



Scripture Reading

You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

-Psalm 16:11

Devotional

It's the most anticipated time of the Christmas season. Opening our Christmas presents. The excitement of children is almost palpable and the pride of parents beam from their smiling faces. The happy moment creates memories that will be embedded into the fabric of the family. Thankfulness and happiness abound. Soon though, the new toys and gadgets become part of everyday life, the excitement quiets down, and the family equilibrium returns. Our new presents bring happiness, but we discover that they do not bring lasting joy.

Dallas Willard describes joy not as a passing sensation of pleasure, but a pervasive sense of well-being that is infused with hope because of the goodness of God. Joy is not a fleeting emotion, but rather the disposition of your heart. Psalm 16:11 says that we find the fullness of joy in the presence of God. In advent, we celebrate the coming of Jesus who is called Immanuel, God with us. Our joy is rooted in the coming of the Messiah because we find the fullness of God present with us. In advent we await the arrival of Jesus, Immanuel, God with us, the one in whom there is the fullness of joy.

Response

Take some time to think through these questions:

- Where do you attempt to find joy? Is it in the presence of God or in the presence of something else?
- Spend some time meditating on Psalm 16:11. Which line of Psalm 16:11 resonates with you the most right now?
- Spend some time in prayer asking God to fill you with joy.