

# Show Your JOY!

by Leah Anderson

*And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!" Luke 2:13-14 (KJV)*

Many people have candles or figurines as part of their holiday decorations that spell out words like "JOY" or "PEACE." They are great reminders of what we should be focusing on during the holiday season. But I have never seen a candle that spelled out "PRESENTS." It is not the point of Christmas. It is a wonderful part of Christmas, but not *the point*.

Jesus' birth is the reason we celebrate. And it is His birth that gives us cause for joy; joy that Jesus was born; joy that He came to save us; joy that we are alive; joy that we have our family and friends for the holidays; joy that we have a church in which to praise him.

This joy should permeate our actions this season. The people around us should know that we are joyful—and why. Remember the song "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love?" Put it into action this holiday season. Be joyful when you are in a bustling crowd at the store - it is a blessing to have someone in your life for whom to buy a gift and to be able to do so.

Reflect peace and good will as you are jostling for space at a holiday concert. Be joyful for the privilege of baking Christmas goodies and boxing them up for friends and neighbors. Be joyful when you are writing Christmas cards; you are sending the good news of Christ's birth. Be joyful when you are spending time with your family - you are making precious memories.

And always praise him! The entire heavenly host praised God at the birth of Jesus. We should do likewise. Praise Him in all things. Try to think of new ways to praise Him this year.

We all know Jesus is the reason for the season, but too often we only think of it during Advent and Christmas Eve services. Showing and sharing your joy throughout the season is a way to demonstrate that HE is the real reason for the season.

**Prayer:** Dear Lord, put the joy of salvation into my heart this Christmas season. Thank you, Father, for the greatest gift of all, the gift of Jesus. Thank you for the joy He brings.

Amen.