

God with Us
Day 19 JOY IN PRESENCE

You make known to me the path of life; you fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand. (Psalm 16:11)

What is the greatest or most special Christmas gift you have ever received? Maybe it came wrapped with shiny ribbons and bows, but chances are it was something you could not put a bow around if you tried. Toys and gadgets can light us up with surprise and happiness, but a surprise visit from a loved one or a healed relationship can overwhelm us with gratitude and joy. Thousands of dollars worth of gifts from a distant, absent guardian are just presents. Small gestures and engagement from a loving, caring parent are rich presence. And in presence there is joy.

As David the Psalmist knew, we are filled with God's joy in His presence. It's a by-product of relationship. As we spend time connecting with God, aligning our spirits with His, we discover joy filling us from the inside. It is a fruit born from His spirit, grown within us. It is a response to His perfect love. Our circumstances can swirl and storm around us, but we can experience joy deep within. Because God is with us, we can seek Him and find Him. Because God is with us, we can know and experience his joy.

Does joy seem distant in this Christmas season? How will you lean into God's presence? How will you share joyful presence with others as Christmas nears?