

***Joy to Your World!: Answering the Call to Be Bringers of Joy***

Based on the book, *Joy to Your World!*, by T.M. Moore (Waxed Tablet Publications, 2016)

How are Christians generally characterized in the media and popular entertainment worlds?

What if...?

Isaac Watts's great hymn, *Joy to the World!*, echoes the angelic announcement of Jesus' birth to the shepherds.

Luke 2.8-11 (Cf. Luke 1.39-44)

"The message of Christmas is one of *joy*, which is the defining chord and key of the Christian life." (12)

Purpose of Jesus: John 15.11

John 17.12-13

Purpose of Apostles: 1 John 1.4

Work of the Holy Spirit: Galatians 5.22

Character of the Kingdom of God: Romans 14.17

"Like some reversed Pig-Pen – the Peanuts character who, even in the snows of Christmas, exudes a cloud of dust wherever he goes – Christians are a fragrance of righteousness, peace, and *joy* to everyone they meet, and they leave the stamp and evidence of these Kingdom virtues and affections in every space they inhabit." (15)

Does this sound like a description of *our* lives? Why, or why not?

"Our immediate experiences and circumstances are not always such as to elicit from us a response of joy. Indeed, we may be *wanting* in those conditions of life that others look to for happiness.... Joy ... is not attached to *changeable circumstances* but to *fixed realities and eternal verities* in which we participate by grace through faith." (31)

Habakkuk 3.17-19

Luke 6.22-23

James 1.2

"It is the folly of unbelief to think that joy can come from circumstances or things. Joy is from the Lord, and we may only know true and lasting joy as we know and enjoy Him." (33)

"The Bringer of Joy makes all who truly know Him joy-bringers to the world. Christians have come to know this joy, and when we're living in Jesus, His blessings fill and delight us, and His *joy* exudes from us in our conversation and works. Confronted by such hope and joy, those who lack it may be moved to inquire the reason for it." (17)

"We are called to be joy-bringers, to *be* witnesses to the Bringer of Joy." (21)

John 20.21

Acts 1.8

Matthew 9.36-38

"Jesus the Bringer of Joy sends everyone who has entered His joy as a joy-bringer to the mission field of the world – *your* world." (37)

How can we be faithful witnesses to the Bringer of Joy this Christmas season and beyond:

as a church body?

as families?

as individuals?