

February 2026 CCH Times Ink Article

*“Dear brothers and sisters, when troubles of any kind come your way, consider it an opportunity for great joy.” James 1:2 – New Living Translation*

I'd like to say that Valentine's Day got me thinking about the difference between happiness and joy—but actually it was from a James Emery White talk I listened to while knitting red hats in front of the woodstove. White described joy as coming from believing and following the message of Scripture, while happiness is something that comes “from the world”. He noted that while we frequently use these descriptors interchangeably they're actually quite different states of being. Happiness is a reaction to something external that happens to you. It's transient—coming and then going as your circumstances or situations change. Happiness originates from events and things, like receiving an unexpected Valentine in the mail, being given a genuine complement, or discovering you have the winning raffle ticket. And as such, happiness is a lovely outside-in kind of feeling. But joy? Joy is a state of being that comes from within you and transcends your surroundings and circumstances. While being happy certainly feels good in the moment, joy is a more stable, long-lasting, sense of purpose and inner peace. Happiness is something you can buy—but joy is something you need to practice and nurture.

I have struggled to comprehend how people could say they feel joy even in the midst of deep pain, grief and suffering. But, diving more deeply into this, I think I finally have a clearer understanding of the connection between joy and Jesus. It seems I was confusing joy with happiness. Joy is rooted in the eternal hope and promise that death is not the end and if we accept Jesus, it is assurance of our future with God. As we develop a deeper relationship with God, as we love and serve one another as Jesus taught and demonstrated, and as we abide in Christ (accept and act in accordance with Jesus), we are promised great joy. *“These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full.” John 15:11– New King James Version*

We invite you to join us on Sundays at 9 am as we continue our journey for a deeper relationship with God.