

Living well through Advent

Week Three

Saturday 17 December 2022

Birthday Joy

This is the day that the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.

Psalm 118:24

The writer of today's devotion reflects on his experience at his four-year-old grandson's birthday party. He says he had never seen a child who loves the traditional birthday rituals more than his grandson. He had him text his parents to tell them that everyone needed to shout "surprise!" when his grandson walked in the door, even though the party wasn't due to start for another three hours. Following the customary lighting of the candles, singing, and the blowing out of the candles, he curled his fists against his beaming face and his little body shook with joy. As if turning 4, having cake, candles, presents, and the love of his family was almost too much to take in.

Young children have so much to teach us about living joyfully in the moment. While the verse above from Psalm 118 is generally associated with Easter, it's also appropriate for living in the joyful expectation of Advent. Living Compass encourages us to "pay attention to what we pay attention to." No matter the day, the time, or the season, we are offered the opportunity to pay attention to the things that bring us down or bring us joy. What we pay attention to affects the quality of our work, play, relationships, health, mood, everything.

As we wait in expectation for the fullness of God's Love, just as did our ancestors who waited for the Messiah, let us pay attention to the joy we feel as we honour the One whose birthday we are preparing to celebrate. In the midst of whatever this Advent brings, may we look for and anticipate simple moments of joy each day.

Let us reflect on the following:

- ◆ Recall a time a child taught you a lesson about joy. How might you apply that lesson to your life today?
- ◆ Notice what you pay attention to and how it affects the quality of your day.

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