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Wednesday Night Bible Study, May 05, 2010

TITLE: Fruit of the Spirit: Joy

let me start with another version .....

Matthew 7:17-20 (AMP)

...Every healthy (sound) tree bears good fruit [worthy of admiration], but the sickly (decaying, worthless) tree bears bad (worthless) fruit. A good (healthy) tree cannot bear bad (worthless) fruit, nor can a bad (diseased) tree bear excellent fruit [worthy of admiration]... Therefore, you will fully know them by their fruits.

Jesus told His disciples that you can tell if someone truly belongs to Him by the kind of spiritual fruit that they produce. What does that mean?

Everything that you do. Every thing that you say.  
You begin to look more like Jesus.

Does the way you live identify you as a Christian?

Galatians 5

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

23 Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.

24 And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts.

25 If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

Here are the 9 signs to check for:

1. Love
2. Joy
3. Peace
4. Longsuffering
5. Gentleness
6. Goodness

- 7. Faith
- 8. Meekness
- 9. Temperance

Galatians 5 The Message  
 22 But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard....

These signs are evidence to the world that you are a Christian and

Contemporary English Version.....

God's Spirit makes this fruit in us.

New Century Version....

the Spirit produces this fruit in us.

**1 LET'S BE KNOWN AS A CHRISTIAN by the fruit of the Spirit.**

April: love

May: joy

June: peace an even temper, forbearance (AMP),

July: longsuffering

August: gentleness

September: goodness

October: faith faithfulness

November: meekness

December: temperance self-discipline

**2 definition of joy**

Let me give you a definition of "joy."

*Joy is an evidence of the presence of God in your life.*

Or....a more Biblical phrase....

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit.

If God is in your life, if you are filled with the Spirit of God, then this fruit of the Spirit will be obvious in your life.

**Do you have that joy that the Bible talks about?**

It's obvious that many people don't.

And you've been around them, haven't you?

They're grumps, they're gripers, and grouches.

They are cranky, they're very negative about virtually everything that happens in life, complaining almost all the time.

As a result, they just aren't much fun to be around.

Careful to say...."Amen!" right now.....the person beside you may think you were thinking of them....

I didn't mean that any of you were one of those.

## STORY

The story is told about a man that paid a visit to the doctor's office. As he walked in, he was met by one of those receptionists that had never experienced this fruit of the Spirit.....of JOY.

He told her that he had a sore on his chin that he wanted the doctor to examine.

She said to him, "Down the hall, first door to the right, & take off your clothes." "But ma'am," he said, "it's just a sore on my chin. I don't think all that is necessary." She repeated, "Down the hall, first door to the right, & take off your clothes." "But ma'am," he said. She repeated..."Down the hall, first door to the right, & take off your clothes."

So he went down the hall, took the first door to the right, walked in & saw another man already sitting there in his boxer shorts, shivering. He said to him, "Boy, that receptionist is really something, isn't she? I just have a little sore on my chin & she told me to come down here, go through this door & take off my clothes." The man in the boxer shorts said, "You think that's bad? I'm the FedEx delivery man."

Lesson: There are some difficult people, aren't there?

Recently we have been reading about the Cleveland Clinic performing a new procedure that is a face transplant. What a radical procedure that is!

But far too many people need a personality transplant. Appears that no matter what they have.... they can never smile.... and never demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit that is JOY.

### ③ What does the Bible say about JOY?

Psalm 30.11

11 Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness;

Romans 14.17

17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

and 15.13

13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

These verses teach us that joy does not come from earthly things .... and certainly not at the expense of others or gaining something over someone else in competition.

But true joy has its foundation in God.

Biblical JOY.

The JOY that is a FRUIT of the SPIRIT comes from the original word *chara*, and the characteristic of this word is that it most often describes that joy which has a basis in a relationship with God.

Indicates either joy in God or joy before Him.

The word declares the acts of God.

④ There is more than one type of joy found in Scripture.

1. Joy that comes from things or events which affect outward physical well-being and especially situations which give rise to a mood of common cheerfulness.

Problem: too many mistake happiness for joy.

It's easy to do that.

The Bible mentions "joy" or "rejoicing" 330 times. But it only mentions "happiness" 26 times.

Happiness depends upon what happens to you. So if all the circumstances are right, then you can be happy. But joy comes from inside.

2. The second kind of joy involves an inner process.

Kittel: Strictly, only God has real joy. In His relationship to men His joy is the supreme blessing.

Look at Paul's experience.....

Philippians 1:1-2:30

1 Paul ... to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi...  
3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,  
4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy,  
5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;  
6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform [it] until the day of Jesus Christ:  
  
11 Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God.  
  
12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things [which happened] unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;  
13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other [places];  
14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my

bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

**18 What then? ... I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.**

Chapter 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings:

15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world;

16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.

17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.

**2.18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.**

### **Philippians 2:14-15 WE version**

14 Do everything without grumbling or making trouble.

15 In that way you will be completely good. No one will be able to say anything wrong about you. You will be God's good children living amongst bad people. Among them you will shine like lights in the world.

People talk about their giving and refer to the passage that says God loves a cheerful giver.

