

# The Fruit of the Spirit is Joy (Galatians 5:22) – Handout

## I. The Context of Joy

- a. Observe how Galatians begins in contrast to Paul's other epistles
- b. Meditate on how Galatians 5:16 connects with v. 22-23 and v. 25
- c. Compare v. 19 with v. 22 (“deeds” vs. “fruit”)
- d. Think of how love in v. 22 relates to joy and the other traits that follow
- e. Study also v. 13-14 and 1 Cor. 13 for parallel ideas:
  - love has joy in 1 Cor. 13, v. 6
  - love has peace in v. 5 (not easily provoked)
  - love is patience in v. 4
  - love is kindness in v. 4
  - love is goodness in v. 6 (rejoices not in evil)
  - love “believes” faithfully in v. 7 (same Greek root word *pistis* as Gal. 5:23)
  - love is gentle in v. 5 (not behaving rudely)
  - love is self-controlled in v. 4-5

## II. The Commands for Joy

Philippians 3:1, 4:4

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

James 1:1b-2a

Psalms 32:11

Psalms 68:3-4

Psalms 100:2 (compare Deuteronomy 28:47 and following), etc.

*Note: We're not commanded to “be happy” (external emotion based on external happenings)*

## III. The Content of Joy

Of/from the Spirit (Gal 5:22; Acts 13:52; 1 Thessalonians 1:6)

Of/from the Father (James 1:17; Ps 16:11; Lk 15; Zeph. 3:17; Deut. 30:9; Isa. 62:5, 65:19)

Of/from the Son (John 15:11, 17:13; Matt. 25:21, 23; Neh. 8:10)

In the Spirit (Romans 14:17)

In the Father (Romans 5:10-11)

In the Son (Romans 5:11; Philippians 4:4, 10, 1:18, 3:3 NKJV)

In what God has done in past salvation (Lk 2:10-11; Isa 61:10; many psalms)

In what God is doing in present suffering (Jas. 1:2-4; Rom. 5:2-4; 1 Pet 1:6-8)

In what God will do in the future (some psalms, much of OT prophets)

#### IV. The Cultivation of Joy

1. Keep in mind that biblical joy is not mere human happiness or dependent on what's happening or changing feelings or circumstances; joy is experienced in the worst of circumstances and feelings (2 Cor 6:10, 7:4, 8:2; Mt 5:11-12; Acts 5:41; Heb 10:34)
2. Commit to rejoice *in the Lord* (Hab. 3:18: "I will," not "I feel") *by the Lord* (His strength: v. 19) despite unhappy feelings or unfavorable events (v. 17), resolve you *will* praise the Lord in joy (Ps 9:1-2) and "sing for joy" (33:1)
3. Consume His Word (Jer. 15:16) daily, like your treasured food (Job 23:12) and rejoice anytime you hear and understand God's truths (Neh. 8:12b)
4. Cry for eye-opening grace to see and find joy in His Word as you read it (Ps 119:18), making yourself happy in it, not forgetting it after reading it (v. 16), praying for God to revive us (85:6) and restore the joy of salvation if you've lost it (58:12) and to heal your broken spirit to enable gladness (v. 8), praying with joy for others (Phil. 1:4), asking all requests in the Lord's name / will so that our joy may be full as God answers (Jn 16:24)
5. Cultivate a joyful heart when you awake (Ps 59:16) and when you go to bed (149:5)
6. Confess your sins (Ps 32, 51) and keep your heart right and pure (97:11) and trusting the Lord (28:7) and continually humbled before the Lord (Isa 29:19)
7. Come to worship (Ps 43:3-4), not just for your sake but to sing to the LORD and serve others with gladness for His sake (100:1-4), to work for the joy of and encouragement of others (2 Cor. 1:24; Phil. 1:24, Job 29:13, Heb. 10:24-25), to give cheerfully (2 Cor. 9:7, 1 Chr 29:9), and to have fellowship with God and His people (1 Jn 1:3-4, 2 Jn 12, Jn 15)
8. Consider Christ: His incarnation (Lk 1:14; 2:10), His death and resurrection (Mt 28:8), His ascension (Lk 24:51-53), His place in heaven right now (Heb. 12:2-3), His kingdom (Mt 13:44), His coming again (Rev 19:7, 1 Pet 4:13), and His constant presence you must acknowledge constantly (Ps 16:8-11, Phil. 4:4-9)
9. Celebrate the gospel: whenever it's proclaimed (Phil. 1:18), when sinners are saved (Lk 15), for the amazing reality that we're saved (Lk 10:20), and for all the astonishing and undeserved spiritual blessings we have by sovereign grace (Eph. 1:3-14)

For further study: John Piper, *How to Fight for Joy*, and *Desiring God* (appendix excerpted below)

1. Realize that joy must be fought for relentlessly
2. Learn ... how to fight like a justified sinner (Micah 7:8-9)
3. Realize that the battle is primarily a fight to see God for who He is (Ps 34:8)
4. Meditate on the Word day and night (Ps 1:2, 19:7-8, examples of Hudson Taylor, George Mueller)
5. Learn to preach to yourself rather than listen to yourself [feelings]; Ps 42:5, Martyn Lloyd-Jones
6. Spend time with God-saturated people who help you see God and fight the fight
7. Be patient in the night of God's seeming absence
8. Make a proper use of God's revelation in nature [enjoy and praise]; Ps 19:1, Mt 6:28-29
9. Read great books about God and biographies about great saints
10. Do the hard and loving thing for others – witness and mercy (Isa 58:10-11, Ps 67:1-2, 6-7)