

The Joy of Christmas

The Books of 1, 2, 3 John

Christmas is a week away! If I were to ask you, “what’s most important to you next Sunday (on Christmas Day)?”, what would you say?

I think most people would say being together is most important on Christmas!

One of my favorite Christmas past-times is listening to Elvis sing Christmas songs as we open gifts together around the tree on Christmas morning!

- “I’ll have a blue Christmas without you!”
- “I’ll be home for Christmas... if only in my dream!”

The Joy of Christmas is found in presence!

- 1) The presence of Jesus - J
- 2) The presence of others - O
- 3) The presence of you - Y

The Apostle John wrote the 3 letters that carry his name - 1st, 2nd, 3rd John!
This Apostle was called “The disciple whom Jesus loved”, as well as “the one who leaned back against Jesus during the Last Supper!” – John 21:20

John was in Jesus’ inner circle of 3! When the crowds went away, and when the rest of the disciples were busy doing other things, Peter, James & John remained present with Jesus!

John was the disciple present when Jesus was crucified! John was the one Jesus entrusted the care of his mother too after his death! – John 19:26-27

I believe John was given the title, “the one Jesus loved” because he was the one continually present with him! Remember Mary & Martha!

John chose presence above all else, & presence with the “One and only” is what he got to experience in ways no other follower of Jesus ever did!

There was no greater joy for John than to be present with his Lord & Savior! And it was that joy that he wanted to share with others in the writing of these letters! **1 John 1:1-4**

Is our greatest joy found in being in fellowship with Jesus Christ? How much time have we spent in His presence this Christmas season? Do we have room for Him in our busy schedules and Christmas celebrations?

Joy without the “J” – “Jesus,” is simply “oy”! Oy is defined by Webster’s dictionary as an expression of exasperation or dismay (annoyance, irritation)

Without Jesus, Christmas is nothing but an annoyance & an irritation!
But in the presence of Jesus, there is great joy to be found in this season!

The joy of Christmas also includes the presence of the “O” - others! **No one wants to be alone for Christmas, and thankfully no one has to be!** **1 John 3:1**

- If God is our Father, then we are a part of His eternal family!
- If we are a part of His eternal family, then Jesus is our brother!
- If God is our Father & Jesus is our brother, then we are all siblings!

If you don’t have a biological family to celebrate Christmas with, then celebrate it with your church family!

The joy of Christmas includes being in the presence of Jesus, and being present with one another, so be here with us and accomplish both!

Joy without the “J” and the “O”, leaves you only with “Y”. It may be spelled different but many people ask “why” at Christmas! “Why...”

That’s why the presence of “You” - the “Y”, is so important at Christmas too!

If we don’t know who we truly are, then how could we ever be comfortable in the presence of Jesus, or others, let alone find joy in that presence?

The Apostle John wants us to not only know Jesus intimately, but he also wants us to know who we truly are because of Him!

- Jesus is light, and He shines into the darkness exposing our identity as sinners!
- Jesus is love, and He lays down His life in order for us to take on a new identity!
- Jesus is life, and the One who gives life to us, one filled with purpose!

The **H.C. # 2** summarizes this truth so well and reveals the reason why we can have both comfort and joy this Christmas, and always!

1 John 4:9-12 – We may not feel close to God this Christmas, but it was Christmas when God came into our presence, placed us in His family, and gave us a new identity! There is true J.O.Y. to be found this Christmas!

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