

## ADVENT- A SEASON OF REAL JOY

Quite too soon, it is another season of Advent which can be the coming of or arrival of someone or something extremely special. It is a season of expectation of a savior who is come to prepare us for the kingdom of God. It is a time of prayer, penitence and fasting among many saints. To most Christians, it is a time of joy because a Savior is going to be born and bring joy to the world. Thus, according to the great book, we are being admonished to rejoice always. This poses very difficult question for most people in this crucial period in the lives of most people. Question of been asked, like How can one rejoice when they are struggling, when they are face with all the vessitueties in life. When their world in which they live is constituted with many dissimilar elements. When life to most people, is an embodiment of all social evil. When all they read in the newspapers or on the news they hear from the media and TV they watch are full of negative reflections on life. Someone once said, we work so hard and yet we as humans do not have enough time to enjoy what we work for.

This to most people takes away the joy in their life: a life that they have spent their entire life working for. This year had been a year most people want to forget so quickly. It's been very unbearable for families, churches, nation's worldwide. In this season of advent, the good lord is bringing joy. Joy, that brings hope in the midst of a crying and an uncertain world. Joy in the light of a world of: wars, pain, killings, unemployment, homelessness, and a world of suffering and uncertainties. It is in this atmosphere that God sees the predicament of his people in this present world. In this season of expectation, Jesus is coming to us with joy the changes our situations or circumstances that we might be experiencing. It is within this atmosphere that we need to remember that Grief and sadness is only for a season when you put your life into proper perspective in God. If we allow it, the seeds of tears can grow into new spiritual growth and leads us to a new experience of joy and hope. Our tragedies of life can become a learning experience if we look at the positive side of it and if we patiently wait upon the Lord and trust him to help and redirect us on to a right path.

During this time, we are being encouraged to find his joy in our own salvation in the Son and knowingly to be very confident that he who began a good works in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus (Philippians 1:6). God finishes what He always starts for those who learn to trust him no matter the potholes and pitfalls in life. In this season, God has started our salvation in His son of bringing new things and helping the family with the spirit of wisdom for them to improve our past lives. In this season, God wants his people to experience joy in order for them to delight themselves in the Lord and to his people get the desires of their heart (Psalm 37:4). During this season, with a positive attitude and faith, we can know or experience real joy in knowing that the Jesus in this season of advent loves us and is coming back for us no matter who we are or what our individual pasts might be. No matter what problems that we have experienced or encountered throughout our day or the nature of the storms that is plowing us or the ways life becomes or comes with its zigzags. The faithful can have real joy in the comfort of His love only if we will learn to trust him and crown him to be part of our day to day life. The question then is what is the foundation that you are letting the joy in yourself built up with, Jesus or your trials, temptations, fears, financial difficulties,

relationship downfalls, family unsolved issues or happenings in this global world? Are you putting your whole body and soul (mind, will and emotions) into serving the Lord or allowing the problems control you that you are ungluing God from your mind? Someone once ask me the question during last year advent, is true Spiritual "JOY", a part of your everyday life? Today, I asks you the same question. If it is not, it can be. If only you can overcome your have not's, can not's, will not's, and do not's, in your personal lives. The bible admonish us that we can do all things though Christ who strengths us.

During this season, you might be going through grief, pain, suffering but remember Jesus is coming and says I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy or you from me. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete", Jesus admonishes his hearers (John 16:20-24). Whoever you are, whatever you might be going through, Jesus wants you, your family and friends, nations in the world to experience joy in our time of war, in the hour of unfriendly political climate, unstable economy or experiencing any form of sufferings. Friendly, when we allow Jesus to know what is going on in our life and will make all the efforts in persuading joy in God, He alone could virtually revolutionize our lives and change our circumstances. It is difficult to admit but it is true, that a number of people are not seeing or experiencing the true divine joy in their physical lives due to some of this acceptations:-

. (1) It may be that we lack the real joy because we do not have a personal relationship with Jesus for us to experience the joy salvation produces (2) There might be lack of joy in one's life due to one's past way of life, sin, or errors in life or may be a result of unconfused sin. Whatever it is, Jesus came for you in this season and comes with joy (3) one might be experiencing lack of joy in life as a result of a wrong focus, goals and path in life. As a result of these, human "JOY" can be lost, leading to lack of faith in themselves and in the Lord, thus leading them to not make any effort to spiritual growth and development. During this season of advent, I encourages you to have a few minutes a day to reflect on a portion of the word to keep your faith and joy level in the Lord.

I admonish you to go to the lord in prayer by taking everything to him and letting him do the worrying, thinking, solving of the problems and giving you joy always. He is at hand, call him while he may still be found to supply all your needs and solve all your problems. Make an effort by looking positive at every situation instead of dwelling on the negative. Make all the efforts by looking at others through the loving eyes of Jesus with love and compassion.

Finally, advent season is a season of new beginnings. True joy comes to those who learn to follow and trust the Lord to help them get through life's journey. Thus, as we begin this advent season, let me suggest to you to start and end your day with the joy of praising the Lord. Some once said true joy is, "The ability to stand and cope with the problems of life by building a solid spiritual foundation of trust on Jesus. In other words, Following Jesus' teachings throughout one's lifetime to help build a solid foundation to have real JOY!"

**HAVE A BLESSED ADVENT AND MAY THE JOY OF THE SEASON ENRICH YOUR LIFE AND THOSE AROUND YOU.**

**REFLECTIONS BY REV. DR. HECTOR SINTIM**