But contributing to the church's offering is not the only action God wants us to take cheerfully. We must do everything with the right attitude.

God loves a cheerful giver.... but....

God also loves a cheerful obeyer.

and .... God loves a cheerful husband and a cheerful wife.

and .... God loves a cheerful Christian.

We shouldn't be doing God's will grudgingly.

don't moan and complain about how hard we have it all the time.

We need to work on obeying God without complaining.

In the month of May.... let's work on keeping a smile on our face no matter what we have to face and do it without grunts, groans, sighs, and all complaining ....

No complaining about who I live with, who I work with, who I come in contact with.

No complaining about what I don't have.....

God loves a cheerful Christian.

In the month of May.....Let's add to LOVE.....the fruit of the Spirit that is .... JOY.

## 5 Identify some enemies of joy.

Now, what are some enemies of joy?

### 1. Some enemies of joy.

A. Sometimes we're robbed of joy by **our differences**.  
marriage.....  
people around us....

B. A second enemy of joy is **unresolved guilt**. A lot of people are unable to accept themselves, & to accept the forgiveness of God.

You may have come through a divorce & you feel that you're inferior in the sight of God. Or you may have had a brush with the law & you feel that you're not welcome in God's house. Or that people would not understand if they knew the secrets of your life.

Example

David was the same way in the O.T. He had committed adultery, & he felt enormous guilt over it. He wrestled with the guilt and finally came to God and prayed,

Psalm 51

1....Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me ....cleanse me from my sin.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Make me to hear joy and gladness; [that] the bones [which] thou hast broken may rejoice.  
9 Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities.  
10 Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.  
12 Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation;

C. Another enemy of joy is unpleasant circumstances.

All of us, I think, begin life with unrealistic expectations as to what life is going to be like. I know that I started out thinking, "Well, I'll marry the perfect woman." And I did. "And we'll have perfect children." And we do. And that we would live in the perfect house, & make lots of money. Which we haven't. And we would be wondrously happy all of our lives, & there would never ever be any problems.

But problems do come, and they come to everybody. You may lose your job. Your children may disappoint you. There may be heartaches. Your health may break. Problems do come.

But here's the good news. Even though the circumstances are unpleasant, God still wants to give you joy, to change who you are, & the way you think.

### ⑥ How can we experience joy?

consider the question, "How do we experience that kind of joy?"

First...of all, that we need to develop & maintain a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Listen to what Jesus says in John 15:5,6...

5 I am the vine, ye [are] the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing.  
6 If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast [them] into the fire, and they are burned.

Jesus is saying that when we become Christians we're like a branch attached to the vine. Jesus is the vine, & we're the branches. As long as we're attached to Him we'll bear fruit.

That is where it begins. When we are attached to the vine it means that we have accepted Jesus as our Savior. If you're here this morning & are not a Christian, then you need to become one. You can never have the joy that this passage talks about until you are attached to Him.

If you're a Christian, & there isn't much joy in your life, then you need to be reattached to the vine. One of my concerns about the church is that there are detached branches that are dying, but they don't realize it yet. They look alive, they sound like they're alive, but in reality they're dead, because they're no longer attached to the vine.

So you need to be reattached, & there are some basic things that you have to do to make that happen in your life.

1. First of all, you need to read the Word. You can't know what God's will is, or what God wants for you until you read His Word. So read the Word, & spend time in prayer. Seek His will in your life.

2. You also need to be faithful to church.  
We just can't make it by ourselves.

... the joy of the Lord will be your strength.

1 Peter 4

12 Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you:

13 But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.

Lesson: Right now things may be tough, but one of these days we will see the glory of God, and we'll be overjoyed because of it.

3. we need to give ourselves in service for others.

One of the biggest problems in our world today is that we have become so self-centered that we no longer experience the joy of serving others.

the writer of Hebrews says,

2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of [our] faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.  
3 For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.

verse 3....Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Jesus didn't do it for Himself. He did it for us. He went to the cross for us. Why? ...for the joy....

And there's joy even in a cross when you're doing it for someone else.

Lesson: call someone who's lonely.

Visit someone in a nursing home.

Help someone.

Mow somebody's grass who can't do it for themselves.

Write them a note.

Give some money away.

Become less focused on self, more focused on others.

Jesus said...

Whosoever shall seek to save his life shall lose it; and whosoever shall lose his life shall preserve it.

4. Look on things eternal.

2 Timothy 2  
10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

Paul writes,

## 2 Corinthians 4

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen [are] temporal; but the things which are not seen [are] eternal.

16 For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward [man] is renewed day by day.

17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding [and] eternal weight of glory;

18 While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen [are] temporal; but the things which are not seen [are] eternal.

Perhaps my greatest joy as a father and grandfather is to see my children and grandchildren laughing together, enjoying each other's company.

We are doubly blessed that we live close to not only our children...but many of my nephews and nieces....

Explain.....

If that's true with me, isn't it also true with God?

His greatest joy is when His children love each other, and rejoice together, and worship together.

Lesson: The fruit of the Spirit is love expressed in joy.

It's the evidence of God's presence in your life.