

**Monday, December 15**  
**Dr. Jeff Reynolds**

**Jesus gives joy no one can steal.**

“Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you.” (John 16:20-22).

I’ll never forget the day our son was born. He was our first child, and my wife and I were petrified. We knew we wanted to welcome our child into the world and were excited to do so, but the gravity of that day was real. I knew that our lives would never be the same ever again. My wife knew that, too, but she had the small matter of labor and delivery on her mind as well.

Being the excellent, godly husband I am, I shared a devotion with her from Scripture as the contractions increased in frequency and intensity: “To the woman, [God] said, ‘I will surely multiply your pain in childbearing . . .’” (Genesis 3:16). There’s more to that verse, but my wife stopped me before I could get it all out. My wife loves Jesus, and she loves me, but in the midst of labor, she was not interested in hearing my thoughtful exposition of that particular passage. (Yes, I really did that, and yes, I was joking. I thought it was hilarious. She must not have gotten the joke, because she was less than amused. I did not repeat that particular devotion on the day of our second child’s birth.)

My takeaway from watching two human beings enter the world is twofold. First, women are incredible, and I’m glad to be a boy. Second, there are types of joy that eclipse even the greatest amount of pain. Jesus brought up childbirth as He was telling His disciples of His impending death. He told them that they would hurt, and the world would rejoice while they were in agony. He told them that they would have sorrow at His death, and He was clear that the events that were coming would ache bitterly. But then He said that they would see Him again. He would come back to them, and their grief would turn to joy. And no one—*no one*—could take their joy from them.

My wife was willing to go through childbirth, first because she really didn’t have a choice once those babies were growing in her womb. They had to come out somehow. Second, and more importantly, she knew the joy they would bring to our family. So she was willing to endure the pain, because she knew a greater reward was coming. That’s what Jesus was telling His disciples: Endure the pain, because a greater reward is coming. He tells us the same thing today. Jesus, our Reward, is coming, and when He comes, nothing and no one will be able to diminish our joy.