

Christmas at the Movies

Elf

God wants to give us a supernatural power to have joy (Luke 2:8-11). At the birth of Jesus, an angel of the Lord appeared to nearby shepherds and proclaimed to them good news of *great joy* concerning the Savior of the world. Christmas – the coming of Jesus – is meant to bring us immense joy. His birth reveals God’s heart for us, that the King of Kings, the Creator of the universe, and the One who is above all rule and authority *wants* us and is *for* us. He takes great delight in His followers and rejoices over us with singing (Zephaniah 3:17). With the help of the Holy Spirit, that reality enables us to live with a contagious joy regardless of our circumstances.

GET THINGS STARTED

Do you think God laughs, and why or why not? What have you been taught about God when it comes to emotions?

GO DEEPER

1. From Luke 2:8-11, why was the birth of Jesus good news of *great joy*? In Luke 2:13-20, how did the heavenly host, Mary, and the shepherds each respond to the news? What should be our response to the news?
2. What does Zephaniah 3:17 reveal about God’s heart towards His followers? What else does God feel towards us, as seen in Scripture?
3. What is joy, and what is it not? How does joy differ from the other fruit of the Spirit found in Galatians 5:22? What does joy look like amid difficult circumstances?

MAKE IT PERSONAL

1. How easy or difficult is it for you to experience joy right now, and why? What is your emotional response to the birth of Jesus in this season? What should your response be, and what hinders you from having that kind of response?
2. What do you believe God thinks of you? What does He sing over you, from Zephaniah 3:17?

PRACTICE IT NOW

As a group, take time in an attitude and atmosphere of prayer to ask God for contagious joy in this season. Ask Him to help you fully feel the joy of His birth and to remove any barriers to that joy. Ask Him what He truly thinks of you and what His heart is towards you, and then take time to listen in His presence. Share with your group what you think He reveals to you.