

Birth and Death of Jesus = Joy

12/14/25

I want you take a moment and think about what you turn to that gives you joy when you're having a bad day? Could it be an iced coffee or a hot cup of coffee. Could it be a song or songs that you have picked out over the years that you like to listen to when you're down. I like to listen to John Denver and Frank Sinatra when I feel blue. Maybe it's a comic book or some TV show or movie that brings you a moment of joy. We all have items or things that we turn to that gives us a few moments of joy. This is the third Sunday of Advent and the third Advent candle is lit which is the special pink candle. This candle represents joy and this joy comes from the story of the Shepherds that were outside of Bethlehem taking care of sheep when Jesus was born. We like reading this story because it has a good ending to it. Let's read some of this story about joy that's found in Luke 2: 8-14 where we read this, ⁸And in the same region there were shepherds out in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with great fear. ¹⁰And the angel said to them, "Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. ¹¹For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. ¹²And this will be a sign for you: you will find a baby wrapped in swaddling cloths and lying in a manger." ¹³And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying,

¹⁴ "Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace among those with whom he is pleased!" (ESV –
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This is a great story. We read that an angel tells the shepherds at the very beginning that the angel has a message that will bring joy to them. The message of joy is that a baby is born that is the Savior, Christ the Lord. We look at this word "joy" and think it is joy only that a baby is born. Look at the celebrations people have when a wife is pregnant. So, we may think this joy is only joy for a baby

being born. I believe this sentence from the angel was also prophecy about a new kind of joy that all people would be able to enjoy if they chose to. Now, let's take a look at another story that happens over 30 years later in John 20: 1-18. This story talks about the resurrection of Jesus after His death on the cross and John states this, "20 Now on the first day of the week Mary Magdalene came to the tomb early, while it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been taken away from the tomb. 2 So she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one whom Jesus loved, and said to them, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we do not know where they have laid him." 3 So Peter went out with the other disciple, and they were going toward the tomb. 4 Both of them were running together, but the other disciple outran Peter and reached the tomb first. 5 And stooping to look in, he saw the linen cloths lying there, but he did not go in. 6 Then Simon Peter came, following him, and went into the tomb. He saw the linen cloths lying there, 7 and the face cloth, which had been on Jesus^[a] head, not lying with the linen cloths but folded up in a place by itself. 8 Then the other disciple, who had reached the tomb first, also went in, and he saw and believed; 9 for as yet they did not understand the Scripture, that he must rise from the dead. 10 Then the disciples went back to their homes. 11 But Mary stood weeping outside the tomb, and as she wept she stooped to look into the tomb. 12 And she saw two angels in white, sitting where the body of Jesus had lain, one at the head and one at the feet. 13 They said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping?" She said to them, "They have taken away my Lord, and I do not know where they have laid him." 14 Having said this, she turned around and saw Jesus standing, but she did not know that it was Jesus. 15 Jesus said to her, "Woman, why are you weeping? Whom are you seeking?" Supposing him to be the gardener, she said to him, "Sir, if you have carried him away, tell me where you have laid him, and I will take him away." 16 Jesus said to her, "Mary." She turned and said to him in Aramaic,^[b] "Rabboni!" (which means Teacher). 17 Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.'" 18 Mary Magdalene went and announced to the disciples, "I

have seen the Lord”—and that he had said these things to her. (ESV – www.biblegateway.com)

Here, we have friends of Jesus coming to His tomb crying and weeping. This would be like the scene from Lazarus when Jesus came to raise him from the dead. People were weeping all over the place. So, Lazarus’ sister looks into the tomb and two angels are there and ask her why she was weeping. A good question from these angels who had no reason to weep because they’re from Heaven. Jesus enters the scene and He asks her the same question – why is she weeping? You may be asking at this point what in the world does this story have to do with baby Jesus and joy?

Before Jesus goes to the cross, He gives a teaching lesson to His disciples in John 16: 16-24 where Jesus states this, “¹⁶ ‘A little while, and you will see me no longer; and again a little while, and you will see me.’” ¹⁷ So some of his disciples said to one another, “What is this that he says to us, ‘A little while, and you will not see me, and again a little while, and you will see me’; and, ‘because I am going to the Father’?” ¹⁸ So they were saying, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We do not know what he is talking about.” ¹⁹ Jesus knew that they wanted to ask him, so he said to them, “Is this what you are asking yourselves, what I meant by saying, ‘A little while and you will not see me, and again a little while and you will see me’?” ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. ²¹ When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. ²² So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. ²³ In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. ²⁴ Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full. (ESV – www.biblegateway.com)

