



December 14, 2025

Series: Week 3

Pastor Ken

[www.lebefree.org](http://www.lebefree.org)

(NS-1)

## “Choose Joy”

### Joy Can Be Elusive

Trusting in Jesus doesn't mean we'll automatically feel and exude hope, peace and joy all of the time.

- Though Jesus was right there with the disciples, His presence often failed to impact their behavior.
- The “wind” and “waves” made a bigger impression on them than Jesus. Mark 4:35-41; Matt. 14:22-33
- Threatening events leading up to the Cross caused fear-driven denials and hiding. Mark 14:50-72

Joy is a choice to trust in: Who God is – What He's done – What He's promised. No matter what.

- Finding joy during hard times is encouraged and modeled in Scripture. James 1:2; 2 Cor. 6:10 **(NS-2)**

### Choose Joy Over Fear (Luke 2:8-20) **(NS-3)**

Lowly shepherds were “terrified” when an ordinary night was abruptly interrupted by a radiant angel.

***“... Don't be afraid!” he said. “I bring you good news that will bring great joy to all people. The Savior—yes, the Messiah, the Lord—has been born today in Bethlehem, the city of David!” 2:10-11***

The Promised Savior was born, who would die for the sins of all, so they could be forgiven and restored.

- The shepherds' choice to believe, delivered them from fear, and placed them in God's joyful story.
- All of us have the same opportunity provided to the shepherds to choose fear or God-driven Joy.
- Choosing joy isn't an easy one-time decision that leaves us forever Happy ☺ Happy ☺ Happy.

### Enemies of Joy

**Joy-Quenching Waves:** (1.) High stress situations - Anxiety (2.) Busyness (3.) Comparing ourselves with others (4.) Family members not walking with the Lord (5.) Past trauma (6.) Difficult relationship issues (7.) Negative news cycles (8.) Health issues/chronic pain (9.) Grieving a loss **(NS-4)**

**Enslaving Mental Gymnastics:** (1.) My life is spinning out of control. (2.) I know something bad is about to happen. (3.) It's all over for me; I've got nothing left. (4.) Missing this opportunity means my life will never be good. (5.) God has abandoned me – He doesn't care. (6.) If this relationship ends badly, I'll never be happy again. (7.) My failure was too great – God has given up on me. **(NS-5)**

### Next Steps –

1. Watch any sermon series and work through our helpful sermon guides at [www.lebefree.org](http://www.lebefree.org)
2. Read James 1:2-4; 2 Corinthians 6:3-10. Explain how it can be possible to find joy even during very difficult times. Give an example of when you were able to do this in your life.
3. Read Luke 2:8-20. Why do you think the shepherds chose to try to find Jesus? What might have kept them from venturing out to look for Jesus? How did their decision impact their lives?
4. What **Joy-Quenching Waves** are you currently facing? How have they been impacting your life?
5. Which of these **Enslaving Mental Gymnastics** do you most closely relate to? Explain why.
6. Spend time this week praying the Warfare Prayer – Take time to study the additional passages listed and add to them. Feel free to make changes that make it more personal to your life.
7. In all the spaces you inhabit there are people who need the Joy of Jesus and the Good News of the Gospel. Ask God to use you to do just that. Who might those people be in your life?

***Continue on if you want to take back lost ground and choose joy.***

## Warfare Prayer

### **Not Here – Not Now!**

*O Lord my God - How great You are  
You reign with ultimate authority  
You created me with a purpose and a plan  
You orchestrate my life to accomplish Your will  
You promise me an amazing forever future  
You surround me with unfailing love  
I will trust and rest in You  
Praise Your Holy Name  
Amen*

### **O Lord my God – How great You are You reign with ultimate authority**

**Isaiah 46:9-10** - Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like Me. <sup>10</sup> Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. Everything I plan will come to pass, for I do whatever I wish. (Psalm 103:19; Colossians 1:15-17; Job 42:2)

### **You created me with a purpose and a plan**

**Ephesians 2:10** - For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things He planned for us long ago. (Genesis 1:26-28; Psalm 139:13-16; Jeremiah 29:11)

### **You orchestrate my life to accomplish Your will**

**Romans 8:27-28** And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will. <sup>28</sup> And we know that God causes everything to work together for the good of those who love God and are called according to His purpose for them. (Genesis 50:19-21; Philippians 2:13)

### **You promise me an amazing forever future**

**Revelation 21:1-4** Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the old heaven and the old earth had disappeared. And the sea was also gone. <sup>2</sup> And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven like a bride beautifully dressed for her husband. <sup>3</sup> I heard a loud shout from the throne, saying, "Look, God's home is now among His people! He will live with them, and they will be His people. God Himself will be with them. <sup>4</sup> He will wipe every tear from their eyes, and there will be no more death or sorrow or crying or pain. All these things are gone forever." (Jeremiah 29:11; Romans 5:1-2; 1 Peter 1:3-5)

### **You surround me with unfailing love**

**Lamentations 3:22-23** The faithful love of the LORD never ends! His mercies never cease. <sup>23</sup> Great is His faithfulness; His mercies begin afresh each morning. <sup>24</sup> I say to myself, "The LORD is my inheritance; therefore, I will hope in Him!" (Psalm 136:26; Romans 8:35-39)

### **I will trust and rest in You**

**Isaiah 26:3-4** You will keep in perfect peace all who trust in You, all whose thoughts are fixed on You! Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock. (Prov. 3:5-6; Ps. 20:7-8; 28:7; Phil. 4:6-7)

### **Praise Your Holy Name**

Amen

(NS-6,7)