



December 2020

Dear Partners,

Merry Christmas everyone! It really is the most wonderful time of the year, isn't it? Everyone is running around buying gifts for children and grandchildren, decorating their homes, baking Christmas goodies and, if you're like our grandchildren, enjoying a nice cup of hot cocoa every night before bed. We decorate our trees with beautiful lights and garland. We hang up stockings and decorations in our homes with the words *joy* and *peace*. What a joy it is to be around family and friends, both young and old, retelling stories, singing carols, going to Christmas services at church and eating baked goods!

As grandparents, we love thinking about what to get our grandchildren for Christmas. It's such a **joy** seeing their faces light up as they open up their gift wrapped goodies and toys! We absolutely love to bless our grandchildren, but we also remind them of how fortunate they are to live in this beautiful, abundant country and *the real meaning of Christmas*. Jesus really *is* the reason for the season. That's why the Lord put it on our heart to bless the children of Romania and their parents during this time of the year by spreading the love of Christ through Christmas goodie bags and food for the holidays (sadly, because of the pandemic we are not able to do that this year).

Unfortunately, this time of the year passes by all too quickly and before we know it, we're in January again. There's a certain sadness when the Christmas tree and decorations come down. What if that joy we feel around the holidays never has to leave? As Christians, we should be filled with the joy of the Lord every single day not just during the holidays. In Romans 15:13, Apostle Paul writes this, "*May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.*" Notice this verse doesn't say, *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace during the Holidays and around Christmastime.*" We are to be **filled with all** joy and peace as we trust in Him *every day*. Joy isn't circumstantial. As a matter of fact, joy doesn't have anything to do with seasons, bank accounts, social statuses, or even the day of the week. Joy is a choice. It's something we *get* to choose every single day. We have the privilege of being filled with the joy of the Lord every day. Joy isn't something we *feel* on a particular day because everything is going great; it's a condition of the heart. It's an expression of the heart towards the Father.

But maybe you're someone who doesn't experience the kind of joy around the holidays that we described. Maybe instead of joy, you feel heartache and sorrow or depression and loneliness. You may have lost a loved one during the holidays and this time of the year brings an insurmountable amount of sadness or maybe you live far away from loved ones. We receive a lot of phone calls and emails from people during this time of the year who are struggling with these problems. In fact, some of them can't wait until the Holiday season is over because it brings them so much misery. We pray together in agreement and tell them that Jesus can fill them with **His** joy and set them free wherever they are in the midst of their circumstances.

Psalm 16:11 says, *You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.*

What's the secret to finding and *keeping* this joy? There is only one way to receive and keep this joy- by spending time with Jesus and in His Word *daily*. The Psalmist tells us *in His presence* is fullness of joy. When we make a commitment to spend time in God's Word and in His presence, we remain immovable and **in faith** despite what's going on around us. By spending time in His presence, we can remain full of joy even though one of our kids isn't serving the Lord wholeheartedly. We're filled with joy even if we may have lost our job or our car broke down. And the reason we remain joyful during these circumstances is because when we do, we remain hopeful. We have that *hope* He **will come through** for us. Being filled with joy builds up our faith and we can be confident that our God is the God of miracles! That is why it's so important to carry this joy in our hearts throughout the year so we will remain immovable and in faith believing God will come through.

1 Corinthians 15:58 NLT says, *So, my dear brothers and sisters, be strong and immovable.*

Need Prayer? Call us at 530-620-2717

So, our dear friend, although 2020 didn't go as planned (and we can all agree on that!), Jesus is still in control! Remember to keep this joy in your heart because no matter what's going on around us, the Lord will always come through for us. His Word never returns void (Isaiah 55:11) and He is faithful to His promises! Even though in the Ministry, we experienced changes and we operated a little differently from previous years, God never ceased to amaze us! His Gospel always finds a way to be continually spread upon the earth through those who are committed to finishing the race. And it's because of **you** that we are able to continue to spread the Gospel of Jesus through this Ministry all year long.

For the eyes of the LORD run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show Himself strong on behalf of those whose heart is loyal to Him. 2 Chronicles 16:9 NKJV

As unconventional as this year was, God used creative ways to spread the Gospel through the airways. Like many of you know, John has been doing Facebook lives several times a week and reaching thousands for God's glory. We're so thankful to you as our partner! We're so honored you have chosen to partner with us in this great work! Your support is so vital in this Ministry and we are so honored to be part of this GREAT HARVEST *alongside* you. We are winning souls together with you! It is because of **you** we are able to take God's uncompromised Word to the ends of the earth and reach the forgotten for Jesus. You are in our daily prayers!

We want to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year!

We know one thing for sure: If He came once already, He will come back again! And this time, we're going back *with* Him! That's a promise (Rev. 22:20)!

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls. 1 Peter 1:8-9

In His Service,

John & Alexandra and our entire staff

