



THE MESSAGE OF CHRISTMAS

INSPIRING JOY

Luke 1:57-80

Joy (CHARA) is a good feeling in the soul, produced by the Holy Spirit, as he causes us to see the beauty of Christ in the word and in the world. - JOHN PIPER

WHEN THE SUNRISE VISITS US . . . (Luke 1:78)

He will bring . . .

1. LIGHT (2 CORINTHIANS 4:6)
2. TRANSFORMATION (2 CORINTHIANS 3:17-18)
3. JOY (LUKE 1:57-80)
 - A. Favor - What He does for us (PSALM 16:11)
 - B. Impact - What He helps us to do for others (PHILIPPIANS 2:1-3)

Discussion Questions (adapted from the Abide Bible)

1. Read Luke 1:68-79. Note the joy in Zechariah's prophecy. Find words and ideas that catch your attention in his prophecy. Do you find inspiring joy in the fulfilled promises of God in your life?
2. Read 2 Corinthians 3:17-18. What does Paul mean by telling the believers in Corinth that they "are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another"?
3. Read Psalm 16:11. How was David able to maintain a heart of joy (see v. 11)? How are you able to experience that same joy?
4. Pray to be filled up with joy during this season as we celebrate the birth of Jesus, and that your overflowing joy encourages and makes an impact on the people around you.

Luke 1:57-80 Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸ And her **neighbors and relatives** heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they **rejoiced** with her. ⁵⁹ And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰ but his mother answered, "No; he shall be called John." ⁶¹ And they said to her, "None of your relatives is called by this name." ⁶² And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. ⁶³ And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, "His name is John." And they all wondered. ⁶⁴ And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵ **And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, ⁶⁶ and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, "What then will this child be?" For the hand of the Lord was with him.**

⁶⁷ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

⁶⁸ "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has visited and redeemed his people ⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us in the house of his servant David, ⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, ⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us; ⁷² to show the mercy promised to our fathers and to remember his holy covenant, ⁷³ the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us ⁷⁴ that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies, might serve him without fear, ⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.

⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, ⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people in the forgiveness of their sins, ⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God, whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high ⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

⁸⁰ And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

2 Corinthians 4:6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 3:17-18 Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom. ¹⁸ And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

Psalms 16:11 You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of **joy**; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.

Philippians 2:1-3 So if there is any encouragement in Christ, any comfort from love, any participation in the Spirit, any affection and sympathy, ² complete my **joy** by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves.