

Advent: Choose Joy!

Speaker: Jeff Dunrankin

Date: Sunday, December 7, 2025

Scripture: Galatians 5:22; Psalm 4:7; John 15:4-5; Psalm 5:11

SUMMARY

Jeff Dunrankin contrasts thin “happiness” with biblical joy—a Spirit fruit that grows in people who stay connected to Christ, serve others, and choose a God-centered life even in hard places.

OVERVIEW

Lighting the Advent candle of joy, Jeff Dunrankin recalls an airport stranger who assumed a youth pastor’s goal was happiness. Scripture mentions happiness rarely but joy hundreds of times—often beside sacrifice, affliction, generosity, and faithfulness.

Joy, he argues, is less a mood we chase than a set of decisions: remain in the Vine (John 15), pursue God rather than self-focused happiness, and practice habits seen in joyful people—intentional connection with God among them. Psalm 4’s “more joy in my heart than when grain and wine abound” names a gladness circumstances cannot manufacture.

KEY POINTS

- Happiness is a thin goal; Scripture elevates joy as deeper and more frequent
- Joy appears near sacrifice, affliction, generosity, and faithfulness—not ease alone
- Joy is fruit of the Spirit, not the product of perfect circumstances
- Joyful people pursue God; joy follows as ambient light from that life
- Jesus’ command: remain in Me—the branch cannot bear fruit alone
- Choosing joy is a series of daily decisions, not a single feeling
- God can put more joy in the heart than abundance ever gives

MEMORABLE LINES

"If it makes you happy, that's the goal, right? I hope that's not the goal."

"Donkeys are mentioned more often than happiness—but joy over 400 times."

"You have put more joy in my heart than they have when their grain and wine abound."

"Remain in me... apart from me you can do nothing."

TAKEAWAY

Trade a happiness chase for vine-abiding: pick one daily practice that keeps you intentionally connected to Jesus, and watch joy grow as fruit—not as a project.

SOURCE

- YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C55iIhPAZIY> (captions)
- Website: <https://www.baypointchurch.com/media/6j4j6hx/advent-choose-joy>