

THE CONTINUING ACTS OF THE CHRIST



Advent Week - Joy

A Note to the Parents/Teachers

- **Big Idea:** We have good news of great joy in the coming of Jesus — because rescue has come

Starter

Evidence of Grace

- Ask kids to share ways they've seen God at work lately. Anything, big or small, which is good is from God. Take time to thank God together.

Discussion:

- Has there ever been a time in your life where you have shouted for joy or shouted with joy?
- What do you think joy is?

Sing Together

Story

Have you ever been watching a sports game and your favorite team scores a goal or touchdown and you let out a big yell or scream because you were so excited? Or maybe you have seen your parents or adults scream with joy when they receive an amazing surprise that they didn't expect. Or maybe you yelled, "Yes!" Or "Woo Hoo!" when the hero of the movie or show you are watching conquers the bad guys.

This is the type of joy that the book of Isaiah talks about in Isaiah 35:1-10. It says in these verses that even creation itself will shout for joy when Jesus comes. Isaiah says things like, "the dry land will bloom and blossom and will shout for joy," "The eyes of the blind will be open, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame will leap, the tongue of the mute will shout for joy." "There will be rivers in the desert and springs in the dry land." "There won't be a lion or any vicious beast there." "The people who have trusted in Jesus will be filled with unending joy and there will be no sorrow or sadness."

Isaiah tells us that Israel is looking for this saviour. They are looking for the King who will make all of these things that Isaiah is writing about come true. They long for a Messiah to come and rescue them out of slavery. When Jesus comes he will not only free His people from slavery but he will free all of creation from the devastating effects of sin in God's good creation. That even the desert, mountains, oceans, and animals will shout for joy because all of the destruction, pain, death, and sickness will be undone.

Jesus is the hero of the story and he will come again. Jesus is the hero of the story that has conquered sin. Because of His life, death, and resurrection death and sin have been defeated. This is the true story we get to be a part of. Jesus has died to defeat sin and he rose again on the third day so that we could join Him in His rescue story. Because even more than our favorite sports team or hero in a movie, this story is true for eternity. This should cause us to shout for joy. We now have an opportunity to shout with joy this good news of Jesus Christ to our neighbor and friends.

While the good news of what God has already done through His son Jesus should bring us joy, we look forward to the day when Jesus returns so that we can experience the fullness of joy. When Jesus returns then all of creation will be fully free from sin and death. For those who have placed their trust and revolved their lives around Jesus, they will get to experience the fullness of joy when God will once again dwell with His people on earth.

True joy isn't based on our team winning or our favorite hero beating the bad guy. Joy isn't getting everything we want or feeling happy. It is something much deeper. It is an overwhelming response to God defeating the power of sin in creation, by sending his Son, Jesus, and promising to send Jesus again one day to totally get rid of sin. This is a story of joy to our world, for the Lord has come, and will come again.

[Dialogue Questions - you may use some or all]

- ▶ What are some things that bring you joy?
- ▶ Who are some people in your life that bring you joy or whose presence brings you joy?
- ▶ Thinking about the Biblical story, what are some stories or things that you can think of where people are full of joy?
- ▶ Thinking about the biblical story, what brings you joy?

Breakout Time

Pray:

God, I know that you are the one true living God who created all things. You created the earth and everything on the earth. You created me. Thank you for sending your Son Jesus so that I can be forgiven of worshiping other things. Forgive me for sometimes worshiping other things than you. I repent. Holy Spirit, please work in my heart to love God and love others in a way that points them to Jesus and your Kingdom. May our hearts be filled with Joy in response to what you have done in and through your Son Jesus and the story you have invited us to now participate in.

Craft:

- The kids can color the following page

BLESS Activity

This week, ask your family how you can practice the Speak rhythm. Maybe as you go to school, go to the store with your parent, go to your sports game or after-school activity, or even in your own home and think about who you might be able to speak the good news that the kingdom of God has come to earth in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

