

True Christmas: Joy

▫ www.pursuegod.org/true-christmas-joy/

SUMMARY:

Joy is one of those words associated with Christmas. It's painted on Christmas tree ornaments and spelled out in large yard decorations. In fact, we see so much Christmas joy that it can become a cliché. But joy at Christmas doesn't have to be a cliché. In fact, joy was a central part of God's plan for Christmas.

★ **Luke 2:10-11** *"I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!"*

Joy refers to a deep sense of happiness and hope that is with you through every part of life. The Bible tells us how every one of us can have joy this Christmas.

★ Reason #1 – We can be joyful because we are alive

We probably overlook this, but being alive is a good reason to be joyful. You are here on this planet. You are breathing. You have the ability to do all sorts of things with your life. Being alive brings with it an almost infinite amount of possibilities, and the Bible makes it clear that life is a gift from God.

★ **Acts 17:25** *And he is not served by human hands, as if he needed anything. Rather, he himself gives everyone life and breath and everything else.*

God is the giver of life and the fact that you are alive right now is a gift from God that is meant to bring joy.

★ Reason #2 – We can be joyful because we have plenty

The reality is that we have more than just life; we have a lot of things going for us. We have homes, cars, iPhones, skis, Xboxes, full kitchens, running water, and much more. You would think that all of this stuff should bring us joy. Now, many people aren't satisfied with what they have because they focus on what they *don't* have. We want what our neighbors or family members have. But the reality is that compared to most of the world, we have a lot, and all of it comes from God.

★ **James 1:17** *Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of the heavenly lights, who does not change like shifting shadows.*

Whether you realize it or not, every good gift comes from God and all these good gifts can add to the joy that you experience.

★ Reason #3 – We can be joyful because of our relationships

We all know that life and stuff is not enough. You can be the richest person in the world and be unhappy. You need people in your life; you were not created to be alone. You are meant to have relationships. In fact, most of us have all sorts of relationships: good friends, a spouse, kids, co-workers, brother and sisters, parents, grandchildren, and more. Our connections are a source of great joy. And, like everything else we've talked about, relationships come from God.

★ | **Genesis 2:18** *The Lord God said, “It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.”*

God has done much in your life to bring you joy, giving you life, possessions, and people. So, be joyful and give credit to God.

★ **Reasons #4 – We can be joyful because we have a relationship with God**

The joys we have been talking about in this message have all been building in intensity. Life is great, but without food and shelter, it is pretty miserable. A new iPhone is a lot of fun, but not quite so much if you don't have anyone to text. And even if you have lots of good friends and people in your lives, there is one more piece that you are missing. And if you don't have this piece you will never have true joy.

The last ingredient in joy is really the most important: a relationship with God. And while the Christmas story highlights the other three ways that God brings us joy, the ultimate way that God brings us joy is through Jesus. Let's look again at [Luke 2](#).

★ | **Luke 2:10-11** *“I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. 11 The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!”*

The coming of Jesus is a message of good news that will bring great joy. Why is that? It is because it is a message of salvation. It's a message that you can have a relationship with God. In fact, the message of reconciliation is so powerful that you can have joy even if a relationship with God is the only part of joy you have on your list today.

But thanks be to God that he has blessed us with these many ways to experience real joy this Christmas!

DISCUSSION:

[Submit questions](#)

1. **Set Up:** Watch the video together or invite someone to [summarize the topic](#).
 2. Share about one of the most joyful moments of your life.
 3. What are some everyday circumstances that rob us of our joy?
 4. What can you do to better appreciate each day of life?
 5. Read [James 1:17](#). How would viewing everything as a gift from God change the way you look at it?
 6. Read [Genesis 2:18](#). Do you normally think of the relationships in your life as a source of joy? Why or why not?
 7. Do you think God wants you to be joyful? Why or why not? Read [Luke 2:10-11](#). According to these verses what role does Jesus play in having a joyful life?
 8. **Takeaway:** Write a [personal action step](#) based on this conversation.
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