

[Light the first two candles.] If kiddos are involved, let the first one who was still and quiet light the first two candles (if they are old enough).

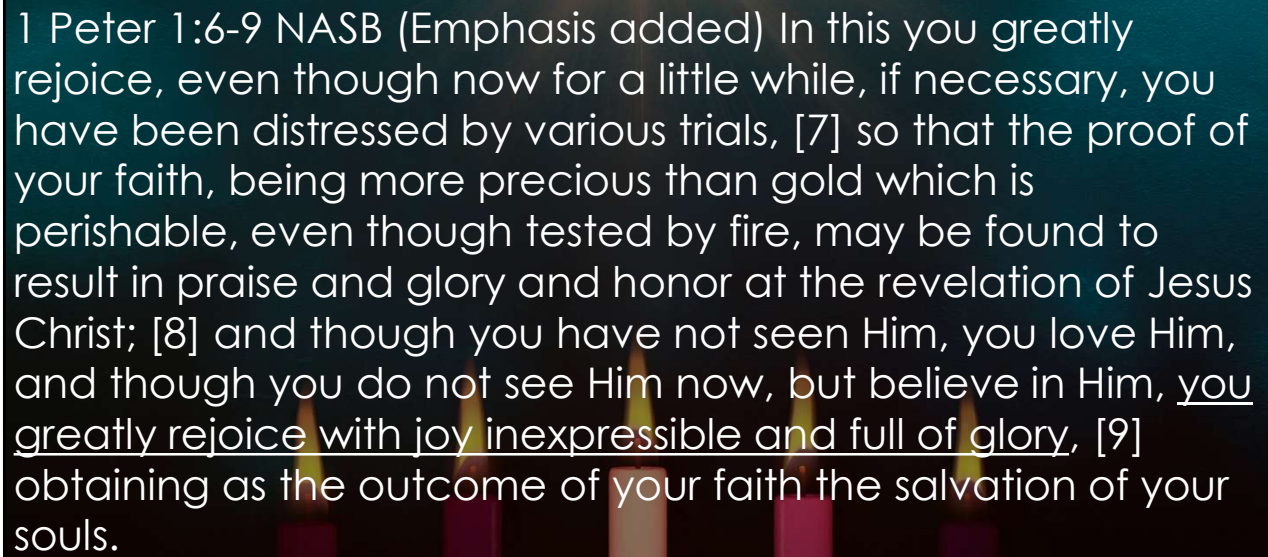
Today, the third Sunday of Advent, we focus on the pink candle. [Don't light it yet]

Why purple to pink? The reason for the shift in the color is a shift in focus in the repentant tone to celebration.

In our culture, everyone just wants to be happy. Statistics show that despite that desire, there is an epidemic of depression and anxiety. This week of Advent, we will unfold something much richer than the fleeting happiness this world offers. We will discover the deep, abiding and lasting joy that is offered when Jesus came to this world.

If you choose, begin by watching the video about JOY. Click on the QR code or follow this link (<https://spencerchristianchurch.subspla.sh/nd6dq44>) to access the video.

If you want to keep it an "unplugged" moment, move to the next page.



1 Peter 1:6-9 NASB (Emphasis added) In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, [7] so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; [8] and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, [9] obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

Our joy is not some empty, short-lived, circumstance dictated, shallow happiness.

The joy we have in the Lord is rooted in our faith in Christ and what He has done **DESPITE** our circumstances.

