

This week has been an interesting week by far. It started off really low for me and then it started to crawl up and get a little bit better. And then it got kicked in the shins again and fell back down. And then started to get better, and it had to get better, and I got hit again. And it just keeps going down. So, it's been really hard this week to think about joy. Like everything I feel like I'm doing, I'm doing wrong. Everything I feel like is going on in my life has been bad. So to get through that I'm like what is going to make me think about joy so I can work this week? And I start watching old Christmas movies. That usually gives me comfort, and they didn't at this time. So I'm like, all right well what else can I do? What else can I find to put me over that edge that will get rid of this rainy day and everything else.

So we start working on Christmas gifts, which we've had most of them done already. Wednesdays working on her list. So we're helping her, we're like okay look let's work on this. Let's find out what do you want Santa to bring? It's huge. It's a huge list. You can guess every word starts with Bluey and that it's something else. Everything she wants. And it's all big things; it's all, glorious things. It's all great things, and she just is giggling and happy. And she's having a great time. So that takes me a little bit out of my funk.

And I start thinking about it because this is always a hard one. This is always a hard one because you got the one weird color candle out of the rest of them. You have that one day, today, that it's like why is that one candle different? What makes it different? Because you would always think with the pink candle would be love instead of joy, but it's not, obviously. So, I looked it up, I look it up every year. I always know the answer is, but I always look to see if there's something different from last year. When I look it up whoever was writing the thing I was reading saying, well, how do you define happy? How do you define happy? How do you define joy? So I stopped reading right there; I looked it up. I'm like, how did you define happy. Happy is defined as temporary Joy. I looked up joy. Joy is defined as extended happy. It doesn't make a lot of sense. They mean each other but either means nothing. Neither one of those words mean something outside of itself. But the two parts of it that are important is the temporary and the extended.

I was thinking about doing that list with Wednesday and I know all of those Bluey toys are going to bring her happiness. And they're going to bring her temporary happiness. I guess that's the difference between Santa and Christ. At Christmas Santa brings that little temporary happiness. He brings that little bit of joy for one day and then you go to school the next day and you talk with your friends about what they got and what you got. And some of your friends got a lot better things than you've got. Some of your friends didn't get anything at all. And then that kind of shifts your view on it. But that shows what Santa does compared to what Jesus does.

The reason that the candle is pink is because we're anticipating the joy of Jesus coming. We're anticipating the joy that God is going to give us with his birth. That's what makes it different. Blue candles show hope. The hope that we have for everyone. The hope that we have for peace; the hope that we have for love. The joy is different.

David wrote In the Psalm today about joy. He wrote about how much God cares for us and protects us. There's different discussions on when he wrote that Psalm. One was he just escaped from Saul and he knew that God was protecting him and saving him from Saul for his next step in his journey. Others say that it was written years after when he was King and he had just got out of a battle. And some say that he fell asleep while he was shepherding. And instead of the sheep failing on him, so to speak, when he woke up they're all still there because he knew that if they had all disappeared his dad would be mad. And in either respect, God protected him. God protected him and gave him a gift. Continued to give him that gift. He was thanking him for it and at the end, David realizes that the real gift that God gave him is joy.

He knows joy, because he knows God. He knows that he can feel it in his heart. One of those covenants that God gave us where he wrote love within us, where he wrote perfection within, is where he wrote joy within us. That's why there's no definition for joy outside of extended happiness. We know what joy is because God gave it to us. One of as many gifts, he gave us, that he gave us Jesus, the greatest gift of all.

David knew that he was going to give us Jesus. Because at the end, he's talking about eternal salvation. He's talking about the gift that God is going to give us a savior who will extend that joy for all time. Not just here on Earth, but in heaven. We'll always have that joy because of him. We'll always have the joy because of the gift of Jesus. Because of God's love for us each day. We might not wake up happy each day; we might wake up having a hard time. But when we see pink, we know that there's joy somewhere. We know that God has put joy within many of us, and the hard part is getting it out. The hard part is sharing it with everyone else.

This time of year we share joy because we feel God's love. We see it everywhere we go. It's the only time of year that we actually get to see God's love everywhere and nobody cares. If you're Catholic, if you're Methodist, Presbyterian, UCC, Lutheran, Jewish, Islamic, nobody cares. But what we all care about is that we want to make everyone happy. That's the important part. We are temporary. We can give and extend as much joy as we possibly can but we are temporary. Our life here on Earth is very limited, much like Jesus. But we know that the joy that God gave us, that we continue to share, that little bit will be forever. Let us pray.