

Advent – In the Waiting...Joy

Mark Windle

Isaiah 61: 1-11

December 13th, 2020

Reflection & Discussion Questions

Joy might be difficult to feel these days

*What has been a 'joy taker' for you recently?

*When have you experienced or expressed fake joy, naïve joy, or contextual/situational joy?

True JOY is not the absence of things that break your heart

It can be found in the very midst of heartbreak.

Read and discuss Isaiah 61:1-4(NIV)

*The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.
He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted,
to proclaim freedom for the captives
and release from darkness for the prisoners,
² to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor
and the day of vengeance of our God,
to comfort all who mourn,
³ and provide for those who grieve in Zion—
to bestow on them a crown of beauty
instead of ashes,*

*the oil of joy
instead of mourning,
and a garment of praise
instead of a spirit of despair.
They will be called oaks of righteousness,
a planting of the Lord
for the display of his splendor.
⁴ They will rebuild the ancient ruins
and restore the places long devastated;
they will renew the ruined cities
that have been devastated for generations.*

*What does this passage tell us about God? About people?

*What does this passage tell us about waiting and weariness, our condition, our JOY?

*What losses of joy do you recognize this year – what's been taken from you or you've let be taken from you?

Read and discuss Isaiah 61:10-11 & Galatians 5:22-23(NIV)

*¹⁰ I delight greatly in the LORD;
my soul rejoices in my God.
For he has clothed me with garments of salvation
and arrayed me in a robe of his righteousness,
as a bridegroom adorns his head like a priest,
and as a bride adorns herself with her jewels.
¹¹ For as the soil makes the sprout come up
and a garden causes seeds to grow,
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness
and praise spring up before all nations.*

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.

*What does the Isaiah passage tell us about True JOY?

*How can these two passages work in tandem to help us wait with JOY?

As we wait with True Joy in the midst of things that break our hearts, He waits with us

*What does it look like to hold joy and heartbreak together?

*Where might you have missed that 2020 has been the year of the Lord's favor?

*What is God saying to you about cultivating JOY in this particular season?

Join us as we celebrate Advent together

[Advent Experience 2020](#)

Visual reflection (Visio Divina)* [Seeing Shepherds](#) by Daniel Bonnell

Song for reflection [JOY](#) by Rend Collective

*Visio divina – a thoughtful and slow way of contemplating a visual prompt like a piece of art, photograph or image and inviting God to speak to you through it. First, focus on the detail that your eyes are drawn to right away – keep focus there and pay attention to what thoughts and emotions you are having. Then, look at the entire image and consider it as a whole, being aware of thoughts, questions and emotions it provokes. End in silence and prayer, considering your experience and anything you feel called to respond to.