



UNSPEAKABLE JOY

Week 1 | Joy Will Change Your Life

| KEY THOUGHTS

- Many of us can look back at certain moments of joy (our wedding day, the birth of a child, etc.). Often, part of the joy was the surprise at how deeply meaningful those moments actually were.
- We all desire joy in our lives.
- Experience shows that any joy we pursue apart from God either never shows up, or flees in a moment. **Real and lasting joy is found only in Christ; and that will change your life.**
- **There is joy in receiving God's promise.**
 - The last thing God had said through the prophet Malachi four centuries earlier was the same thing the angel told Zechariah in Luke 1; when God spoke again after a 400-year silence, it was to reaffirm His promise.
 - Zechariah and Elizabeth had never wavered in their commitment to God, but trusted and loved Him no matter what.
- **There is joy in the process.**
 - Though there are challenges along the way, joy transforms the challenges into a season of blessing;
 - **Joy comes from being included in God's plan and invited into Christ's story.**
- **There is joy in the fulfillment.**
 - Even after Zechariah and Elizabeth had what they'd always wanted, their commitment to God never changed; they continued to obey Him by naming him John (which means *God has been gracious* or *God gives grace*), despite the pressure from family and friends to do otherwise.
 - They rejoiced, not just at finally having a son, but because they were privileged to see God at work.
 - By grace God spoke; by grace, God gave them a son; by grace, God included them in His story; by grace, God made John the announcer of His Kingdom; by grace, John baptized Jesus.

| SCRIPTURE

⁵ 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. ⁶ And they were both righteous before God, walking blamelessly in all the commandments and statutes of the Lord. ⁷ But they had no child...

Luke 1:5-25 (ESV)

⁵⁷ Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son...

Luke 1:57-66 (ESV)

⁵ "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and awesome day of the Lord comes. ⁶ And he will turn the hearts of fathers to their children and the hearts of children to their fathers..."

Malachi 4:6-7 (ESV)

... everything else is worthless when compared to the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

Philippians 3:8 (NLT)

| PRACTICAL

- Though God seldom speaks directly through angels anymore, we can still hear His voice through the scriptures, through prayer, and through other growing disciples. Are you listening?
- We lose joy when we take our focus off Christ and give something else greater importance over Him. That's called "disordered loves."
- When that happens to you, adjust your focus and fix your eyes on Christ.
 - Dial into who you are without Christ, and see how that contrasts with who you are *in* Christ.
 - A good way to do that is to read Ephesians 1, 2, and 3.
 - Meditate on it, and if possible, discuss it with brothers and sisters in Christ.

| REFLECT

- One of Satan's favorite weapons against Christians is to steal our joy by tempting us to value the "good" things over Christ Himself. He even tried it with Jesus, but with no success.
- Nothing will give you fulfillment like knowing Christ. Nothing!
- What might your life look like if it were marked by joy in Christ?
- What's keeping you from putting your faith in Him?

MYLIGHTHOUSECOMMUNITY.COM