

SEQUOIA NOTES

Today's Sequoia @10:10 Message...

Finding Joy in our Discouragement

With Ryan Dawson, Lead Pastor

December 13, 2020

Advent - Joy



Luke 1:5-7 (NLT) “When Herod was king of Judea, there was a Jewish priest named Zechariah. He was a member of the priestly order of Abijah, and his wife, Elizabeth, was also from the priestly line of Aaron. ⁶ Zechariah and Elizabeth were righteous in God’s eyes, careful to obey all of the Lord’s commandments and regulations. ⁷ They had no children because Elizabeth was unable to conceive, and they were both very old.”

Luke 1:19-20 (NLT) “Then the angel said, ‘I am Gabriel! I stand in the very presence of God. It was he who sent me to bring you this good news! ²⁰ But now, since you didn’t believe what I said, you will be silent and unable to speak until the child is born. For my words will certainly be fulfilled at the proper time.’”

Luke 1:25 (NLT) “How kind the Lord is!” she exclaimed. “He has taken away my disgrace of having no children.”

Luke 1:30-33 (NLT) “Don’t be afraid, Mary,” the angel told her, “for you have found favour with God! ³¹ You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. ³² He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. ³³ And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!”

Luke 1:41-45 (NLT) “At the sound of Mary’s greeting, Elizabeth’s child leaped within her, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² Elizabeth gave a glad cry and exclaimed to Mary, ‘God has blessed you above all women, and your child is blessed. ⁴³ Why am I so honoured, that the mother of my Lord should visit me? ⁴⁴ When I heard your greeting, the baby in my womb jumped for joy. ⁴⁵ You are blessed because you believed that the Lord would do what he said.’”

Luke 1:46-51 (NLT) “Mary responded, ‘Oh, how my soul praises the Lord. ⁴⁷ How my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour! ⁴⁸ For he took notice of his lowly servant girl, and from now on all generations will call me blessed. ⁴⁹ For the Mighty One is holy, and he has done great things for me. ⁵⁰ He shows mercy from generation to generation to all who fear him. ⁵¹ His mighty arm has done tremendous things!’”

Joy is available to us in the midst of our discouragements & difficulties. Why is this?

• Joy is not defined by our circumstances.

James 1:2-4 (NLT) “Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy. ³ For you know that when your faith is tested, your endurance has a chance to grow. ⁴ So let it grow, for when your endurance is fully developed, you will be perfect and complete, needing nothing.”

“Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in every situation.” Rick Warren

• Joy is found in the presence of God.

Psalm 16:11 (ESV) “You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.”

1 Peter 1:8-9 (NLT) “You love him [Christ] even though you have never seen him. Though you do not see him now, you trust him; and you rejoice with a glorious, inexpressible joy. ⁹ The reward for trusting him will be the salvation of your souls.”

• Joy is a gift we choose to receive.

Philippians 4:4-5 (NIV) “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! ⁵ Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.”

Hebrews 12:1-3 (NLT) “Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a huge crowd of witnesses to the life of faith, let us strip off every weight that slows us down, especially the sin that so easily trips us up. And let us run with endurance the race God has set before us. ² We do this by keeping our eyes on Jesus, the champion who initiates and perfects our faith. Because of the joy awaiting him, he endured the cross, disregarding its shame. Now he is seated in the place of honour beside God’s throne. ³ Think of all the hostility he endured from sinful people; then you won’t become weary and give up.”

Big Idea: Choose to find joy in the presence of Christ.

Missional Challenge: Fill a manger for an individual, family, or organization in need. Share a Christmas tradition with someone to encourage them.

The Translation of the Bible Scriptures used in today's 10:10 service is from the New Living Translation (NLT), the English Standard Version (ESV), and the New International Version (NIV).



**Sequoia Impact Communities are where we
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To get plugged in email:

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**Finding Joy in our Discouragement
#3 of 5 - December 13, 2020**

- 1) Which “promise” from the 100 Days of Impact was most significant for you this week and why? Where have you seen God working as you engage with the weekly Missional Challenges?
- 2) How did the message resonate with you? What questions or comments did it raise for you?
- 3) Read Luke 1:5-25. What impacts you about the story of Elizabeth and Zechariah? In what ways can you identify with their discouragement?
- 4) Read Luke 1:30-56. How does Mary demonstrate trust in God in the midst of challenging circumstances? What can you learn from this?
- 5) James 1:2-4. What do we learn about joy from this passage? Do you “consider it joy” when you face discouragement and difficulty? Why or why not? What is the promise contained in this passage?
- 6) Discuss the quote from Rick Warren on joy. In what ways would you like to apply this understanding to your life?
- 7) Read Psalm 16:11 and 1 Peter 1:8-9. What do we learn about joy from these passages? How do we access this joy?
- 8) Read Philippians 4:4-5. Describe in your own words what “rejoice” means to you. Why is this a choice? What makes this choice hard in your life?
- 9) Read Hebrews 12:1-3. How does knowing we are “Jesus’ joy”, help us make Christ our joy? In what ways will you choose joy in the presence of Christ this week? What are your next steps?

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