

ADVENT JOY 2006 THE SEASON OF JOY

Luke 1:39-56

On this Third Sunday in Advent
Were looking at the Season of Joy.

taken from Mary's Song in Luke

"My soul rejoices in my God, my spirit finds joy in God my savior"

The questions this morning are:
Do I have a right to expect joy in my life?
It is an inalienable right I can claim?
Is there really joy in every circumstance?

Author Leo Buscaglia tells of the sad night his father came home and told them,
They would have to go into bankruptcy because his partner had absconded with their firm's funds. Leo said at this sad news he watched his mother get up, go out and sell some jewelry to buy food for a sumptuous feast. When other members of the family heard about it they scolded her for doing it. But she told them that "the time for joy is now, when we need it most, not next week." Her courageous act rallied the family.
(Christopher News Notes, August, 1993)

Joy throbs throughout Scripture as a profound, compelling quality of life that transcends the events and disasters which may afflict God's people.

Did you know that the Hebrew language
has more words for joy and rejoicing than any other language
and Hebrew is not known for a lot of words.
13 Hebrew roots, in 27 different words,
have some aspect of joy or joyful participation in worship.
If our world is walking away from worship of the true God,
We are also walking away from Joy.

N.T. refers to as joy as "Gladness, bliss and celebration."
The Hebrew word means, "to leap or spin around with pleasure."
Both the Old and New Testament show God's people as joyful,
When they are in obedient relationship with God.

John 15:10-11 If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

ADVENT AS THE SEASON OF JOY
SHOWS US THAT

I. OUR GOD IS A GOD OF JOY.

Look at how many times the word, or the expression of joy
OCCURS in our nativity stories.

For Elizabeth and Zechariah: The angels said that the new baby would be a
Luke 1:14 He will be a Joy and delight to you, and many will rejoice because of his birth,

**When Mary greeted Elizabeth
 The baby John the Baptist in his mother womb.
 Leaped for joy at meeting Jesus in Mary's womb.**

Luke 1:44 As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for Joy.

**When John Baptist was born...
 The joy spread to the whole neighborhood.**

**Luke 1: 57When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son.
 58Her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her Joy. Luke 1:57-58**

**The shepherds hearing the new of a baby to be born.
 We ecstatic as the angels said to them this baby would be a Joy for all the people.
 Luke 2:10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people.**

Franz Joseph Haydn, the great musician, was once asked why his church music was so cheerful, and he replied: "When I think upon God, my heart is so full of joy that the notes dance and leap, as it were, from my pen, and since God has given me a cheerful heart it will be pardoned me that I serve Him with a cheerful spirit."

The writer of the epistle to the Hebrews wrote about Jesus' joy when he said:
Hebrews 12:2 Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the JOY set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

Certainly Jesus wasn't happy about going to the cross to experience suffering and death, but He rejoiced when He thought of what His death and resurrection would accomplish for us sinners.

Advent is a season of Joy GOD WITH US.

I. GOD A GOD OF JOY

II. GOD WANTS HIS PEOPLE JOYFUL

John 16:24 Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete.

God wants his people to have His joy.

Are we a joyful people?

**The newly wed wife said to her husband when he returned from work,
 "I have great news for you. Pretty soon we're going to be three in this house instead of two." The husband kissing his wife said, "Oh darling, I'm the happiest man in the world."**

His wife said: "I'm glad that you feel that way because tomorrow morning my mother moves in with us".

Are you a joyful person?

Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., was a member of the U.S. Supreme Court for 30 years. His unofficial title was "the greatest justice since John Marshall." At one point in his life, Justice Holmes explained his choice of a career by saying: "I might have entered the ministry if certain clergymen I knew had not looked and acted so much like undertakers." (Moody Bible Institute's Today In The Word, June, 1988, p. 13.)

Are we joyful Christians?

Dennis Wholey, author of "*Are You Happy*" reports that according to expert opinion, perhaps only 20 percent of Americans are happy or joyful. Do you have a sense of joy in your life this morning?

The evangelist Billy Sunday once said, "The trouble with many men is that they have got just enough religion to make them miserable. If there is not joy in religion, you've got a leak in your religion."

Nobody wants to be around a complainer.

We all know what it's like to be drug down by somebody who just doesn't get life.

Everything about them and around them is wrong.

They were born with a bad attitude.

Only one thing is contagious in life that is attitude.

Talent isn't

Experience isn't

Practice isn't,

But attitude is contagious.

That's why coaches never put their best team players to bunk with their negative ones. By the time the night is over, they would both be down.

The only thing more contagious than a good attitude is a bad attitude.

That is not only for the players but for the fans as well.

