

DEEPER: CONTAGIOUS JOY

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Michael Swartzentruber, Senior Minister



John 15:9-17

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love. 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. I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

'This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. I do not call you servants* any longer, because the servant* does not know what the master is doing; but I have called you friends, because I have made known to you everything that I have heard from my Father. You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go and bear fruit, fruit that will last, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask him in my name.

I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another.

REFLECT & DISCUSS

1. Read the passage slowly. Then take a deep breath and read it again. What word, phrase or image stands out to you?
2. What is joy? Is it different from happiness? Why or why not?
3. Share a memory or story of a time you experienced great or surprising joy.
4. Have you ever experienced a time when someone else's happiness or joy spread to you? What happened?
5. St. Paul writes about joy in many of his letters, most notably Philippians (some call it the "letter of joy"). Often, he is rejoicing despite suffering, persecution, and or even imprisonment (Philippians 1:13). What might joy mean in these moments?
6. Jesus speaks of the joy of love. Think of a time when you experienced joy by showing or receiving love?
7. How can we as a church bring about "contagious joy"?

South Elkhorn Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

4343 Harrodsburg Road, Lexington KY 40513

859-223-1433 southelkhorncc.org