



WHAT MATTERS MOST AT CHRISTMAS

UNPRECEDENTED JOY

For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy.

Luke 1:44

What is the Path to Joy?

1. **Hearing (Luke 1:26-37)**
2. **Believing (Luke 1:43 [E], 1:45 [M])**
3. **Obeying (Luke 1:38)**

And Mary said, "Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word." **Luke 1:38a**

Discussion Questions:

1. Read Luke 1:26-37. How would you react if an angel appeared before you with a message from God? What were Mary's four reactions to Gabriel's visit and message? (Look at 1:29a, 1:29b, 1:34, 1:38)
2. Read Luke 1:49. What is something great God has done for you in the last month? Discuss.
3. Read John 14:15-17, 26 and Romans 8:26. The "Path to Joy" begins with hearing God's truth and discerning His will for our lives. Is God speaking into your life through His Word and Spirit? Discuss.
4. Read I Thessalonians 2:13. In this verse, Paul is commending the church for their belief in the message of the gospel they received through the Word of God. This is the second step on the path to joy. Share with each other the day you believed. If you have ever struggled with your belief in God share reasons why? Discuss.
5. Pray with each other about your journey in joy as you hear God's word, believe in his promises, and obey his calling for your lives.

Mary's Visit to Elizabeth (Luke 1:39-45)

³⁹ In those days Mary arose and went with haste into the hill country, to a town in Judah, ⁴⁰ and she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ And when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, the baby leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit, ⁴² and she exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb! ⁴³ And why is this granted to me that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ For behold, when the sound of your greeting came to my ears, the baby in my womb **leaped for joy**. ⁴⁵ And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her from the Lord."

Mary's Song of Praise (Luke 1:46-55)

God's Saving Power in Mary's Journey (46-49)

⁴⁶ And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷ and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸ for He has looked on the humble estate of His servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; ⁴⁹ for He who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is His name.

God's Saving Power and Mercy (50-51)

⁵⁰ And His mercy is for those who fear Him from generation to generation. ⁵¹ He has shown strength with his arm; He has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

God's Intervention in the Rich and the Humble (52-53)

⁵² He has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; ⁵³ He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty.

God's Faithfulness to Israel - the Promise Keeper (54-55)

⁵⁴ He has helped His servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵ as He spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever."