

Waiting with Joy

During Advent, joy may seem hard to find when life's demands get overwhelming or when we're experiencing grief and sadness. The expectation of cheer in the Christmas season may lead us to feel this difficulty more acutely. Yet for faithful believers, joy is always possible. Join Groundwork in studying Isaiah 35 and John 16:16-33 to discuss how we live with joy in all of life's seasons and to discover the ultimate joy for which we long.

AWARENESS Before listening reflect on what you already know or understand about topics we'll cover in the episode.

- How do you define joy? Is joy different than happiness? Are they related?
- Where have you observed or experienced joy recently?



LISTEN TO THE EPISODE: [Waiting with Joy](#)

READ [John 16:19-24](#), [Isaiah 35](#)

REFLECTION After listening, consider the following questions:

- Do you allow Christ's presence to touch all aspects of your life, or do you compartmentalize your life? How do you think this affects how you experience joy in your work, in your play, in your church, or in your home?
- Read the Christmas story in [Luke 2:1-20](#). What is the significance of the angels sharing the news of Christ's birth with the shepherds? How can this simple story bring joy to various people and situations today?
- In segment 3, host Scott Hoezee explains, by telling the story of Zacchaeus, that joy isn't something we have to find or develop, it's given to us in our salvation. How are you letting the joy in your heart transform your life as you wait for Christ to come again?
- Are there particular scripture verses that bring you joy by reminding you of God's strength, salvation, and provision during times of difficulty or sorrow? Was there a particular experience that solidified the meaning of these verses for you? Think of a way to keep them handy; share the verses and why they're meaningful to you with others who need joy.

RELATED PASSAGES for further study

[1 Thessalonians 1:6](#), [Revelation 12](#), [Isaiah 45:1-7](#), [Psalm 30](#), [Luke 2:8-14](#)

CONCLUSION

Personal situations differ and not everyone welcomes Christmas cheer with the same happiness and excitement. There may be broken families with raw wounds; mourning loved ones; loneliness; and a myriad of other human emotions that make traditional Christmas spirit elusive or make it difficult to participate in conventional festivities of the season with gusto. Be alert and sensitive as you discuss and celebrate the season. Dwell in Christ's presence and allow the depth and significance of real joy to wash over you. Pray that you will be prepared in all circumstances to come alongside someone and share this joy that has transformed your life through all seasons.

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