

Let There Be Joy!...in the face of hopelessness

When Good Things Happen To Bad People

- “Why not me?”
- “Why them?”

When Bad Things Happen To Good People

- “Why me?”
- “What did I do to deserve this?”

Let There Be Joy!...in the face of hopelessness

- When Hope Gets Put In The Box

What is Joy?

What Joy is NOT...

- ...found in circumstances
- ...found in others
- ...found in happiness
- ...found passively

Joy is...

“Joy is the settled assurance that God is in control of all the details of my life, the quiet confidence that ultimately everything is going to be alright, and the determined choice to praise God in all things.”

Kay Warren - **Choose Joy** Devotional, The Bible App

Kay Warren continues...

“Joy is a settled conviction ABOUT God. It’s a quiet confidence IN God. And joy is a determined choice to give my praise TO God.”

A Story of When Hope Gets Put In The Box

Excursus: Believe The Story

“Inasmuch as many have undertaken to compile a narrative of the things that have been accomplished among us, just as those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word have delivered them to us, it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, that you may have certainty concerning the things you have been taught.” (Luke 1:1–4, ESV)

Zechariah and Elizabeth

“In the days of Herod, king of Judea, there was a priest named Zechariah, of the division of Abijah. And he had a wife from the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth. And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. But they had no child, because Elizabeth was barren, and both were advanced in years.” (Luke 1:5–7, ESV)

Hopelessness Happens...

- When expectation and reality collide
- When we can't see an alternative path forward
- In the pendulum swing of life

But God...

“And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense. And Zechariah was troubled when he saw him, and fear fell upon him. But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard, and your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you shall call his name John. And you will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth,” (Luke 1:11–14, ESV)

But God...Part II!

“And Zechariah said to the angel, “How shall I know this? For I am an old man, and my wife is advanced in years.” And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news. And behold, you will be silent and unable to speak until the day that these things take place, because you did not believe my words, which will be fulfilled in their time.”” (Luke 1:18–20, ESV)

“And when his time of service was ended, he went to his home. After these days his wife Elizabeth conceived, and for five months she kept herself hidden, saying, “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.”” (Luke 1:23–25, ESV)

What Opens The Box

The Divine Encounter

“And the angel answered him, “I am Gabriel. I stand in the presence of God, and I was sent to speak to you and to bring you this good news.” (Luke 1:19, ESV)

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Why?

Because God loves you

- In spite of all the feelings to the contrary - and hopelessness is full of feelings of being unloved and unlovely - God loves you.

Let the candle be lit

The small flame is the beginnings of acknowledging the love of God in your life.