

Lesson 2

The Fruit of the Spirit – Joy

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

1. Imagine you wanted to plant a small vegetable garden. What things would be necessary if you wanted the plants to be fruitful?

2. What things are most important if we want to bear fruit as a Christian?
 - Of these components which ones are you doing regularly?

 - Which ones do you need to increase?

 - What are some practical ways you can increase in these?

3. What dangers would you need to protect your garden from?
 - As believers, what things do we need to avoid in order to be fruitful?

For our second study, we will look at joy.

4. Define joy.

- What are some synonyms of joy?
- What are some antonyms of joy?

Read Acts 16:16-34

5. What part did joy play in the story?

6. Why do you think Paul and Silas were able to express joy in such difficult circumstances?

7. How did the joyful life of Paul and Silas help them share the gospel with others?

For Discussion:

A. Think of a time in your life when things were very difficult and yet you found that God gave you joy.

The word joy is a translation of a Greek word used more than 50 times in the New Testament. Some of these verses will provide insight into what godly joy is like and where it comes from.

Read Luke 15:7

1. According to Luke 15:7 what brings God joy?

Read Hebrews 12:2

2. According to Hebrews 12, what part did joy play in the actions of Jesus?

3. Think about the cross, what did Jesus have to endure to make it possible for sinners to be saved?

4. According to 2 Corinthians 11:24-28, what did Paul endure to bring the gospel to others?

For Discussion:

A. If seeing sinners saved is what brings God joy, what are you willing to endure to participate in sharing Christ with others?

Make a list from the following verses of where joy comes from.

- *John 15:11*

- *John 16:24*

- *Acts 13:52*

- *Romans 15:13*

- *1 Thessalonians 2:19*

For Discussion:

Examine the list you just compiled:

A. Which ones are you currently involved in?

B. Which ones do you need work on?

C. Which ones do you not understand and would benefit from some further instruction?

D. It has been said that the difference between joy and happiness is that happiness is based upon circumstances while joy is a condition of the heart. As a believer we can be saddened by circumstances and still have a joy that carries us through.

1. What do the following verses teach us about joy?

- *James 1:2-3*

2. Why should we rejoice in trials?

3. Read the story of Jesus in the boat in *Mark 4:35-40*. What do you learn about Jesus and trials from this story?

4. How can you apply this lesson to your current circumstances?

Read Nehemiah 8:10

5. Where does Nehemiah tell us joy comes from?

6. How does joy give us strength?

Read Psalms 16:11

1. Imagine a scenario where you possessed a key that would unlock chains that held a person captive. Imagine that you offered them the key but they ignored you trying to no avail to break the chains or to function as though they were not held by them. How does this scenario illustrate the truth that in the presence of God is where joy is found?

Read Psalms 126:5

2. What is sowing?

3. What is reaping?

4. What is promised to the weeping sower?

Read Jeremiah 15:16

1. What did Jeremiah do with the word of God?

2. How do we do that?

3. What were the results?

Read Genesis 37:34-35

Jacob received news that his son Joseph had been killed by wild animals. When he heard the news he broke down and mourned profusely. As time went on his children attempted to comfort him, but he refused to receive the comfort available to him. Jacob would spend the next several years living under a dark cloud refusing to allow God to replace his sorrow with joy.

4. Without diminishing the difficulties you might have endured, ask yourself if you are in anyway refusing the comfort and joy God has provided for you.

5. Take a few minutes to pray asking God to replace sorrow with joy

For Discussion:

A. Life is sometimes difficult and we all must walk through seasons of sorrow. What have you learned in this lesson about how to receive strength during House seasons and how to move on to the next season?