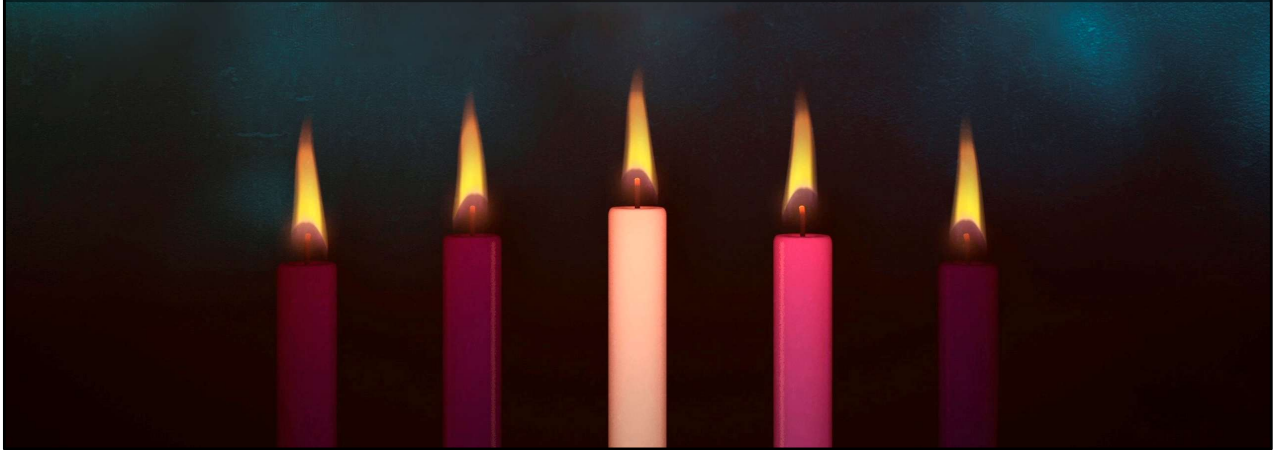
ADULT VERSION OF QUESTION

In 1 Peter 1:6-9, we're reminded that our faith, tested through trials, produces joy and strengthens our hope in Christ. How can you actively demonstrate the peace of this unshakable faith by responding with grace and trust in God during a current challenge in your life?

KIDS VERSION OF QUESTION

In 1 Peter 1:6-9, God says our faith in Jesus can make us joyful even when things are hard. How can you show God's peace by staying happy and kind to others when something tough happens, like a bad day at school?

John 15:10-11 NASB (Emphasis added) If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. [11] These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.



ADULT VERSION OF QUESTION

In John 15:10-11, Jesus teaches that abiding in His love through obedience leads to complete joy. How can you actively cultivate peace in your life by choosing to follow Jesus' commands in a specific relationship or situation this week?

KIDS VERSION OF QUESTION

In John 15:10-11, Jesus says loving Him and following His words fills us with joy. How can you show Jesus' love and bring peace to someone, like a friend or family member, by doing something kind today?

JOY LEADER: Sing! Shout! Dance! Rejoice and exult with all your heart! Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice!

RESPONSE: We rejoice in the expectation; we rejoice in the waiting. We will sing and dance through the night, because joy comes in the morning.

LEADER: With joy we can draw water from the wells of salvation. With joy we can find strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow. With joy we can move our bodies and our minds toward thanksgiving.

RESPONSE: We rejoice in the expectation; we rejoice in the waiting. We will sing and dance through the night, because joy comes in the morning.

LEADER: Restore to us, O God, the joy of life with You. Remind us that joy is indeed our strength, and that Your joy sustains us. [Light two purple candles and the pink candle.]

ALL: We light a candle of joy today, believing in the promises of God. The morning comes soon. We will call upon God's name, and we will make praise be known among the nations. Amen.

With the first two purple candles already lit, and as you prepare to light the pink "Joy Candle", have one person read the "Leader" lines and others read the "Response" line. After the reading light the pink "Joy Candle". Take a moment with your loved ones to discuss what gives them joy. Then think about how the message of Jesus' return brings us joy.

If you are using this as a personal devotional, read both parts and then light the pink "Joy Candle". Take a few moments of solitude to appreciate how Jesus is the light and hope of the world.

If you have small children, use the "Response" lines as a short prayer before you light the pink "Joy Candle". Enjoy the glow of the candle together in a quiet moment with your kiddos. Now reward the one who was the most attentive the joy of blowing out the candles.