

Sermon Study Guide – December 17th, 2023

"Looking for Joy in All the Right Places"

1) Thoughts to get you started...

- ◆ How do people look for joy in all the wrong places? Christmas is a time of joy, yet how does joy elude people even now?
- ◆ As we continue our Advent series, "The King Shall Come", how can our king provide us with the joy that is lacking elsewhere in our lives?

2) Today's Message: John 1:6-8,19-28

⁶ There was a man sent from God whose name was John. ⁷ He came as a witness to testify concerning that light, so that through him all might believe. ⁸ He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light... ¹⁹ Now this was John's testimony when the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. ²⁰ He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Messiah." ²¹ They asked him, "Then who are you? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." ²² Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?" ²³ John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'" ²⁴ Now the Pharisees who had been sent ²⁵ questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Messiah, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?" ²⁶ "I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. ²⁷ He is the one who comes after me, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." ²⁸ This all happened at Bethany on the other side of the Jordan, where John was baptizing.

3) What does God want you to hear today?

Throughout the sermon, consider...

How does today's sermon show you your sin? (i.e. What's the law?)

How does today's sermon show your Savior? (i.e. What's the gospel?)

Law:

Gospel:



Answer the following questions if it helps you follow the sermon...

1. Explain each of the titles the Pharisees used in their questions to determine John the Baptist's identity.
2. Why did the Jewish leaders find it strange John was baptizing?
3. How did the Jewish leaders forfeit the joy God intended for them?
4. How does Jesus offer better joy than we can provide for ourselves?
5. How can Jesus help us find joy even in "the wrong places"?

4) Taking it Home:

Read these sections of the Bible to reinforce this week's truths:

Monday: *review* Is. 61:1-11, 1 Th. 5:9-14 **Thursday:** Matthew 11:1-19

Tuesday: Psalm 47

Friday: *read/review* John 1

Wednesday: Malachi 3

Saturday: Deuteronomy 18:14-22