

Flint Hills Bible Church
Biblical Soul Care Sunday School
Fruits of the Spirit: Joy Part 1

I. Introduction

1. How would your unbelieving friends and family members define joy? What would they say brings them “joy”?

2. Who is the most joyful person you know? What do you observe about them that makes you say that?

3. Are you a joyful person? Why or why not?

Galatians 5:22–23 (ESV)

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Objectives:

We will read texts about joy in Scripture and glean what joy looks like in the lives of believers.

II. What is the foundation for joy?

Before we begin talking about joy specifically, let’s consider the fruits of the Spirit in the context that Paul is writing to the Galatians.

4. What were the Galatians struggling with?

In the near context Paul describes the works of the flesh and then contrasts it with the fruits of the Spirit.

Galatians 5:19–23 (ESV)

**¹⁹ Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality,
²⁰ idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions,
²¹ envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before,
that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.**

²² But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³ gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

5. What are some important differences between the two lists?

6. Where do the works of the flesh originate? Where do the fruits originate?

7. Why is this an important distinction in the context of discipleship and soul care?

The Holy Spirit is the prerequisite for the fruit to be in our lives. *Note: the greek word for fruit is singular - meaning that all of the virtues listed here are the same fruit. We don't have love without joy and peace and the rest. If we have the Holy Spirit we will have these virtues to some degree.

Joy in Galatians 5:22 is translated from the Greek word *chara* and it means to be joyful, exceedingly glad, great happiness and delight.

Joy then is an emotional response to something. Christian joy goes deeper than that. It is a state of being - a deep rooted happiness that is not changed by the winds of circumstances. However, it requires a proceeding reality. You will not be joyful for no reason.

8. If this is true, how can Paul command us to be joyful always in Philipians 4:4? Is it sinful to not have joy? Why or why not?

Summary: God commands us in Scripture to be joyful because He is worthy of our amazement, of our thankfulness, worship, and devotion. Because of this, it is a blatant sin to not have a deep joyful response to Him and all that He has done for us.

III. What in Scripture brings joy?

- a. God's Character: Psalm 96:10-13

- b. God's Word: Nehemiah 8:9-12, Psalm 19, 119

- c. Salvation/Union with Christ/Living for Christ: John 15:11, Col. 1:9-13, Rom. 15:13

- d. The Holy Spirit: Acts 13:52, Rom. 14:17 1 Thes 1:6

- e. Evangelism: 1 John 1:1-4
- f. Anticipation of Heaven: Phil 3:21, 1 Pet. 1:8, Rom. 14:17
- g. Fellow believers, friends: 2 Tim. 1:4, Philemon 7, Phil 4:1
- h. Discipleship: 1 Thes. 2:20, 3 John 4
- i. Generosity: 2 Chron. 29:6-9, Phil. 4
- j. Children Prov. 23:22-25

Summary:

IV. What does joy look like?

If we are commanded to rejoice in the Lord at all times, we should consider what it can look like in the midst of unpleasant times or even times of great suffering. In the following texts we will consider how believers have displayed their joy.

Before examining what it does look like, it is sometimes helpful to define what it does not have to look like.

What joy is not:

Joy does not have to look like _____.

Habakkuk 3:17–19 (ESV)

¹⁷Though the fig tree should not blossom, nor fruit be on the vines, the produce of the olive fail and the fields yield no food, the flock be cut off from the fold and there be no herd in the stalls, ¹⁸yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation. ¹⁹God, the Lord, is my strength; he makes my feet like the deer's; he makes me tread on my high places. To the choirmaster: with stringed instruments.

Joy does not have to look like _____.

Romans 9:1–2 (ESV)

¹I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Spirit—²that I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart.

Joy does not have to be the absence of _____.

Philippians 3:17–18 (ESV)

¹⁷ Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us. ¹⁸ For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ.

Joy does not have to be the absence of _____.

1 Thessalonians 1:6 (ESV)

⁶ And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

James 1:2–3 (ESV)

² Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, ³ for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness.

*See also: Heb 10:34, 2 Cor. 6:10

What joy can look like:

Exodus 15:1-18 “Song of Moses”

Exodus 15:1–3 (ESV)

¹ Then Moses and the people of Israel sang this song to the Lord, saying, “I will sing to the Lord, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea. ² The Lord is my strength and my song, and he has become my salvation; this is my God, and I will praise him, my father’s God, and I will exalt him. ³ The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name.

9. What does joy look like and sound like in this context?

10. What is the reason given for joy?

2 Samuel 6:12–15 (ESV)

¹² And it was told King David, “The Lord has blessed the household of Obed-edom and all that belongs to him, because of the ark of God.” So David went and brought up the ark of God from the house of Obed-edom to the city of David with rejoicing. ¹³ And when those who bore the ark of the Lord had gone six steps, he sacrificed an ox and a fattened animal. ¹⁴ And David danced before the Lord with all his might. And David was

wearing a linen ephod. ¹⁵ So David and all the house of Israel brought up the ark of the Lord with shouting and with the sound of the horn.

11. What does joy look like and sound like in this context?

12. What is the reason given for joy?

Psalm 2:10–12 (ESV)

¹⁰ Now therefore, O kings, be wise; be warned, O rulers of the earth. ¹¹ Serve the Lord with fear, and rejoice with trembling. ¹² Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and you perish in the way, for his wrath is quickly kindled. Blessed are all who take refuge in him.

13. What does joy look like and sound like in this context?

14. What is the reason given for joy?

*See also: Luke 1:46-55 “Mary’s Song”

Summary:

We see that joy is possible at all times, and that our joy is to be rooted in what we know about God. He is the powerful creator, sovereign ruler, righteous judge, and loving Father. These truths are the foundation that supports our joy. Next week we will seek to answer the question “How do I encourage and foster greater joy both in my life and in the lives of those I counsel?”