

**A Few Reasons to Rejoice: Jesus!**  
**Exciting FCOG, Pastor Peter Smith, 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent Dec. 7, 2014**

“And Mary said: “My soul glorifies the Lord  
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,  
for he has been mindful of the humble state of his servant.  
From now on all generations will call me blessed,”  
-Luke 1:46-48 NIV

- John the Baptist was six months older than Jesus!
- Mary stayed with Elizabeth up till she gave birth to John
- Gabriel visited both families: Zechariah and Mary. Angels are messengers from God. Their message is trustworthy because of Who sends them.
- Gabriel tells Mary, “Many will call you blessed.” Why?
  - She was chosen to carry the Savior and to give birth to him
  - She wouldn’t be remembered for her chocolate chip cookies! Or her clean house, or her hospitality.....
  - No other lady ever born would hold the place of honor that Mary would / does
  - Mary had reason to rejoice

**What does that mean for us today?**

- Christmas is about expectation / anticipation, rejoicing
- Our reason to rejoice is to be found in Jesus

**Here are just a few reasons to Rejoice:**

**Promise:**

“Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will  
conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.”  
-Isaiah 7:14, NIV

**Fulfillment:**

“All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet:  
“The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him  
Immanuel” (which means “God with us”).” -Matthew 1:22-23, NIV

1. God has fulfilled His promise.

- He fulfilled His prophecies from the OT
- He sent His son on a rescue mission to earth FOR YOU AND ME!
- When God says He will do something, He does it...this is a reason to rejoice!
- Friends, what has he promised you?
  - That your family would be saved?
  - Healing for your body?
  - A call to ministry?
  - Hold on to His promise today by rejoicing: you have seen it by faith before it happens in your life. And God is able to do it for you.

His promise of salvation becomes personal when we act upon it (Rom. 10:13 says)

**“Everyone who calls out to the Lord for help will be saved.”**

**-Romans 10:13, GNT**

### **Show Video clip: Craig's Story**

#### 2. God has given us His **presence**.

- Jesus' name is 'Immanuel' which means 'God with us'.
- What confidence do you have because of this knowledge? What assurance?
- Where is fear in our lives when Immanuel is with us? Gone!

#### **Story:**

Think of a time your special person came to visit. Maybe recently, maybe long ago. How many people did you tell about their upcoming visit? Did you light your FB page that so-and-so would be visiting? Remember how full your heart was that they came, they laughed, they shared memories, they were WITH you.

Now think about the Promise of God: His presence would be with us. Why rejoice?

- He says He will never leave: he won't get mad and walk away;
- He says He is glad to be with you and me: the angels, announcing the birth of Jesus to the shepherds, said: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace towards to those on whom his favor rests."
  - He chose to come to you and live with you. Rejoice!
  - His favor, not his judgment, rests on you. Rejoice!
  - He calls us his friends, his chosen people, his royal priest...because he wants to share his life with you and me. Rejoice!

**Have you let His presence come to your life?  
Have you rec'd Jesus as your Savior? For real?**

3. God has given us power over **sin.**
- We hear stories of God changing lives here at our church. Why?
    1. Not because we are so good!
    2. Not because of counselors or medicine or pastors!
    3. Because of the Truth of what Jesus did and can do in our lives.

Jesus' cousin John, on the day that Jesus got baptized, saw Jesus and said,

**"Behold the Lamb of God that takes away  
the sins of the world!" –John 1:29**

- Through Jesus sin's power cannot dominate our lives. Rejoice!

4. God gives our lives **purpose.**
- To live for more than ourselves
  - To live for Him and not our self

- A reason to wake up every morning...that we are part of His plan in this world.
- He gives us hope for an eternal life to come... Rejoice!