

**Study Questions for the December 12, 2021 Sermon:  
"Reclaiming Christmas: Joy"  
Isaiah 9:2-7, Luke 2:8-20**

1. Pastor Tavernelli opened with some thought-provoking questions, including: How can we experience joy in suffering? Apparently, this is possible. Hebrews 12:2 states: "For the joy set before him (Jesus) endured the cross." What do you understand as the Biblical definition of joy?
2. Pastor Tavernelli also cautioned us that our joy can be stolen. What attitudes or situations steal your joy?
3. What are some of the wrong places you have looked for joy that actually diminished your joy, or provide only a brief period of joy?
4. Psalms 16 and 51 are both psalms of David. Read 16:11 and 51; 11 & 12. How would David define joy?
5. Pastor Tavernelli warned us that unfulfilled longings can rob our joy. Give an example of this from scripture.
6. Name one person whom God has put into your life so that this person could hear the Gospel.
7. In Luke 2:14, the Angels sing of peace. Epictetus, a first century pagan writer, expressed this: "While the emperor may give peace from war on land and sea, he is unable to give peace from passion, grief, and envy; he cannot give peace of heart, for which man yearn for more than even outward peace." (From the David Guzik commentary.)
  - a. How does Jesus give us that kind of peace that political leaders cannot? If possible, support your answer with scripture.
  - b. How much are you at peace? Seldom, Sometimes, Mostly, Always.
  - c. Are you more at peace now than you were before you became a believer?

8. The Christmas season is often a time of stress because of: shopping, preparing meals, meeting family expectations, finances, relationships we want and do not have, and relationships we have that are unfulfilling. If you have any strategies for remaining joyful during this time, please share at least one.