

## Covenant Life

- Our next **prayer meeting** is **TODAY** at 3pm. We plan to have Children and Youth ministries. **We will also have a CCGD Christmas dinner after the gathering sponsored by the CCGD Youth Ministry. Please make plans to come and stay for the food and fellowship!!**
- Our **2025 Stewardship Promise & Recommitment Drive** is active, and we want to hear from everyone, please click [2025 Promise](#) if you have not yet responded.
- **Save the dates:** We will have a prayer meeting in two weeks on Sunday December 22 and a special **Adoration** service on the second Sunday of January (1/12/25) to pray in the New Year.
- [GodsDelight.org](#) has prayer meeting [audio](#), [summaries](#), [transcripts](#), and [teachings](#).
- Your ongoing financial support to the Community is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, TX 75222.

## Reflection

In listening to the readings today the word that caught my attention was Joy! It is prominent in the [Responsorial Psalm](#) "The Lord has done great things for us; we are filled with joy". I also heard the word in the [First](#) and [Second Readings](#). It got me thinking...where does joy come from and why do some people radiate joy more than others?

I do not consider myself a very joyful person. My wife Laurie on the other hand is a very joyful person (one of the many qualities that attracted me to her so many years ago). I can also say that it was the love and joy of so many at Bishop Lynch at the earliest prayer meetings that attracted me and became the foundation of my response to God. I really do believe that our joy draws others to God. We all want and prefer joy and are likely drawn to those who are joyful.

Joy is an emotion, but I also think joy is a choice. Sometimes it is an easy choice and sometimes it is a harder choice. As Christians we know that God is the source of our joy. The question we must ask ourselves is how to be joyful when we do not 'feel' joyful. In James 1:2 we read words that do not seem to make much sense..."Consider it all joy, my brothers, when you encounter various trials...". What? How?

Responding with joy during times of trials begins with awareness that God is at work in our lives and that He has a purpose even for the trials we experience. It is our faith in Him and His love for us that propels our belief that the trials we face are designed or allowed by God with a specific purpose in mind. He wants better for us than we want for ourselves, right? So, if that is true whatever happens to us is part of His plan to show us His divine love.

So, with that in mind, are we open to seeing trials as a demonstration of God's love, even if we do not understand the how and why?

Joy flows from our appreciation of all God has done for us, but Joy is also a choice to respond to trials, inwardly and outwardly, because we have confidence that God will use them to accomplish His will in and through our lives. It is His Holy Spirit that empowers our ability to defy natural emotions and respond with joy. In the same way we are called to unconditional love, I believe we are called to unconditional joy...greeting every situation and circumstance with inward and outward joy because we have confidence in God and His will for us. This is only possible with the power of His Spirit...but we have that!

Showing Joy does not mean that we fake happiness during trials but rather it flows from our choice to look beyond the present circumstances and see the truth that God loves us more than we can imagine and would never test us beyond our abilities. He wants us to recognize and utilize the power He has bestowed upon us with His Holy Spirit so we joyfully embrace trials as a witness to the world that we are different...that others may come to believe in the power of His love and joy!

Let us pray, "Heavenly Father, I know how much You love me and want the very best for me. I desire to respond to every circumstance and trial with joy. Give me Your Holy Spirit that I can be inwardly changed to see Your hand in every trial I face. Give me the patience to see You at work and to trust that everything will work out if I but embrace whatever You send my way in joy. Please give me not only inner joy and peace but also allow me to witness to my sisters and brothers outward joy, even during difficult times so that I can be a witness for You and lead others back to You. I love You!"

God Bless,  
David