

THE GREATEST GIFT

“Jesus Gives Joy”

Luke 1: 26-38, Now in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent by God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, 27 to a virgin betrothed to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin's name was Mary. 28 And having come in, the angel said to her, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!” 29 But when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and considered what manner of greeting this was. 30 Then the angel said to her, “Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. 31 And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bring forth a Son, and shall call His name Jesus.

(T.S.) Jesus gives us Joy. So the question becomes how do we experience this Joy.

1. CHOOSE JOY.

-The Christmas story begins with the command to rejoice.

-**Luke 1: 28**, “Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!”

-To express or to show Joy. To be cheerful, calmly happy.

-Nehemiah 8: 10, “the Joy of the Lord is your Strength.”

-Our Joy as believers is based on knowledge and not conditions.

-**John 15: 11**, “These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.

-**1Peter 1: 8**, whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory,

-Based on who we know and not dependent on what happens to us.

-Mary's conditions: Teenager, betrothed, her reputation, 100 mile trip to Bethlehem, would have to deliver child in messy conditions.

-**Habakkuk 3: 17-18** (NLT) Even though the fig trees have no blossoms, and there are no grapes on the vines; even though the olive crop fails, and the fields lie empty and barren; even though the flocks die in the fields, and the cattle barns are empty, 18 yet I will rejoice in the Lord! I will be joyful in the God of my salvation!

-Your conditions may not be ideal but you can choose joy.

2. RESIST FEAR.

-**Luke 1: 30**, Then the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God.

-Fear is an enemy of Joy. Fear will deplete our joy.

-Fear will cause us to react not respond. Rejoicing is a response. Getting mad and upset is a reaction.

-**Matthew 1: 18-21**, Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: After His mother Mary was betrothed to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Spirit. 19 Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not wanting to make her a public example, was minded to put her away secretly. 20 But while he thought about these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take to you Mary your wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit. 21 And she will bring forth a Son, and you shall call His name Jesus, for He will save His people from their sins."

-**Isaiah 41: 10**, Fear not, for I am with you; be not dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, Yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.'

3. PREPARE YOUR HEART FOR JOY.

- "Let every heart prepare Him room."

-**Matthew 2: 7**, Then Herod, when he had secretly called the [b]wise men, determined from them what time the star appeared.

-**Matthew 2: 13**, Now when they had departed, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream, saying, "Arise, take the young Child and His mother, flee to Egypt, and stay there until I bring you word; for Herod will seek the young Child to destroy Him."

-Joy is connected to the Word. (Knowledge)

-The enemy to receiving the Word is a hard heart.

-**Luke 4: 13-20**, And He said to them, "Do you not understand this parable? How then will you understand all the parables? 14 The sower sows the word. 15 And these are the ones by the wayside where the word is sown. When they hear, Satan comes immediately and takes away the word that was sown in their hearts. 16 These likewise are the ones sown on stony ground who, when they hear the word, immediately receive it with gladness; 17 and they have no root in themselves, and so endure only for a time. Afterward, when tribulation or persecution arises for the word's sake, immediately they stumble. 18 Now these are the ones sown among thorns; they are the ones who hear the word, 19 and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful. 20 But these are the ones sown on

good ground, those who hear the word, accept it, and bear fruit: some thirtyfold, some sixty, and some a hundred.”

-Luke 2: 38, Then Mary said, “Behold the maidservant of the Lord! Let it be to me according to your word.” And the angel departed from her.