Luke 2:10-11 "[10] … Do not be afraid. I bring you **good news that will cause great joy** for all the people. [11] Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; He is the Messiah, the Lord." (NIV)

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 "[16] **Always be joyful**. [17] Never stop praying. [18] Be thankful in all circumstances, for **this is God's will for you** who belong to Christ Jesus." (NLT)

CHOOSING CHRISTMAS JOY

Joy Blocker #1: BITTERNESS

Luke 1:6-15 "[6] Zechariah and Elizabeth were **righteous in God's eyes, careful to obey all of the Lord's commandments and regulations**. [7] They had no children because Elizabeth was unable to conceive, and they were both very old." (NLT)

- Elizabeth and Zechariah experienced joy by choosing FULFILLMENT IN GOD.

John 15:10-11 "[10] If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in His love. [11] I have told you this so that **my joy** may be in you and that **your joy** may be complete." (NIV)

Joy Blocker #2: ANXIETY

Luke 1:38 "Mary responded, "I am the Lord's servant. May everything you have said about me come true." And then the angel left her." (NLT)

- Mary experienced joy by choosing to TRUST IN GOD'S PLAN.

1 Peter 1:8-9 "[8] 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**, [9] for you are receiving the end result of your faith, the salvation of your souls." (NIV)

Joy Blocker #3: LOSS

Luke 2:37 "Then she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer." (NLT)

- Anna experienced joy by choosing GREAT IS HE verse WOES IS ME.

Romans 12:12 "Be **joy**ful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer." (NIV)

BOTTOM LINE

1. Joy is a CHOICE.

   Philippians 4:4 "**Rejoice** in the Lord always. I will say it again: **Rejoice**!" (NIV)

2. Joy is a CONSEQUENCE of the Holy Spirit.

   Galatians 5:22-23 "22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, **joy**, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness and self-control …" (NIV)

   1 Thessalonians 1:6 "You became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you welcomed the message in the midst of severe suffering with the **joy** given by the Holy Spirit." (NIV)

3. Joy is a CONFIDENCE in the Lord.

   Jude 1:24-25 "24 To Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with **great joy**— 25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen." (NIV)