

A d v e n t

## Family Worship Guide

### Discussion Questions

- Why does obedience increase joy instead of taking it away?
- What is one command of Christ you can follow joyfully this week?

### **Day 5 Therefore, I will hope in Him**

*1 Peter 1:8–9 Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls.* | Peter describes a joy so deep and radiant that it is “inexpressible” or beyond what words can communicate. This kind of joy comes from loving and trusting a Savior we cannot physically see. Advent reminds us that God became visible in Christ so we could know, love, and believe in Him. Even in trials, we as Christians rejoice because our joy is full and inexpressible. Have you ever been so happy you cried or blurted out emotion or danced? Those who have faith in Christ see what eyes cannot see. We behold the beauty of Christ and believe in the promises given to us. Believers look forward to the completion of our salvation upon His return. It is already ours now, but it will overflow even more when we see Him face to face. Advent joy looks forward with longing to the day when Christ will return and our joy will be complete.

### Discussion Questions

- Why can we have joy even when we suffer or face hard times?
- What does it mean to love and trust a Savior you cannot yet see?



## West Oaks Baptist Church

(in preparation for Sunday, December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2025)

### Advent Devotional #3 Joy

## Day 1

*Luke 2:10-11 And the angel said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.'* | The first words most angels speak to people are “Fear not,” and so it is with the shepherds, too. Advent joy or biblical joy begins where fear ends. It is not that life becomes easier necessarily, but as we have seen in the past two weeks it all centers around God coming near. The angel proclaimed “good news of great joy” and this joy is rooted in our Savior Jesus Christ. It was anchored in the arrival of the Son of God, born in the flesh. He came to rescue us and restore our broken relationship with God. The angel says this joy is “for all the people.” Christ came for outsiders, the overlooked, the broken, and yes sinful people. Even the shepherds who were considered unclean and socially insignificant were chosen to receive the announcement of the King. Advent joy is for everyone who sees their need for a Savior and calls out to Him in faith. As we notice the phrase “unto you is born,” this shows us it is personal too. Christ did not come merely into the world but He came for you. He came to save individuals with real sins, real fears, and real struggles. Joy is not something we chase but it is something given to us through Christ. Because our Savior has come, our joy is steady, unshaken by hardships. Christians are anchored in His unchanging love. This is the source of our great joy!

### Discussion Questions

- Why does the good news of Jesus remove fear and bring joy?
- Where does the sinful world often try to find joy if not in Christ?

## Day 2

*Nehemiah 8:10 ...And do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.* | The people of Israel wept when they heard God's Law read and began to understand their sin. Nehemiah reminded them that their conviction is not the end of the story but it leads to the joy of forgiveness. The “joy of the LORD” is not joy we just create through our own efforts, it is joy rooted in the character of God. This joy comes from His salvation that He brings to us. It lifts up our eyes from our fixation on our failures and turns them toward the God who restores us, who brings us true spiritual healing. Advent joy teaches us that our Savior who confronts us with our sin is also the same Savior who removes our guilt. Christ did not come to crush the brokenhearted but to heal and restore them. So do not be grieved, God is in control. God is greater than our grief. Many reformers use this verse in Nehemiah 8 to teach through ideas such as that true joy comes from hearing the word of God. That this joy gives us strength through Christ because it lifts our hearts from the fear of judgment we spoke of in the last section to a confidence in Christ. You may be seeing a pattern now of how these Advent themes are linked. They are kind of like dominoes falling into the next one and so on. Advent joy flows from knowing that Christ has come, that he is now reigning, and that He will come again in the 2nd Advent.

### Discussion Questions

- What kinds of failures are you prone to fixate on?
- Why does God's joy give strength in times of weakness?

## Day 3

*Psalms 16:11 You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.* | Once again true Advent joy is found only in the presence of God. David wrote this Psalm and he says there is “fullness of joy.” If you take a sponge and pour a little water on it or wipe up a small spill of water, it will soak it up and disappear into the inner regions. Is it full? Not really. Now if you take that sponge and plunge it into a full bucket of water and squeeze out all the air is it full? It absolutely can't hold anymore water. This is the kind of full we are talking about for joy. Everything else in life may offer a temporary pleasure, but only God offers eternal and full joy. Advent declares that God has drawn near in Christ so we can experience the full joy of His presence. Joy grows as we walk closely with Him, obeying His Word and depending on the Holy Spirit. Advent joy looks both backward and forward. Backward to Christ's first coming, when joy entered the world in human flesh, and then forward to His return, when joy will be complete in His kingdom. Until then, we taste the joy of His presence through faith, knowing that greater joy is coming.

### Discussion Questions

- How else could you describe the fullness of joy?
- What is one way you can walk closely with God this week?

## Day 4

*John 15:10-11 If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. [11] These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.* | Jesus desires that His own divine joy would live inside of us. As our Savior obeys the Father's commands and abides in His love, we too should have joy that flows from abiding in His love and walking in His commands. Obedience does not really diminish our joy, it strengthens and enhances it. Sin can sometimes seem like it promises happiness but really it does nothing but steal our joy. Jesus' joy is full because it is rooted in His perfect fellowship with the Father, and through the Holy Spirit and that same joy can become ours. His joy sustains us in all of life and steadies our hearts when we face temptation. Our joy becomes full when our hearts fully rest in His love and our minds trust His Word. Our lives should reflect His ways. Heb 12:2 says ...looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. We should be able to endure suffering with the joy that comes only from the Lord.