Norman Cousins tells that once during a football game a doctor at the first aid station treated five people for food poisoning. He tried to tack down what they had in common and discovered that all five people had bought drinks from a particular concession stand at the stadium,

The Doctor had the game's announcer advise people in the stadium to avoid buying drinks from the particular vendor because of the possibility of food poisoning. Before long, more than 200 people complained of food poisoning symptoms. Half of the people were so sick they were taken to the hospital. But the story doesn't end there. After a little more time it was discovered that the five original victims had eaten tainted potato salad

from the same deli on the way to the game. When the other sufferers found out that the drinks in the stadium were safe, they experienced miraculous recoveries.

Attitude is contagious.

People always project on the outside how they feel on the inside.

Are you a person of joy in the Lord?

Fred and Martha were driving home from church.

Martha asked Fred: "Did you notice that the pastor's sermon was kind of weak today?"

Fred said: "No not really."

"Well", said Martha, "did you hear that the choir was flat?"

"No, I didn't," he responded.

"Well, you certainly must have noticed that young couple and their children right in front of us, with all the noise and commotion they made the whole service!"

Fred said: "I'm sorry dear, but no, I didn't."

Finally in disgust Martha said:

"Honestly Fred, I don't know why you even bother to go to church!"

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

When you're full of the Holy Spirit, you are full of joy.

Joy is the outgrowth of the Holy Spirit.

At that time Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure." Luke 10:21

God wants his people full of Joy.

That's the job of the Holy Spirit

It is the second in the list of the fruits of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:22: But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control....

A man from Louisville, Kentucky, was in St. Louis on business over the weekend. On Sunday morning as was his custom he left the hotel looking for a church in which to worship. The streets were deserted, but finally he saw and asked a policeman for directions to the nearest Protestant church. He thanked him for the directions and was about to walk away when he turned and asked the policeman: "Why have you recommended that particular church? The policeman smiled and replied: "I'm not a church man myself, but the people who come out of that church are the happiest looking church-people in St. Louis. I thought that would be the kind of church you would like to attend." (1)

Are we a joyful kind of Church?

Are you a joyful kind of person?

II. GOD WANTS A JOYFUL PEOPLE LET US CONCLUDE BY LOOKING AT THE JOY BUSTER AND JOY BUILDERS.

The first of the joy busters is:

1. Unsatisfied expectations. You feel that your expectations for your marriage have not been met. Or, maybe your kids aren't living like they should. Perhaps you don't have everything you want – a bigger house, a nicer car, and a better job. Or maybe your faith isn't where it ought to be. Unsatisfied expectations are a joy buster.

2. Unresolved conflict. Our joy evaporates when we allow conflict between ourselves and another person to go on. Rivalry, bitterness, fighting, arguing.

“Make every effort to live in peace with all men and to be holy; without holiness no one will see the Lord. See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.” Hebrew 12:1`4-15

3. Unconfessed sin. This third joy buster is perhaps responsible for chasing more joy out of lives than any other. The sin and the guilt that results, can cut your joy faster than anything I know. Sin can send joy far away.

Psalm 51:7-8: “Cleanse me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice.”

Those are the joy buster.

The JOY BUILDERS ARE:

1. OBEDIENCE: Joy is found in obedience

The Shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told. Luke 2:20

Shepherds obeyed and found great joy. When we obey God in our lives, we find joy.

2. FELLOWSHIP: Joy is found in fellowship: When the believers gather God appears in our midst through his Holy Spirit, Holy Word, or even Angles.

Luke 2:10-11 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.

3. CHURCH : Joy is found in the church, in worship, when Christians gather and grow in faithfulness to God. Apostle John writes:

3 John 3-4 It gave me great joy to have some brothers come and tell about your faithfulness to the truth and how you continue to walk in the truth. I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.

4. SALVATION: Joy is found when we accept Christ as our Savior. And are able to share it with others.

I John 1:3-5 3We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his

Son, Jesus Christ. 4We write this to make our joy complete. 5This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all.

Last Joy builder I want to mention is

5. **THANKSGIVING:** Joy is experienced when we give thanks in the midst of all circumstances.

I THESSALONIANS 5:16 Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

In the midst of suffering and difficult times.

Psalms 92:19 When anxiety was great within me, your consolation brought joy to my soul.

**What we discover today in the SEASON OF JOY
is that when we come and worship
God the Joy of the Lord is our STRENGTH.**

Even in the storm there is joy,
Even in the pit there is hope
Even in the darkness there is light.
Even when we sin we discover a savior.

So as we close this Sermon on the SEASON OF JOY

Remembering what The Purpose Driven Life author
Rick Warren said: even in the face of his wife's cancer
In Happy moments, PRAISE GOD.
Difficult moments, SEEK GOD.
Quiet moments, WORSHIP GOD.
Painful moments, TRUST GOD.
Every moment, THANK GOD.
The Joy of the Lord will be your Strength.
-Rick Warren
Experience ADVENT this year as the SEASON OF JOY

