



Advent

Many gifts, one package

What Is Joy?

- ★ “Feeling of great pleasure or happiness”
- ★ For us “responding to circumstances with inner satisfaction or contentment”
- ★ We find joy in Jesus not a feeling
- ★ We find joy in eternity with our Savior



Punchline

Joy isn't a fleeting feeling
It's an attitude we attach to



And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified

Luke 2: 8-9 NIV



But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”

Luke 2: 10-12 NIV

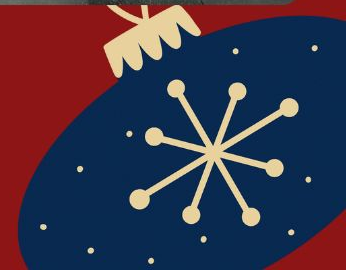


Joy Is Needed

- ★ Angel came to the shepherds first
 - I love that the shepherds heard early on
- ★ “Anointed One” - He’s coming for special service
- ★ This will **CAUSE** great joy



Cause Of Joy.



We Need Joy

- ★ We need joy today
- ★ Look up, not down and around
- ★ Take joy that our life isn't defined by right now
- ★ We're defined by eternity in heaven with Him who is perfect when our lives aren't



Those the LORD has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing; everlasting joy will crown their heads. Gladness and joy will overtake them, and sorrow and sighing will flee away.

Isaiah 51: 11 NIV



Joy Is Powerful

- ★ **Crowned with everlasting joy**
- ★ **Crowns represent power**
- ★ **Joy will overtake the people**
- ★ **Joy makes sorrow and sighing flee**



Powerful

CHOCOLATE



PEPPER X



Joy Is Powerful

- ★ Power doesn't often get associated with joy
- ★ Joy starts inside of your heart
- ★ Let your heart pump joy
- ★ Joy is based on our eternal experience



We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend ourselves in every way: in great endurance; in troubles, hardships and distresses; in beatings, imprisonments and riots; in hard work, sleepless nights and hunger;

2 Corinthians 6: 3-5 NIV



In purity, understanding, patience and kindness; in the Holy Spirit and in sincere love; in truthful speech and in the power of God; with weapons of righteousness in the right hand and in the left; through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report; genuine, yet regarded as impostors;

2 Corinthians 6: 6-8 NIV



**Known, yet regarded as unknown; dying, and yet we live on;
beaten, and yet not killed; sorrowful, yet always rejoicing;
poor, yet making many rich; having nothing, and yet
possessing everything.**

2 Corinthians 6: 9-10 NIV



Joy Is A Choice

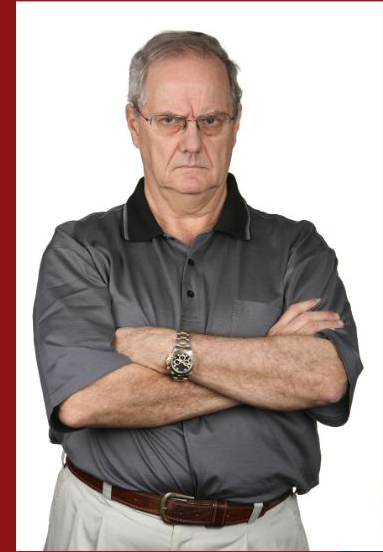
- ★ Paul is always choosing to rejoice
- ★ Some people thought badly of Paul
 - He was a “false teacher”
- ★ Paul chose joy in the good times
 - Not taking credit or taking joy in himself



Choose An Attitude



**CHRISTMAS
TUNES**



CHOCOLATE

Choose Joy

- ★ Attitudes are chosen
- ★ When nothing is going right
 - Choose an attitude that looks forward to Jesus
- ★ When everything is great
 - Not getting a big head about how great things are but a big heart full of joy



“As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

John 15: 9-11 NIV



Make Joy Complete

- ★ Remaining in the love of Jesus is what makes joy complete
- ★ Jesus did this and we should do this



Experience



Experience Joy

- ★ Joy is a value at Hometown
- ★ Remaining in the love of Jesus is how we experience joy
- ★ “Keep Christ in your Christmas”
- ★ Chose Jesus before, work, wrapping, presents or hitting the gym