Jesus is telling them that they will be sad when He is crucified and put in a grave. The people during this time were taught to grieve. Rich people would pay

people to come to funerals to cry out loud. Relatives and friends would come to make sure there was enough people to grieve at the funeral. The Jews took grieving for the dead very seriously. So, when Jesus tells them that they will weep and be sorrowful in verse 20, they would understand that. However, Jesus then tells them in the same verse that at the same time, the world will rejoice. Then their sorrow and grief will turn to joy. During this time period, there would be 7 days of intense mourning and mourning could last to 30 days over someone who had died. How could the world have joy at the same time when grieving? The Greek term John liked to use in his Gospel for world is "kosmos". John used this Greek term several times when Jesus talked and the term can have two meanings. It can mean world, but it can also mean universe. In other words, the angel with the shepherds was talking about more than the earth itself because it's the same Greek term. Those in Heaven were not weeping. The people that loved Jesus on this earth mourned for Jesus. The angels of Heaven were not weeping. When Mary took a peek into Jesus' tomb and saw the two angels, they asked her why she was weeping. The angels were not weeping. In Revelation chapter 5, we read John is weeping because no one can open the scroll that he sees in Heaven and an angel tells him to stop weeping. The angel tells him that the Lamb that was slain is worthy of opening the scroll. Then the angels praise the Lamb, they don't weep. You see, weeping and grieving is part of our human nature and we all will grieve at some point. When Jesus was crucified, His friends and family grieved, but the angels in Heaven praise Jesus. They didn't weep for Jesus. They understood the mission of Jesus for us and they were filled with joy. They knew the victory that Jesus has over satan. So, if we go back to the angel with the shepherds, I believe the joy the angel was talking about was joy for Jesus being born, and for the joy that we can have now because of Jesus dying on the cross. You see, because of that little baby being born to die on a cross, we can enjoy some of the angel joy now. Peter tells us this in 1 Peter 1: 8-9, "⁸ Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, ⁹ obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. (ESV – www.biblegateway.com)

True followers of Jesus Christ can enjoy inexpressible joy now. We can enjoy the same type of joy the angel was talking about and what they enjoy. Peter tells us that because of our faith and the salvation of our souls through Jesus Christ, we can enjoy Godly peace now. Yes, we can mourn over the loss of a loved one and we will, but we can have joy that can help us to deal with that loss. Not only that, but God's joy can help us to deal with any suffering and pain that we have to go through. In 1 Thessalonians 1: 6, Paul states this, "So you received the message with joy from the Holy Spirit in spite of the severe suffering it brought you. (NLT)" Paul is talking to Christians who are suffering for Jesus here. The Lord of our salvation can give us joy whenever needed if we have repented from our sin and have allowed Jesus into our heart so that the Holy Spirit can make permanent residence within our heart and mind. This joy that comes from the Holy Spirit within us is the same joy that angels get to enjoy. I like what Rev. Charles Spurgeon stated in a sermon on December 21, 1871, where he talked about what the angel said to the shepherds in the field, "Since this joy is expressly associated with the glory of God, by the words, 'Glory to God in the highest,' we may be quite clear that it is a pure and holy joy. (Spurgeon, 21)" Paul tells us this in Galatians 5: 22, "But when the Holy Spirit controls our lives, he will produce this kind of fruit in us: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. (NLT)" If we ask and allow the Holy Spirit through Jesus to control us and fill us, we get to enjoy true, pure, and holy joy that can only come from God now. This is why after the angel was done speaking to the shepherds, the armies of heaven joined together to sing praise to God and Jesus because they knew what we could enjoy through what that little baby was going to do – die on the cross so we could enjoy the joy of God. This is why the two angels were not weeping in the empty tomb. They had joy. We need this joy to be able to handle this sinful and dying world. We need this joy when we suffer for being a true follower of Jesus. We need this joy when just dealing with the hardships of life. We have the joy within us, we just need to ask Jesus to release His joy within us through the Holy Spirit. This joy will help us to love Him more and to love the people around us more. We need to pray for it. I finish with this Scripture from our Lord when He talked to His disciples about His death: "I have told you this so

that you will be filled **with my joy**. Yes, your joy will overflow! I command you to love each other in the same way that I love you. (NLT)”

NLT Life Application Study Bible. Tyndale Publishers: Wheaton, 1996

Spurgeon, Rev. Charles. *Spurgeon’s Expository Encyclopedia*. Baker Book House: Grand Rapids, 1984

The Strongest Strong’s Concordance. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 2001