

Pastor Jordan Gades Sermon 12.13.20 **John 1:6-8, 19-28**

Grace and Peace be to you from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ Amen

Candle of Hope,

Candle of Faith,

Candle of Joy - Rejoice always, 17 pray without ceasing, 18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Sometimes Joy comes easy - this sense of happiness that runs from our fingers to our toes. That sense of excitement that makes us so full of energy that we have to move and dance and shout out loud. That's what Joy is. That's what we are remembering and celebrating today. That Joy, That Joy that Comes from God and this joy sends us in directions we could not fathom and places we cannot imagine

6 There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. 7 He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. 8 He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. 9 The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. A man was sent from God, that's who the author was writing about but it is so much bigger today.

There are now a people sent from God. A man, a woman, an elder, a child, all sent from God. They were as a witness to testify to the light, they were sent as one who has seen the light, they were sent as a people who could tell others about the light, they were sent to, most importantly, show the light.

Those who have only walked in darkness do not understand, cannot comprehend the light. What can you say? So you've only lived in this place where everything is the same, formless and void, no color, no depth. Let me attempt to describe for you what you have no words for. And John walked into this world with his head held high and tried. And so do we.

Why do we try so hard? Why do we push ourselves? Because I know that you are. Our God knows how hard we have pushed. What drives us? We know too well that we are not the light. We know that the Joy that resides within us cannot be our own for the world seems to bleak. We were just walking alone and bewildered, afraid and lost. But that Light, But that Joy, But our Christ our Savior came to us and showed us something we have never known before. And now we reflect that light. Now we dance with joy We are not the source but praise be to God we know the source. The true light. That light which was sent for the brightening of the entire world, is what we shine. That joy that we can turn to even if there is nothing else, is what we exclaim with every breath.

This season of waiting and anticipation lingers on and on. This virus lingers on and on. Every part of our lives seems to somehow completely frozen and yet never the same for more than 2

seconds. And yet on the horizon we see a faint light, the first inklings of the breaking of the dawn after a long, long night.

Do not lose hope now, my friends. Do not lose faith, my sisters and my brothers, do not lose that perfect joy.

We might be pent up but we will not lash out. We might be bowed down but we will not fall. We might be cracking but we will not break.

We can see the light with our eyes. We can feel the joy in our souls.

Today we ready our selves for the year of the lords favor as Isaiah Prophesied:

We are going to be lifting up s mantle of praise upon this church

We are going to be binding up the brokenhearted

We are going to be releasing the prisoners and comforting all those who morn

We are going to be building up those ancient ruins and We are going to repair the cities

We are going to rejoice and people are going to know that the Lord has blessed us.

They are going to see us wearing the robes of Righteousness and those garments of Salvation.

We are all going to see what the Lord can do. What the Lord will do.

We know the light which is coming to the earth. The dawn is coming. Let us rejoice.

And now

May the God of peace himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. 24 The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do this.

Amen.