Wrap Up

- ★ Joy is a gift because it's eternal
- ★ We need it
- ★ It's powerful
- ★ Choose it
- ★ Choose joy and have it be the attitude you attach to



Audio file

[Joy Audio.mp3](#)

Transcript

If I had to describe Christmas in one word, I kind of piggybacked on one. I heard Becky saying. Festive always think of like the decorations and everything coming together and the colors. And even if it's snow, it all feels festive, right? But we can all take different words to define Christmas, and we all may use different words to define different things. Like I'm a big fan of different word choices, right, like I think. It's cool. We're going to use. Somebody will use a word this way somebody use another word that way and it can mean different things. I did find something out. This year, is anybody aware of what the 2023 Oxford word of the Year is other than Ryan? Because I texted him about this. Anybody know the 2023 word, the year by Oxford? Becky got it. Anybody else? Riz the word, riz RIZZ, anybody familiar with the definition? Of riz out, yeah, we have a few. What's that? Charisma. Yeah, right. Charisma. I was. This is. I feel old when I'm like, I don't know what this is. I text Ryan, like, oh, yeah, I use it with my high school girls all the time. Like talking to him like cool used in a sentence. You have to define my high school daughters. Yeah. I mean, don't you though? With their friends, I mean, you know, talk about Riz. So it's like style or charm. Let's see that person is about them like I was looking it up and say, like, what does this mean? I don't know. But Riz, Riz is the word, so. Yeah, cause charisma is too long of a word to use, right, Mark. So. So anyway, words right words. And every year they put out a word of the year, like Oxford. All these different dictionaries will put out a word of the year. Well, we're talking about singular words when we do our Advent themes cause Advent. The themes are one word each week and we've done. Hope and peace and this. Week we will talk about. Joy. So we are in our third week many gifts, one package as the title of the series because I see all of these words really as gifts that we are given in the package of Jesus. So we'll talk about joy this week. We have love next week and we'll finish up with just talking about Jesus on Christmas Eve. So we've been lighting a candle each week for Advent. We have our two from the previous week's lit. Let's do the big reveal here to light, and there it is, our joy candle and we are going to talk about joy. So let's start off by kind of defining joy, talking about what does this word maybe mean, because I would guess many of you probably have different. Views of the word joy or what it really means. When I just looked it up, they say a feeling of great pleasure and happiness when happiness gets mentioned, it kind of implies more of an emotion. Things that make us feel good things externally that we feel good or happy about. But it's an emotion. If we talk about happiness is an emotion that can change. Given our circumstances and it's not a bad. Being happy is great. I hope that all of you are happy. I think Jesus is totally great. If we're happy, maybe not his goal for us, but he's fine if we're happy. But Joy is different than happiness because joy isn't determined by outside. Circumstances are outside factors because joy is something inside of us. Joy for us is responding. To those outside circumstances with inner satisfaction or contentment. How we respond to things is a choice. This is something Stacy I've been working on a lot with her son, Jeremiah. How you respond to things when you get frustrated when you get upset, even when you win a game, how you respond, right. It's an attitude that we should strive to make part of our DNA an attitude of joy. Make it part of us who we are and our joy as Christians is found. In Jesus, and that's kind of where our definition as Christians might differ from other peoples, because we find our joy in Jesus, not in a feeling, not in

