

The Clergy Review

Eva Shepard, Assistant Pastor
Andover Baptist Church
JOY

These days of fun, vacation, shopping, gifts, an amazing variety of delicious tempting foods have brought mixed feelings to all of us. Sometimes we bubbled over with joy just being together as a family, again when we received that dream gift, again watching others happy with our gifts to them. There were other times when a gift was not what we truly wanted, a friend was unable to come, and then sometimes we were too tired to care. Yet all these mixed feelings of joy and sadness left us with a warm glow of happiness.

What moments were the happiest ones for you? Was it when your gift brought joy to the eyes of a child, your thoughtful deed made your friend's face light up as you sang and talked with him? It was God's Spirit in you that helped you do that thoughtful deed. It was God's Spirit that guided you to buy the gift that brought such joy to a loved one or to that lonely person. When you let God guide you, you will have joy.

One wise man by the name of Paul wrote "Always be full of joy in the Lord." (a) Wouldn't that be great to always be full of joy? That seems like an impossible dream. It is impossible if joy means having what we want when we want it. Paul's thought is different. He added a little phrase that (a) Living Bible Philippians 4:4 gives a new meaning to joy. He taught that it should be "joy in the Lord."

That special glow of joy that you felt at Christmas came as you were doing God's will, loving others and showing that love by action. "Joy in the Lord", can be yours continuously as you seek for that deeper joy that comes with doing what God wants you to do. Love God and love all God's children. Do seek to "Always be full of the joy of the Lord" each day of the year.

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we look forward to peace and
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