



- The wonder of God is experienced in simply **trusting** God.

I pray that the God who gives hope will fill you with much joy and peace while you trust in him... Romans 15:13 (NCV)

- The wonder of God allows us to live a life of **faith** in God.

- When we cultivate the wonder of God, we experience **joy** from God.

Shepherds were in the fields near Bethlehem. They were taking turns watching their flock during the night. And an angel from the Lord suddenly appeared to them. The glory of the Lord filled the area with light, and they were terrified. The angel said to them, "Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, a message that will fill everyone with joy. Today your Savior, Christ the Lord, was born in Bethlehem. Luke 2:8-11 (GWT)

... a message that will fill everyone with joy. Luke 2:10

#### The Difference between Happiness and Joy:

- Happiness is based on the **good** around us while Joy is based on **God** within us.

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8-9 (NIV)

- Happiness is like a **thermometer**, while joy is a **thermostat**.
- Happiness comes from the **world** around me; Joy originates from the **Spirit of God** within me.

But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Galatians 5:22-23

What has happened to all your joy... Galatians 4:15 (NIV)

#### How we lose joy:

- We lose joy when we are preoccupied with what's happening **to** us rather than what God's doing **in** us.
- We lose joy when what we **want** is more important than what we **have**.
- We lose joy when the **stress** of life replaces the **rest** in our lives.
- We lose joy when the culture we're trying to **fit into** is the culture we don't **belong** to.

#### Reasons for Joy:

- God **loves** me.

For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Mary said, "My soul praises the Lord's greatness! My spirit finds its joy in God, my Savior, because he has looked favorably on me, his humble servant. Luke 1:46-48

- God has **forgiven** me.

What joy when sins are covered over! What relief for those who have confessed their sins and God has cleared their record. Psalm 32:2 (TLB)

My heart finds joy in your salvation. Psalm 13:5

- God **protects** me.

Let all who trust in you rejoice; let them sing joyful praises forever. Spread your protection over them, that all who love your name may be filled with joy. For you bless the godly, O LORD; you surround them with your shield of love. Psalm 5:11-12

- God **provides** for me.

... In your presence there is fullness of joy; in your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16:11

- God is **for** me.

You have been chosen by God himself. 1 Peter 2:9

The LORD is my strength and shield. I trust him with all my heart. He helps me, and my heart is filled with joy. Psalm 28:7

- God is **with** me.

So the Lord's promise came true, just as the prophet had said, A virgin will have a baby boy, and he will be called Immanuel, which means God is with us. Matthew 1:22-23

"Don't be afraid! I have good news for you, a message that will fill everyone with joy. Today your Savior, Christ the Lord, was born in Bethlehem. Luke 2:8-10

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- Your Joy is tied to **your** savior.

11 Today your Savior was born in the town of David. He is Christ, the Lord. Luke 2:11 (NCV)



## TO CREATIVELY LOVE AND LEAD PEOPLE IN A GROWING RELATIONSHIP WITH JESUS.

### Questions that can be used in Connection Groups:

*These questions also work well for personal time with God.*

- What scripture and/or point spoke most to you from the Talk on Sunday? Explain why?
- Why is joy so important in our lives?
- In your own words, what is the difference between happiness and joy? Do you think you pursue happiness more than joy?
- Read Luke 2:8-11; Do you think that the angels message gives hope to the world? Why or why not?
- What is one of the biggest reasons for the absence of joy in your life? (If there is one)
- Do you find that the reasons for joy listed here provide joy in your personal life? Explain.
- Go through each point under the sub-heading "Reasons for joy" and discuss why each one provides joy in our lives.
- What does it mean to you that your personal joy is tied to your savior? Can you have joy without Jesus? Explain.
- What is the key to living with joy everyday?

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OTHER NOTES:

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Today's Talk..



**Joy**