



the gift exchange

EXCHANGE ADVERSITY FOR JOY

December 21 & 22, 2024

Joy is far different than happiness. Happiness depends on what is happening to you. Joy is a choice. _____.

- Joy is _____. Happiness is _____.
- Happiness is _____. Joy is _____.

"Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of every detail of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything will be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in all things."

– Author Kay Warren in her book, *Choose Joy*

What adversity robs me of joy and what choices should I make?

1

The adversity of _____ and _____.

When Mary faced the adversity of anxiety, she chose to _____ and accept His plan.

Luke 1:26-30 (NLT)

In the sixth month of Elizabeth's pregnancy, God sent the angel Gabriel to Nazareth, a village in Galilee, to a virgin named Mary. She was engaged to be married to a man named Joseph, a descendant of King David. Gabriel appeared to her and said, "Greetings, favored woman! The Lord is with you!" Confused and disturbed, Mary tried to think what the angel could mean. "Don't be afraid, Mary," the angel told her, "for you have found favor with God!"

Luke 1:31-33 (NLT)

You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be very great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his ancestor David. And he will reign over Israel forever; his Kingdom will never end!

Luke 1:34-37 (NLT)

Mary asked the angel, "But how can this happen? I am a virgin." The angel replied, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God. What's more, your relative Elizabeth has become pregnant in her old age! People used to say she was barren, but she has conceived a son and is now in her sixth month. For the word of God will never fail.

Luke 1:38 (NLT)

Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her.

JOY comes to those who say "God, I trust you _____."

Luke 1:47 (TPT/NLT)

My spirit bursts with joy in God my Savior!

2

The adversity of _____ from hurts.

Resentment over hurt will cause you to have no joy.

When Joseph faced the adversity of resentment from hurts, he chose to _____ and let the pain go.

Matthew 1:18-19 (NLT)

This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

Resentment is the most _____ in the world.

JOY comes to those who say "God, I _____ and I'm letting it go."

Matthew 1:20-21 (NLT)

As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

Nehemiah 8:10c (NIV)

“... the JOY of the Lord will be your strength!”

3

The adversity of _____.

When the wise men faced the adversity of confusion, they chose to follow God’s _____ one step at a time.

Matthew 2:1-3 (NLT)

Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea, during the reign of King Herod. About that time some wise men from eastern lands arrived in Jerusalem, asking, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We saw his star as it rose, and we have come to worship him.” King Herod was deeply confused when he heard this, as was everyone in Jerusalem.

Four Stages of Spiritual Growth in Matthew 2:

_____ - they followed the prompting of God’s spirit.

_____ - they were seeking something important.

_____ - they would find the Messiah of the world and believe in Him.

_____ - they would worship Him as king.

JOY comes to those who _____ in life.

Matthew 2:8 (NLT)

Then he told them, “Go to Bethlehem and search carefully for the child. And when you find him, come back and tell me so that I can go and worship him, too!”

Matthew 2:9-10 (NLT)

After this interview the wise men went their way. And the star they had seen in the east guided them to Bethlehem. It went ahead of them and stopped over the place where the child was. When they saw the star, they were filled with joy!

JOY comes to those who follow God’s compass for life – _____

Psalms 119:105 (NLT)

Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path.

Matthew 2:11 (TPT)

When they came into the house and saw the young child with Mary, his mother, they fell to the ground at his feet and worshiped him. Then they opened their treasure chests full of gifts and presented him with gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

JOY comes only to those who:

- Overcome pride with _____ that God gave us Jesus.
- Offer God their _____.
- Open their trusting heart to receive the _____ of salvation.

Luke 2:10 (NLT)

...but the angel reassured them. "Don't be afraid!" he said. "I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people."

Nehemiah 8:10c (NIV)

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- Joy is internal. Happiness is external.
- Happiness is temporary. Joy is eternal.

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When Mary faced the adversity of anxiety, she chose to trust God and accept His plan.

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JOY comes to those who say "God, I trust you completely."

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Resentment over hurt will cause you to have no joy.

When Joseph faced the adversity of resentment from hurts, he chose to offer grace and let the pain go.

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This is how Jesus the Messiah was born. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. But before the marriage took place, while she was still a virgin, she became pregnant through the power of the Holy Spirit. Joseph, to whom she was engaged, was a righteous man and did not want to disgrace her publicly, so he decided to break the engagement quietly.

Resentment is the most useless emotion in the world.

JOY comes to those who say "God, I forgive and I'm letting it go."

Matthew 1:20-21 (NLT)

As he considered this, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream. "Joseph, son of David," the angel said, "do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife. For the child within her was conceived by the Holy Spirit. And she will have a son, and you are to name him Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."

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Follow - they followed the prompting of God's spirit.

Seek - they were seeking something important.

Find - they would find the Messiah of the world and believe in Him.

Worship - they would worship Him as king.

JOY comes to those who seek God in life.

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JOY comes to those who follow God's compass for life – the Bible.

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- Offer God their very best.
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