emotion, not a circumstance. We find our joy and our savior and our eternity. With him. So I want to look at a few different things this week about joy in Jesus. I want to see that joy is needed that joy is powerful. That joy is a choice and finally how we make that joy complete. And we really experience that joy. So what I want you to think about today, if there's one kind of thing we remember about joy, it's that joy isn't a fleeting feeling. It's an attitude that we attach to. It's not a fleeting feeling. It's not something we feel. It's not an emotion, but it's an attitude that we really grab onto and we attach to. This joy in Jesus. So let's look at how joy is needed. We're going to. Look at Luke 2 verses 8 through 12 to start off with. This will be up here behind me. This is part of kind of the traditional Christmas story as told in Luke's Gospel. So here's Luke 28 through 12. And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An Angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the Lord of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the Angel said to them, do not be afraid. I bring you good news. I will cause great joy for all the people today in the town of David. A savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah. The Lord. This will be assigned to you. You will find a baby wrapped in clothes lying in a Manger will stop there. So if angels that appear to. The shepherds, now shepherds in this time, were very low class. They were looked down upon. They were deemed unreliable. Right. They weren't the cream of the crop here but. The Angel came to the shepherds first and bring some big old news, he says. A savior is born to you. Now, it's not only born to the shepherds, it's born for other people, but it includes them. These. Low class people. This is for them now. There's some people that probably need some joy in their lives. It could have been these shepherds at this time. And as we know, as we progress through Jesus Ministry, he was going to elevate those that were lower in class he. Was going to kind of flip things on his head. He elevates those that were deemed low. So I love that the shepherds were one of the first people to hear this say joy, as saviors coming. To you. And say this is the Messiah, the one people have been waiting for, the anointed one. Which means coming for special service. There is something special about this Messiah that's coming and the Messiah will. Cause great joy. Literally will cause it Jesus's birth. Causes joy. Think about something that maybe it's just man. You do it or you experience. It and there is just joy, right? You feel good on the inside. Remember inner contentment. I am I talk a lot about. Fitness and stuff here. When I'm up here because lifting weights and exercise is a big part of my life, right? So I was down in the gym, my home gym which I referred to as my jungle and my sanctuary on. Monday, well joella. Was homesick on Monday, so Stacy was home too. So Stacy came down with me. We're going to work out. We have marketability, different feelings about working out and exercise. So I'm there. Like I'm getting done with the set and the music playing. I'm like dancing in between sets. I'm all excited. Like I'm feeling really good about it and she's just glaring at me. What are you doing? Why are you the way you are? And I'm like, I don't know. But I get this great sense of inner satisfy. Lifting the weights it feels good. I like it. I enjoy it. It literally causes me to be joyful. It may not be for everybody. I understand that that's fine, but that's what it does for me. Jesus's birth caused joy and it was needed. We need joy today. We need to find it in Jesus. I need to find it in Jesus, not just lifting weights. That's. Point we think we just need to be happy, right? They talk about this. Are you happy? Are you going to be happy? And being happy is all well and good. Happiness is great. But happiness can change. Joy doesn't have to change. Because joy is responding with inner contentment and satisfaction again, I think it's almost like the step after peace. If you're with us last week we talked about peace and when we talked about inner peace, we said it's kind of the calm inside you in the midst of. Crazy. So you're calm with that peace. Joy is now we're content. We're going to be satisfied in the midst of whatever is going on around us. And that sounds good, right? Like being content, being satisfied and the inside sounds really good. But how do we do that when everything

around us is kind of nuts? And I think the phrase I use is. Look up, not down and around. Cause down and around is focused and everything is happening right now, right around us, right? It's there's a line from the old movie Weens World that says live in the now. Right. Leave it right now, which is everything's going on and we're here, right stuff affects us right now, but right now is not our end all be all. Take joy that our life isn't defined by right now.

OK.

