

They were terrified, but the angel reassured them. “Don’t be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David! Luke 2:9-11(NLT)

Joy is an elusive feeling that we search for, longing for it, trying anything we can to create it, even if just for a moment. What we are often trying to find is happiness. It is an emotion that is fleeting, dictated by our situations or circumstances.

Joy is a steadfastness, that is built on the unchanging nature of God. That in him we have the promise of life abundant. That in his kingdom he will make all things new and although for a time we live in this tension between the already and the not yet- we look ahead with great Joy

JOY ISN’T EMOTIONALLY OR SPIRITUALLY, OR INTULLECTUALLY DISHONEST. Christian joy doesn’t mean that we are sticking our heads in the sand and saying, *“it’s fine, we’re fine, everything’s fine”* while running past the gutter of broken dreams, eyes averted.

JOY ISN’T DENIAL OF GRIEF OR PRETENDING HAPPINESS. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said “The **joy** of God goes through the poverty of the manger and the agony of the cross; that is why it is invincible, irrefutable. It does not deny the anguish, when it is there, but finds God in the midst of it, in fact precisely there.”

JOY IS BORN, NOT FROM PRETENDING EVERYTHING IS FINE, BUT FROM HOLDING BOTH HOPE AND TRUTH TOGETHER. Joy is born out of trust and hope and gratitude and faith in that coming Kingdom. We have a reason to rejoice. And it’s not denial or innocence or naivety or stupidity.

JOY IS THE AFFIRMATION OF THE TRUEST THING OF ALL: REDEMPTION, RESTORATION, RECONCILIATION.

All made possible in and through Jesus.

This advent season how would you describe Joy? In the past year where have you experienced Joy? Are there things that have hindered your experience of Joy? Take some time and ask God to restore to you the joy of your salvation that you may experience the work of the good news of great Joy that the Jesus has come.

Advent