

“Life without war is impossible either in nature or in grace. The basis of physical, mental, moral, and spiritual life is antagonism. This is the open fact of life.” -Oswald Chambers

Luke 2:8-11

⁸In the same region there were *some* shepherds staying out in the fields and keeping watch over their flock by night. ⁹And an angel of the Lord suddenly stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them; and they were terribly frightened. ¹⁰But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid; for behold, I bring you good news of great joy which will be for all the people; ¹¹for today in the city of David there has been born for you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.

The angel brought news of great joy for all the people: a Savior has been born for us all, and He is Christ the Lord!

Joy would come to the world at a high price, and would seem almost absent as Christ performed His saving work.

Luke 2:34-36

³⁴And Simeon blessed them and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this *Child* is appointed for the fall and rise of many in Israel, and for a sign to be opposed— ³⁵and a sword will pierce even your own soul—to the end that thoughts from many hearts may be revealed.”

1 Peter 1:6-9

⁶In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, ⁷so that the proof of your faith, *being* more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; ⁸and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, ⁹obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

The doorway to joy is on the path of sorrow, not on the path of peace.

Hebrews 12:2

²fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.

As we pursue joy, we all want to go around the cross, rather than through it.

Joy compelled Jesus to take the hard road, and there he found the gateway to everlasting joy.

Joy was His only as He embraced the cross. There was no avoiding the hardship if He was to take possession of joy.

What cross am I avoiding? What joy is it costing me and my loved ones?

What was His joy, and what was the joy He was bringing to the world?

Hebrews 2:10

¹⁰For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things, and through whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to perfect the author of their salvation through sufferings.

His joy was to bring the Father joy by gathering the Sons and Daughters of God and giving us His joy!

All the joy is found through the grief of the cross.

Jesus's path to joy and ours are the same: through His cross, and taking up ours!

John 17:12-24

¹² While I was with them, I was keeping them in Your name which You have given Me; and I guarded them and not one of them perished but the son of perdition, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled. ¹³ But now I come to You; and these things I speak in the world so that they may have My joy made full in themselves. ¹⁴ I have given them Your word; and the world has hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ¹⁵ I do not ask You to take them out of the world, but to keep them from the evil *one*. ¹⁶ They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. ¹⁷ Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth. ¹⁸ As You sent Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world. ¹⁹ For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth.

²⁰ "I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; ²¹ that they may all be one; even as You, Father, *are* in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. ²² The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; ²³ I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. ²⁴ Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world.

Zephaniah 3:14-18

¹⁴ Shout for joy, O daughter of Zion! Shout *in triumph*, O Israel! Rejoice and exult with all *your* heart, O daughter of Jerusalem!

¹⁵ The Lord has taken away *His* judgments against you, He has cleared away your enemies. The King of Israel, the Lord, is in your midst; You will fear disaster no more.

¹⁶ In that day it will be said to Jerusalem: "Do not be afraid, O Zion; Do not let your hands fall limp.

¹⁷ "The Lord your God is in your midst, A victorious warrior. He will exult over you with joy, He will be quiet in His love, He will rejoice over you with shouts of joy.

Matthew 25:21

²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful slave. You were faithful with a few things, I will put you in charge of many things; enter into the joy of your master.'

Malachi 4:2

² "But for you who fear My name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings; and you will go forth and skip about like calves from the stall.