Right, I would bet. That none of you would say your life is absolutely perfect right now. Maybe I can't say it 100%, but most of us would say it's not totally perfect. It might be great. Maybe there's some things that we want to be. Because if we look at the down and around like, well, that part's not quite. Perfect. That's not where I want it. But when we look up, we can remember that we're defined by our savior. We're defined by Jesus, defined by eternity in heaven with Jesus, who is perfect when our lives aren't. Right now we're not ignoring. As always, we don't ignore what's going on around us. We don't ignore anger or sadness, or the feelings or what's going on. We do have to deal with it. But Joy is remembering that that's not the end, that there is still more to come. We need that joy, and we need that joy. And what's to come with Jesus? So we need joy. I think joy is powerful. Isaiah 51, verse 11 says those the Lord has rescued will return. They will enter Zion with singing everlasting Joy will crown their heads. Gladness and Joy will overtake them and sorrow and sighing will flee away. Right. So it's those that the Lord rescued will return. This is talking about the Israelites that were rescued in Exodus. We just did our series on Exodus. We ended that about a month ago. Right. They were enslaved. The Israelites were held captive, and they were freed by God. They were rescued. So they're going to come out of rescue, they're going to sing and praise, they're going to be filled with joy inside. They're great because they've been saved and it says they'll be crowned with everlasting joy. Think about a crown for a second. Crown usually denotes royalty, right, kings, Queens, Princesses, Princess, but also the crowns represent power, right? You have a crown that means something. There's strong. There's power in that. And this crown is everlasting. It says no royalty can get overthrown. You can lose the crown we see throughout history. But this everlasting crown of joy cannot be overthrown. So it's. Everlasting crown of. It also says. Joy will overtake the people. Think about something overtaking you right when we hit the complete dog days of winter in January and it's so cold you step outside in one of our like -45° days and that cold just completely overtakes you. Every part of your being, your mind, your body. Everything feels it right. Takes you over. Don't you feel what you experience? Joy does that. Joy overtakes is that powerful. It can overtake everything, and that's what you feel and you experience in every core of. Joy also makes sorrow and sighing. Flee. That's what it says. Those things sorrow, sign sadness. They want none of what joy has because joy is stronger. Joy is more powerful than that. Joy has power. I was thinking about power this weekend. How to describe it at I'm a big foodie and a cook, so I went to powerful foods and was actually thinking about spicy Peppers. Fascinatingly enough, I was having a text conversation with Griffey, my nephew, about spicy Peppers. It was via Lindsay. Lindsay was like the intermediary on this. But at Thanksgiving, Griffey had brought a soup that included jalapenos. Well, he didn't need the rest of the jalapenos. We gifted them to me, and I used them this week. So I text you, Griffin, to let him know. And then he was coming back about spicy Peppers. Well, I learned. This week, about the spiciest pepper on record is called Pepper X now. That they measure the heat of Peppers on what's called the Scoville unit, the Scoville scale. So here's some reference points. A jalapeno. Many of you have had a jalapeno. The average rate of this IT average is about 3000 to 8000 on the. Scale pepper X. According to you, the Guinness Book of World Records, which has verified it, measures a 2.6 million on the Scoville scale.

That's pretty hot. It was created by this guy named Ed Curry, who works, I think he founded the the Puckerbutt Pepper company is what it's. Called and he tasted this thing. He ate it. And he said he felt the heat in his body for 3 1/2 hours, horrible cramps. And he said I was laid out flat on a marble wall for an hour in the range is groaning in pain. That's how powerful this pepper was. Why I don't know, cause he could. I don't. I had no idea. I it makes no sense to just eat it. I think if I put that in. My mouth, Jesus. Would just call me home like. Nope, it's such a powerful pepper that the creator, this big wig and Peppers was laid out for in pain for that long. Joy is our pepper X. OK, that. And I kind of like the idea of joy being powerful cause one I hadn't thought about before. I don't think power is a word that often gets associated with joy, but I like it because the imagery from that passage of joy overtaking us, sorrow, running away, fleeing right, sorrow is scared of joy because joy is more powerful than it. That's power. Thinking about making something flee. So put on that power every day. Put on joy every day. And here's the thing. When. We put on joy. It doesn't look all bright eyed, bushy tailed and glowing because it's not just on the outside of us, because joy starts inside your heart. Think about our hearts, right. It pumps blood through the body. It works super hard to do that. Your heart also pumps. That's spiritual blood, your attitude, your thoughts, your reactions. It all comes from your heart. So let it pump. Joy let the power of joy get all through you and there will be other things in life that will. Try to be that powerful. Anger, arrogance, sorrow. They will try. Anger wants to dominate, to control and to blame things. Arrogance wants to puff you up, so you're better. Maybe you're going to excel at the cost of others. Sorrow wants to tell you you'll always be hurt. Things won't get any better. It just things just kind of suck. But those attitudes are based on our experiences right here and now. Joy is based on our eternal experience. It looks up pushing past the anger past the arrogance, past the sorrow and knocking them down. Because it's stronger than all of them to get to Jesus. Joy is powerful. Joy is also a choice. We choose to have Joy, 2nd Corinthians 6 versus 3 through 10. It says. We put no stumbling block in anyone's path so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God, we commend ourselves in every way in great endurance and troubles, hardships and distresses. And beatings, imprisonments and riots and hard work, sleepless. And hunger and purity, understanding, patience and kindness in the Holy Spirit and sincere love in truthful speech and in the power of God with weapons of righteousness in the right-handed in the left, through glory and dishonor, bad report and good report, genuine yet regarded as impostors, known yet regarded as unknown dying. And yet we live on. Beaten and yet not killed. Sorrowful yet, always rejoicing. Poor yet making many rich, having nothing and yet possessing everything. So this is Paul writing a letter as his second letter to the Corinthian church here. And Paul had. A lot of stuff that's happened to him in his life, but he's saying he's always choosing to rejoice, to express the joy that he has and this happens no matter the circumstances. Paul has been in prison, Paul's dealt with riots and Ephesus, he's been through a lot of stuff. And then in verse eight through 10, they kind of put these different, opposite things. Right. And he's saying he chooses joy in all of them. Starts out there are people that thought badly of Paul that thought he was dishonorable. There are people outside of the Corinthian church, even critics within the church that he's helping. That's their human point of view. They have this skewed view of Paul. And it's negative. Right. So he. But he's got to rejoice and find joy even through that. But there also people thought he was good, that he was from. God, that his message. Was pure. He's got to find joy. Even in the midst. Of that good or bad circumstances, he chooses joy. Some people believe Paul was a false teacher or an impostor. He didn't carry with him a recommendation from anybody talking and verifying who he was. Some felt that took away Paul's validity. This is hard stuff to deal with, right? He's trying his best to work with the church, shared Jesus with gentiles and people are calling him an impostor or even an agitator, or giving him bad

