

Tusculum Hills Baptist Church  
Paul Gunn, Pastor

THE JOY OF JESUS

Luke 2:1-21, Luke 1:39-45

December 13, 2020

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There are two points to my message today:

- The good news was meant to cause joy.
- Jesus brings joy when you least expect it.

Today, we have the story of Jesus' birth.

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 2:1-21

*In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while<sup>[a]</sup> Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register.*

*<sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David.*

*<sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.*

*<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.*

*<sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."*

*<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,*

<sup>14</sup> “Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

<sup>15</sup> When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, “Let’s go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about.”

<sup>16</sup> So they hurried off and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger. <sup>17</sup> When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, <sup>18</sup> and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them. <sup>19</sup> But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. <sup>20</sup> The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.

<sup>21</sup> On the eighth day, when it was time to circumcise the child, he was named Jesus, the name the angel had given him before he was conceived.

## **THE GOOD NEWS WAS MEANT TO CAUSE JOY**

**EXPLANATION:** Angels appeared to the shepherds to announce Jesus’ birth. How incredible the sight must have been! They said the news would cause great joy to everyone. The shepherds took the joyful news and shared it with others and then returned with joy to the fields.

**APPLICATION:** Let’s talk about being human. 100% of us can relate to that, right? We are this mix of emotions, triggered by circumstance and chemistry. It’s probably not possible to have a good day, all day, every day. But it is possible to have joy on most days. If we have the Gospel message in us, then we should have joy. Joy manifests itself in different forms... from quiet calm to being bubbly. Real joy is genuine. Fake joy is well, fake and everyone knows it.

**ILLSTRATION:** A friend of mine once pointed out the fake joy of another person. It was just a one-on-one conversation. She mentioned how this man was a salesman and his sales approach had taken over his personal life. When the man spoke to her, he came across as a salesman with fake joy. “Hey, it’s so goooooood to see you” and other things came across as fake joy to her. The emotion of joy must be genuine.

**ILLUSTRATION:** I've known several people named Joy. I want to say hi to Joy McNeese who watches our program each week because she cannot attend anymore. Hi, Joy! I've known other women named Joy. You know, having the name Joy seems like it would bring a lot of pressure. A name like Paul doesn't put any pressure on someone. But many years ago, I knew a woman named Joy who was a very unhappy person. Her personality contradicted her name.

**APPLICATION:** Let me ask you, if you say you are a believer in Jesus Christ, does your disposition bring credence to the cause of Christ, or does it do harm? Again, let me be clear – we are human, and all of us have many emotions. All of us face hardships. We are not superman, or superwoman. But if there is no joy in us for what Christ has done for us, then something is terribly wrong.

Jesus First, Others Second, Yourself last. I believe people are more likely to find joy by following that simple pattern. The most unhappy people are those who put themselves before others and Jesus. It's true! The good news was meant to cause joy!

## **JESUS BRINGS JOY WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT**

**SCRIPTURE:** Luke 1:39-45

*At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea,<sup>40</sup> where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth.<sup>41</sup> When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit.<sup>42</sup> In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the child you will bear!<sup>43</sup> But why am I so favored, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?<sup>44</sup> As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.<sup>45</sup> Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfill his promises to her!"*

**ILLUSTRATION:** When Susan went to have an ultrasound, we hoped to see what gender the child would be. During the ultrasound, the doctor said the baby looked like she was running, moving her legs and arms. He said it was important for the baby to move so that he could see whether it was a boy or girl. Susan said, "That's why I drank thee Dr. Pepper's this morning." Then he said, "It's a girl." That leaping in the womb was caused by Dr. Pepper, not the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist jumped in the womb of his Elizabeth when Mary said she was pregnant with Jesus. The Holy Spirit caused that to happen.

**APPLICATION:** Has the Lord ever surprised you with joy in the middle of something? He has done that for me. Several people have told me that 2020 has been the best year of their lives! That might be hard to believe.

As you know, the Book of Acts is the story of the new church. After Jesus ascended into heaven, Pentecost came and the Holy Spirit came to be the third and final revelation of God. His followers faced imprisonment, discrimination, isolation, exile, martyrdom. They faced government oppression, and at times, they themselves were divided.

When you read through Acts, highlight the number of times you read the word “joy”. Whatever happened, no matter how terrible, the church moved on and the default emotion of Christians was joy!

Something is wrong if we cannot find joy. What is your source of joy? Probably most of you would say family, kids, grandkids, or a relationship with someone. There are other sources of joy, but really, our main source of joy should be Jesus. Other sources of joy must be secondary.

JOY really is about perspective. Let’s close the service singing Joy To the World.

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I use the NIV translation of scripture because of its conversational nature. Feel free to go to Bible Gateway and copy and paste whichever translation you want to use. This transcript has been edited to an outline format that improves readability and therefore may not exactly follow the video edition.

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Thanks to Jennifer Anderson for her editing assistance.

Sincerely, Paul Gunn  
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