

# ENCOURAGEMENT FOR *Real Life*

## 124. Sound Your Joy on Repeat to the World

You are listening to episode 124 of the Encouragement for Real Life Podcast titled, Sound Your Joy on Repeat to the World. Welcome to the podcast today. I thank you for joining me, and Merry Christmas! With Christmas being less than a week away, I wanted to, in some way, create a Christmas-focused episode this week, and so here we are. We are peering into a Christmas carol, that was never meant to be one, and how one sentence in this carol continues to ring loudly above all the others in my brain. I pray this episode encourages your heart and adds a lift to your step during this Christmas season. Get ready to sound your joy on repeat to the world, friend. So, let's get to it.

What does joy sound like? Pause a moment and think about your answer. I can think of a few examples. The joy-filled squeals of my excited grandsons when I walk into their home on Wednesday mornings. Or the tune of the worship song I may be listening to. It can even be the sound of stillness with a distant train whistle on a quiet morning as I step outdoors and watch the sunrise.

### **What does joy sound like to you?**

Now, I know this isn't a typical question to ask, and quite honestly, I've not asked or answered this before until today. But I've been thinking about joy a fair amount lately. What it is, where it comes from, and why it matters in my life. I've even searched online about joy and why it's deeper than happiness. All because I've been stuck on this one Christmas carol: Joy to the World.

In my search, I've learned that Isaac Watts didn't write this to be a Christmas carol, nor a hymn at all. He wrote it as a poem in 1719, so it's been around awhile. It was his Christian interpretation of Psalm 98, and the lyrics reflect more of Christ's second coming than His first as a baby. I can certainly understand why it became a Christmas carol, however, for the first stanza reminds me of Advent and preparing my heart for His coming.

Joy to the world! the Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing (repeat),  
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

But interestingly, stanza three isn't about the birth at all, but more about how Christ defeated the effects of sin through His death and resurrection. It also points me to the text of Genesis 3 when it mentions the curse and thorns.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,  
Nor thorns infest the ground;  
He comes to make His blessings flow

Far as the curse is found (repeat)  
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

But no matter, as we know, it's a beautiful Christmas carol. I'm thankful the tune was added to the poem over 100 years after it was written so we can enjoy it today.

That's probably more information you ever wanted to know about Joy to the World. So maybe you can say today you learned something new.

But the sentence I'm stuck on, that keeps repeating over and over in my mind lately is found in stanza two.

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns;  
Let men their songs employ;  
While fields and floods, rocks, hills, and plains  
Repeat the sounding joy (repeat),  
Repeat, repeat the sounding joy.

**Yes, repeat the sounding joy.**

That's it. It continues to ring in my head throughout this season. It's clear that joy is to be ours, and we are to repeat it. But again, what does joy sound like? And how are we to repeat it? I've come to the conclusion, if I ponder the first verse of each stanza, each one fills me with great joy.

Joy to the world! the Lord is come

Joy to the world! the Savior reigns

No more let sins and sorrows grow

He rules the world with truth and grace

In a way, they form the message of the gospel and the hope we have through Jesus: Jesus has come, He reigns as Savior, He has power over my sins and sorrows, and His truth and grace rules the world. This right here is complete joy, and this is why we who follow Jesus have the hope we do. This is why we celebrate His birth every year at this time.

**It's worth repeating, and this joy we have is worth repeating.**

So joy sounds like a baby's first cry in a manger.

It sounds like the angel's declaration to the shepherds that "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord" (Luke 2:11 NIV).

It sounds like the heavenly host proclaiming the truth of His birth and giving God glory in the fields that night.

Joy also sounds like how the wise men appeared bearing gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh.

It sounds like lots of other things too.

Like how God guides you and me every day to His will for our lives.

Like how He meets us in and provides for our every need.

It also sounds like the laughter, the conversations, and even the tears among friends God has blessed us with.

It may also sound like trusting God when the bottom of life falls out, like believing in His healing power for a sick loved one, and even like the hope we profess through our grief in a loved one's passing.

Joy comes from God, Himself, and it has nothing to do with being happy. Joy is a byproduct of a relationship with Jesus. And this joy is worth repeating.

**So, sound your joy on repeat to the world today, my friend.**

You have joy to share. You may not think you do, and it may feel like you don't, but you do. After all, it's one of the fruits of the Spirit.

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

It comes from the Holy Spirit, so even in the hardest of times, we have joy because of Jesus. Because joy has nothing to do with our circumstances or situations.

The world needs joy today, don't you think? It'll need it tomorrow too. You have it, so sound it on repeat. Share the message of the Christmas story. Share the message of what God has done or is doing in your life. I would love to hear your joy. We'll be discussing this over in our private Encouragement for Real Life Community on Facebook this week. Stop in for a few minutes and join the conversation. The link to this group is in the show notes.

You can also find in my free Resources on my site a printable that contains the full Christmas story Bible verses. It's a great tool for you or for you and your loved ones to read together this season. It's full of joy!

Joy to the world. Sound your joy on repeat to the world, my friend. Keep sounding it. Keep sharing it and keep repeating it. Sometimes we might need to hear the joy come from our own mouths in our own voice.

**Yes, we have good news to share this season and beyond.**

Luke 2:10-12 reads, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." Oh, what a joy we have!

Before we close, I have some exciting news to share. You may know I published a book in October titled, *Right Now Matters: Empowering Right-Now Women in a Culture of Distraction*. You may also know I have been working on a companion to go with that book, which is scheduled to be published soon. The *Right Now Matters Bible Study: A 28-Day Guided Adventure to Living as a Right-Now Woman* will be available sooner than I expected! I'm excited to announce it will release next Tuesday, December 26, my birthday! You'll be able to order it just in time for the new year! All the details are at [rightnowmatters.com](http://rightnowmatters.com), and you'll be able to find it on Amazon and Barnesandnoble.com.

Also, if you found encouragement in this episode, would you please leave a rating or review so others can find this encouragement too? Be sure to subscribe so you never miss a new episode.

Friend, sound your joy on repeat to the world today. I pray this joy permeates everything we do over the next few days as Christmas approaches. Not only then, but also into the new year. I pray the joy of the Lord is your strength today, tomorrow, and every single day forward. Merry Christmas, friend. God bless you!

[Joy to the World](#)

[Luke 2](#) NIV

[Galatians 5:22-23](#) NIV

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*Julie Lefebvre*