reports. And he still chose joy. Joy that he had in choosing to follow Christ in choosing to be. Who God made him to be, he. Did this in the good circumstances as well, not taking credit for any of the good stuff, not taking joy in himself. For being awesome and Paul was awesome. But choosing joy in Jesus and choosing to have that joy, joy is a choice. It's an attitude that's chosen. So we choose attitudes and people have attitudes about everything, right? I remember working a coffee shop did that for a number of years before my kids were born. And we started to play Christmas music right after Thanksgiving. People have views on Christmas music. Let me tell you about whether they love it or they hate it. So we would start playing it right away. And I remember I'm standing at the counter. And I worked. There for a while and it starts off and there's a woman that comes in the door, hears the Christmas music and no joke, starts dancing her way up to the counter to Santa baby because she loved it. That's how she expressed. That attitude, she's dancing. She was great. But then you can go to the next slide, Becky, there's gonna be a picture here. Well, right. So we kind of got, like, the dancers going on. Well, then we had a fella come in. Walks in regular walks in kind of, you know, kicks the snow off his shoes. Looks up. You can tell he hears the music and just. He's like this guy's not happy about it. Did not walk up to the counter and says really Jeff, we're doing this. It's like ohh don't be a Grinch to my Christmas music. Come on. He wasn't happy about it. He had an attitude about it. Now both of them had attitudes that were chosen. Now they had feelings inside of them about how they felt about it, but they expressed them differently, right? One danced up to the counter, the other one looked pretty angry about it. Choosing joy is kind of like metaphorically dancing to the counter, right. It's having that attitude because attitudes. Are chosen. Regardless of the situation we choose, our attitude now. Usually it's a negative to say somebody has an attitude, right? You see somebody? Ohh. They got an attitude. They're a little snippy. They're sharp, right? We see that attitude, but we can't. We can't always change what's going on around us. But we can change the attitude inside of us. So I want to look at kind of attitudes in two very different scenarios. First off, when nothing is going right, right at work, you're like I'm done. I don't wanna deal with any of this anymore. Every e-mail is getting a response. If that sounds like a 2024 problem, I'm done. No. Or at Christmas, there's too many events, too much family time. I don't have enough gifts. I can't get everything decorated. It's too stressful. Your health and Wellness. I can't stick to a plan. I don't feel good. Hurt. I'm sick. No. In your house. It's like. Ohh, cool. Didn't have much money anyway. Now my dishwasher when I gotta buy a new one everything around. Feels like it's not going well, and the attitude easily goes negative and it makes total sense. Because difficult circumstances lead to a negative attitude naturally. But have the courage and the strength to choose the joy in the midst of that choosing. Joy isn't ignoring the hurt, the struggle, or the grief that you're going through. But it's to know that this isn't it. It's choosing an attitude that looks forward to Jesus, and it's hard. It takes effort and intentionality. What's really hard is it's rarely our default. It's trying to make it that default when everything is hard. What about when everything is rainbows, butterflies and white chocolate chips? When it's all great, you're crushing your work goals. Works great. You're all warm and fuzzy about Christmas. It's like you have the hot chocolates going, people are singing carols. This. Is great you. Feel good inside your your health and Wellness. Everything is good. Your house looks great. You got all the decorations. But everything is awesome. Still choose joy in Jesus and I'm not trying. To be a. Buzzkill about it. You can be happy about all this stuff and excite. But the attitude of joy. Thanks Jesus for what he's done for you. The attitude looks forward to when that stuff is gone, but you still have Jesus. It's not getting a big head about how great things are, but choosing to have a big heart full of joy. To have a heart full of joy, make the choice to have. And then finally making joy complete and experiencing our joy. John 15, verses 9 through 11 says as the father has loved me. So have I loved you. Now remain in my

