

WEEK 1 – Christmas is a Time for SURRENDER

WEEK 2 – Christmas is a Time for LOVE

WEEK 3 – Christmas is a Time for MIRACLES

WEEK 4 – Christmas is a Time for JOY!

Remember the great announcement to the shepherds by the lone angel, "... I bring you tidings of **GREAT JOY** which shall be to all people..."

In the truest sense, Christmas should be a season filled with JOY! Unfortunately, for many people, these days are anything but joy-filled. Why is that?

First of all, many people do not understand what joy is and are looking for joy in all the wrong places.

Joy is a fruit – the produce – of the Holy Spirit in our lives. People look in other directions and to other things to give them joy. One closet organizer encourages people to ask if a particular piece of clothing 'gives them joy.' If not, it should be discarded. Can a piece of clothing - no matter how expensive it might be – give a person real joy? Not likely!

Joy is the elated emotional state that is not actually based on anything but spiritual reality. The 'joy' one experiences when you purchase your first 'brand-new' car is short lived, isn't it? A few years and several thousand kilometers from now, that 'joy' will have dissipated.

So what is the source of true JOY? Isn't it in the knowledge that we can have a right relationship with God the father; that our sins can be forgiven because of Jesus' sacrifice and that we can know that we will spend a blessed eternity with God? If that won't give you joy, nothing will!

Here are a few other verses – spiritual wisdom – about JOY...

TWENTY-FOUR REASONS OR OCCASIONS
FOR JOY...

REFERENCES

Answered prayer

John 16:24

Seeking God

Psalm 106:3; 1Chron. 16:10

Receiving the Word

Luke 8:13; John 15:11

When a sinner repents

Luke 15:7

The Kingdom of God

Romans 14:17

In Tribulation/Persecution

Luke 6:23; 1 Thess. 1:6; Heb. 12:2; Jas. 1:2

Eternal Reward

Matt. 25:21;

Finding the Saviour	Matt. 2:10; Luke 1:44; Luke 24:52
Being filled with Holy Spirit	Acts 13:52
The Presence of God	Psalm 16:11; 1 Chron. 16:27
Our Refuge in God	Nehemiah 8:10
Victory in battle	Psalm 20:5
Creation/the Work of God	Psalm 92:4
Redemption	Isaiah 35:10; 51:11
In God Himself	Isaiah 61:10
To God	Psalm 95:1
Miracles	Luke 19:37
Other Believers	1 Thess. 2:20; 2 Tim. 1:4
Loving righteousness/hating evil	Heb. 1:9
God's people cause Him to rejoice	Zephaniah 3:17
When the people obey their church leaders	Hebrews 13:17
The Privilege of Prayer	Philippians 1:25
That our children walk in the truth	3 John 1:4
That we can stand in God's eternal presence	Jude 1:24

Did you notice that not one of these reasons had anything to do with materialism, social status, feasts or holidays? The circumstances that make us happy will come and go. But joy, true JOY is not based on mere circumstance; it is all about having a relationship with God. No wonder we sing, "Joy to the World; the Lord is come; let Earth receive her King!" Do you want to experience joy, not just happy amusement at this season? Focus on the Father; get alone with Him; worship Him; enjoy Him. Let His Holy Spirit fill you anew. Let His strength and power in you be your joy, and let your joy be found in His strength. He is mighty to save, after all.

At this Christmas season, we, of all people have reason to celebrate and to BE JOYFUL! Let's take a moment – many moments to focus on Emmanuel, God with us, and rejoice!