

“JOY”
December 18, 2011

Theme Verse: 1 Thes. 5:16-18 *Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.*

Intro: Christmas is about good news of great JOY”!

Luke 2:¹⁰ *But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great JOY that will be for all the people.”*¹¹ *Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord.*

“JOY” (Webster) – the emotion of great delight & gladness

A. The Bible teaches “JOY” is found in the person of Jesus!

John 15:11 *“I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. (Jesus)*

*“God is most GLORIFIED when we enjoy him.” John Piper
“When I Don’t Desire God”*

B. “Grinches” – anyone or anything that threatens to steal your JOY; including yourself! What size is your heart?

1. **Grinch #1 - FEAR** Rejoice in the Lord (Phil. 4:4-8)
2. **Grinch #2 - LOSS** Rejoice in God’s Word (Jn 15-16)

C. “Grinch” #3 – SIN (Idolatry – worship gone wrong)

God’s 1st and 2nd commandment declare He alone is to be worshiped. What or who are we worshipping?

D. Message – To “be joyful always” we have to...

REJOICE IN REPENTANCE & Worship the King!

Acts 3:19 *Repent, then, and turn to God, so your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.*

E. TEXT: Matthew 2:1-12

1. **King Herod the Great** – tried to steal 1st Christmas!
Half-Jew who worshiped *idols* of power, wealth,

ambition, sex, violence, revenge; served Rome & abused the Jews with taxes, and retribution.

- a. Slave to fear, greed, revenge, violence, jealousy
 - b. Killed babies under 2 yrs. in Bethlehem
2. **“Magi”** – Persian (Gentile) astrologers and magicians who traveled months to worship a King they had only heard of in prophecy. A “star” was their sign (angel?).
- a. They were filled with JOY in worship.
 - b. Their sacrificial worship COST them.
Gave extravagant gifts that would sustain Mary and Joseph in their exile to Egypt.

F. Are you exhibiting “Herodian” (Grinch) tendencies?

(fear, bitterness, resentment, rage, jealousy, greed, etc.?)

Repent of the sin of idolatry and WORSHIP the King!

Stop and change direction; get on “repentance road.”

Psalm 51:12 – Repentance restores JOY.

G. Dealing with the “Herods” in your life: (Jesus’ way)

1. **Forgive** – cancel the debt (Matt. 18). Jesus on the cross:
“Father, forgive them for they don’t know what they do.”
2. **Repent of sin** – confess any sinful response (Luke 15)
All of heaven rejoices over one sinner who repents!
3. **Pray for God’s “route”** – Magi were given God’s instructions to return home by a different “route”.
 - a. Search God’s Word, pray for wisdom, then obey.

James 1:² *Consider it pure joy, my brothers, whenever you face trials of many kinds...⁵ If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him.*²² *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says...you will be blessed.*

H. Christmas Challenge:

1. **Read book of Philippians**
2. **Memorize 1 Thes. 5:16-18**
3. **Read “When I Don’t Desire God” – John Piper**