love. If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love just as I have kept my father's commands and remain in his love. I've told you this so that my joy may be in you. And that your joy may be complete. So Jesus says remaining in the love of Jesus is what makes joy complete. So Jesus is saying I remain in my father, in his love. My joy is complete in the father. He kept his father's commands. He obeyed. So Jesus is teaching the disciples, teaching us to do the same thing. Right to remain in the love of Jesus, to make our joy complete. Jesus did this. We should do it too. And that's how we really experience joy. Right. We all think about different experiences. We want to experience things. I looked it up by my brother and sister-in-law and their girls love going to Disney and they all have great experiences at Disney. And I looked it up. Disney actually has a my Disney experience app. There's an app for everything, right? They want you to have a great experience. So they created an app to help you. To book the theme parks, the Sea Adventures, the festivals, the golf outings, so much to do at Disney, and they want you to have this great Disney experience. You know, we may not have, like an experienced joy app other than our Bible app, but we do still want to experience joy to its fullest. And Joy is actually one of our five values at hometown and we use the verse John 15:11 to go with them, making our joy complete because we want to have it. That inner contentment, no matter the circumstances, that power of joy, what we do is remaining in the love of Jesus, how we get to. That's how we experience joy, right? Remaining in Jesus love, remaining with him and it sounds great. So it's experience, let's have it. Let's take it and it comes in. Jesus goes back to kind of our title of the series, the one package Joy is in Jesus will remain in him. There's a song lyric, I think I quoted it last year. The rapper KB that says people don't care if there's Christ in your Christmas. They can't see that there's Christ in the Christian, and I like that part about keeping Christ in the Christian. Right. Keep Christ in you all the time. Not just in Christmas, right? If you keep Christ in us all the time, he'll be in our Christmas. He'll be in every part of us. So just remain in Jesus every day. And if you want joy and Jesus, a source of joy, then we gotta be with Jesus. Hang out with Jesus, choose Jesus before going to work before wrapping the presents before hitting the gym. Choose to be with Jesus to experience him, to remain in him, and experience the joy that only he can bring. Experience joy and this joy that we want to experience. That's powerful. That's needed is a gift and it's a gift because it's eternal. It can't be taken away. Right. It can't come from anywhere else like our other themes that we're talking about. Jesus gave us this, but he didn't give it to us to, like, put on the mantle or to put in a case and just stare at. He wants us to use it to take it. Because we need it, we need his joy with everything going on around us. And that joy is powerful, and we need the power of that joy. It's not just a nice idea, but it's powerful and makes sorrow and sighing and all this other stuff flee and run away. So use the power of that joy. And choose it. Choose the attitude of joy, no matter what the circumstances that you're in. Right. Whether it's great or rough or the circumstances are somewhere in between, choose that attitude of joy. Choose joy and have it be the attitude that you attach to. Let's pray. Got to thank you that we have joy in you that we have something. That we can keep inside of us, that we can have inner contentment got inner satisfaction in the midst of everything going on. You gotta really thank you that that joy is eternal. That is something we don't run out of. It's something we don't lose and something we can look forward to. So I pray God that as we continue on this Christmas season, things get busier with everything going on. I pray that we would remain and you remain in your love. Remain in your joy and have that attitude of joy that we would focus on that every day, that we won't lose sight of that. That we wouldn't. We wouldn't get too stressed or even too overly excited that we would forget. About the joy that you bring. So I pray that we would put that on our hearts every day that we would spend our

time with you every day that we would choose that. Attitude of joy. Every day. We thank you for being here with us again. This morning your name. Amen.