

Spiritual joy is: The settled conviction that God sovereignly controls the events of life for the believers' good and His glory. Spiritual joy is not an attitude dependent on chance or circumstance. It is the deep and abiding confidence that regardless of one's circumstances in life, all is well between the believer and the Lord. No matter what difficulty, pain, disappointment, failure, rejection, or other challenge one is facing, genuine joy remains because of that eternal well being established by God's grace in salvation. Thus, Scripture makes it clear that the fullest, most lasting and satisfying joy is derived from a true relationship with God. It is not based on circumstances or chance, but is the gracious and permanent possession of every child of God.

John MacArthur

The Christian is a (person) of joy... A gloomy Christian is a contradiction of terms, and nothing in all religious history has done Christianity more harm than its connection with black clothes and long faces.

William Barclay

There is a joy which is not given to the ungodly, but to those who love Thee for Thine own sake, whose joy Thou Thyself art. And this is the happy life, to rejoice to Thee, of Thee, for Thee; this it is, and there is no other.

Augustine

Do not let your happiness depend on something you may lose...only (upon) the Beloved who will never pass away.

C.S. Lewis

The purpose of rejoicing is not so we can feel better emotionally (though that will happen). The purpose of joy is to glorify God by demonstrating to an unbelieving world that our loving and faithful heavenly Father cares for us and provides for us all that we need.

Jerry Bridges

The test of Christian character should be that a man is a joy-bearing agent to the world.

Henry Ward Beecher

The religion that makes a man look sick certainly won't cure the world!

Phillip Brooks

---

## ***A Time for Joy***

Selected Scriptures

**Introduction:** The *hope* of the Old Testament believers was fulfilled in the birth of the Messiah in a cave outside Bethlehem. And, as Isaac Watts declared, this birth brought *Joy to the World!* In two very different parts of the Christmas story, we see a unifying theme of *joy*: The shepherds were surprised by it, while the Magi spent months and months seeking it. And ultimately, they all found it in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The presence of joy at Christmas reminds us that joy is to be the constant possession of the Christ-follower.

### **Joy Defined**

**Isaiah 55**

The motive behind the promise of the Savior: *love*

The longing for the promised Savior: *hope*

The presence of the promised Savior: *joy*

### **The Shepherds: *Surprised by Joy***

**Luke 2:8-20**

The setting

The surprising announcement

The joy of fulfillment

### **The Magi: *Seeking for Joy***

**Matthew 2:1-12**

The setting

The scholarly announcement

The joy of inclusion

### **The Joy of Christmas**

Recovering joy

Radiating joy

### ***Where do you delight?***

## The Third Sunday of Advent

### ***A Time for Joy***

Selected Scriptures

**Introduction:** The *hope* of the Old Testament believers was fulfilled in the birth of Messiah in a cave outside Bethlehem. And, as Isaac Watts declared, this birth brought *Joy to the World!* In two very different part of the Christmas story, we see a unifying theme of *joy*: The shepherds were surprised by it, while the Magi spent months and months seeking it. And ultimately, they all found it in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The presence of joy at Christmas reminds us that joy is to be the constant possession of the Christ-follower.

#### **Joy Defined**

Isaiah 55

The motive behind the promise of the Savior: *love*

The longing for the promised Savior: *hope*

The presence of the promised Savior: *joy*

#### **The Shepherds: *Surprised by Joy***

Luke 2:8-20

The setting

The surprising announcement

The joy of fulfillment

#### **The Magi: *Seeking for Joy***

Matthew 2:1-12

The setting

The scholarly announcement

The joy of inclusion

#### **The Joy of Christmas**

Recovering joy

Radiating joy

#### ***Where do you delight?***

# Kids Notes

## A Time for Joy

### The Questions

Answer the following questions. The answers are on the back.

1. *The angels told the shepherds that they were bringing them:*

- A. plans for a better fence to keep the sheep in.
- B. beautiful ornaments for their Christmas cactus.
- C. good news of great joy.
- D. all of the above.

2. *The Magi were:*

- A. three wild and crazy guys.
- B. three rich kings from the east.
- C. a group of astronomers from the east.
- D. all of the above.

3. *Joy is ever-present delight in knowing that:*

- A. our very lives are safe in the arms of Jesus.
- B. our eternal future is secure in Jesus Christ.
- C. the great promises of God are being fulfilled.
- D. all of the above

For Family Discussion: *How does your family demonstrate the joy of Christmas?*

Space to Doodle

## Did You Hear It?

Mark the times you hear these key words:

JOY _____	<b>TOTAL:</b> _____
SHEPHERDS _____	_____
MAGI _____	_____
MESSIAH _____	_____
CHRISTMAS _____	_____
AGENTS _____	_____

## Word Search

Find the following words in the scramble below. Letters are sometimes used twice, and words may go around corners.

JOY SHEPHERDS MAGI EAST GIFTS MYRRH FRANKINCENSE GOLD  
HAPPINESS BETHLEHEM HEROD SHEEP FIELDS ANGELS GLORY  
LORD JESUS MESSIAH SAVIOR CHRIST GIFT FAITHFULNESS  
PROMISE ISAIAH LUKE MATTHEW PRESENTS AGENTS DISCIPLES

```

M N P S F H R S I S R D L S F Y S
L E U R A R T O H Z F E H E A M U
X H I O N A E I I Y E P L I Y S
R G A E E M P N E V R O O P T R E
D S I S L H I L K O A T J I H R J
I O E F E H D S D I U S Z C F H T
X R S R T S T O E J N J T S U M T
P J D I K S L E G N A C C I L A S
F S A G E N T S B Y K O E D N T I
S S E N I P P A H R R I R N E T R
P E E H S E A S T G G O X T S H H
E K U L H N N T I A O E L L S E C
M E S S I A H F M I Z L Q G T W H
N B U R I A T A Y V U X D U S B T
P T X R V H W F Z Q P X Q X K B U
    
```