

Joy
Jim Burgen
Dec 22nd, 2024

// Bible References: Luke 1:11-13,18-20,26-34,37; 2:10-11, 13-14, 19-21. Matt 1:18-21,24-25; John 8:12

// Community Question: What is the third verse of Joy to the World? How does it relate to having joy?

// Discussion Questions

1. The sermon explains that biblical joy is about believing God is present in any circumstance, and joy can exist even in difficult times. What does Jim mean when he says that joy is not just an emotion but a choice? Can you think of a time in your life when you had to choose joy despite facing a tough situation? How did that impact your perspective?
2. According to the sermon, practicing gratitude helps push aside feelings of anger and bitterness, making room for joy to grow. Why does Jim emphasize the importance of gratitude as a gateway to joy? Make a list of things you are grateful for right now. How does focusing on these things change your outlook on life?
3. Read Luke 1:11-13, 18-20. Zechariah's faith was influenced by his own logic, experiences, and the reality of his and Elizabeth's age, which made him doubt God's promise. In what ways do you relate to Zechariah's feelings of doubt based on personal experiences or challenges in your life? Consider a situation where you felt overwhelmed and doubted whether things would work out. How can this story encourage you to have a different perspective?
4. Read Luke 1:37. Jim uses this verse to illustrate that choosing to believe in God's possibilities can be a source of hope and joy. What is the significance of the statement 'Nothing will be impossible with God' in the context of finding joy? In what areas of your life do you find it hard to believe that everything is possible with God? How can you adjust your mindset to see things differently?
5. Jim shares his experience of losing joy when he tried to control situations that only God could manage, highlighting the importance of understanding our responsibilities. How can confusing our role with what God needs to do lead to a loss of joy? Identify an area in your life where you might be trying to control things instead of allowing God to take the lead. What steps can you take to find peace in that situation?

// Challenge: Think of your upcoming Christmas season, how can you be a source of encouragement and joy during this Christmas Season?