**The Star: A Journey of Joy**

**Luke 2:9–12**

1. **Can Joy and Pain coexist?**
* Joy is a strange thing, it seems that most people think joy can only come when pain is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
	+ The reality is joy and pain exist side by side in our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_world.
	+ On this side of heaven, we see there is really no way to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ them.
	+ Our lives are a constant balance of joy and pain as we walk through the experiences of life.
		- We find that balance when our eyes are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on the right things.
		- It is often our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ magnify the power of the joy we find in Christ.
* This isn’t a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that you fake it and slap a smile through the deep pains of life. (James 1)
	+ It’s an \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that even during trouble and pain there a new perspective that shows us that our trials can lead us to grow and become mature in our faith.
	+ While growth isn’t easy, the \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of growth can be filled with joy.
	+ As we walk in \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ with God, we can grow to experience a sense of joy that comes from \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ that there is more than the pain we’re facing.
1. **Joy leads us to Connection.** (Psalm 96:7-13)
* The good news of Christ and Christmas it was not intended for us to have this news just for\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
	+ The good news of great joy is for \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people. Life-giving joy is meant to bubble over and touch others. It can’t help itself.
	+ The coming of Jesus and the promise of His second coming should be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ source of joy to all of creation. Jesus came to set things \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the entire world from sin and death.
		- The good news is for the world—\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
		- Joy is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by borders or governments or nationalities or races.
* Fear and pain \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ us, but joy brings \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* The joy of Jesus’s coming goes out into all the earth, connecting us to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
1. **Our response to Joy is Worship.**
* It is easy to embrace joy when life is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.
* When life is difficult joy seems distant.
	+ Sometimes our struggles and hurts are so overwhelming that we are \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by our fear.
	+ Joy can feel so far away, so distant, maybe impossible.
* The Bible shows us that the appropriate response to joy is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ worship.
	+ If our source of joy is our \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_we should always find worship as a natural response.
	+ Worship can also jump-start joy as we fix our eyes on God. (1 Peter 1:8–9)

**So What Now?**

* Take the time to connect with others especially other believers.
* Take time and make the choice to be purposefully thankful. Gratitude has a way of reminding us of joy and the reasons we have to rejoice even in the midst of pain.
* Worship God for who He is.

*“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4)*

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