

Joy
(Galatians 5:22-23)

Introduction:

1. In our lesson we are concentrating on a very important subject that receives a great amount of attention this time of year -- "joy."
2. Specifically, we are covering passages that relate to:
 - a. developing joy
 - b. maintaining our joy
 - c. not losing our joy.
3. Let us begin our study by showing that . . .

Discussion:

I. WE DEVELOP "JOY" WHEN WE BECOME CHRISTIANS

- A. In Acts we read about many people who were filled with joy when they became Christians, including:
1. people in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:37-38, 41, 46-47)
 2. people in Samaria (Acts 8:5, 8, 12)
 3. the eunuch of Ethiopia (Acts 8:35-39)
 4. the jailer in Philippi (Acts 16:27, 32-34).

B. The Bible shows in 2 Corinthians 5:17 why joy is associated with becoming a Christian.

II. AFTER WE BECOME CHRISTIANS THE BIBLE TEACHES US TO MAINTAIN OUR "JOY"

A. This principle is taught in:

1. Galatians 5:22-23 -- Joy is one of the nine characteristics that collectively make up *"the fruit of the Spirit."*
2. Philippians 3:1 -- *"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord."*
3. Philippians 4:4 -- *"Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice."*
4. 1 Thessalonians 5:16 -- *"Rejoice evermore."*

B. Not only does the Bible teach us to be filled with joy, but it also teaches when we are to be filled with joy -- *"always"* and *"evermore."*

1. To be more specific, the Bible teaches us to be filled with joy when we undergo trials (James 1:1-2; Matthew 5:10-12).
2. Thankfully, we have some positive examples in this area, including:
 - a. the apostles (Acts 5:40-41)
 - b. Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25)
 - c. Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2).

- C. Before we go further, we must understand what the Lord requires of us.
 - 1. We often think of joy as a feeling of happiness that is based on some pleasant experience.
 - 2. The joy we are considering is the gladness of heart that a Christian possesses because he has a right relationship with the Lord.
 - a. This type of joy is not based on how well things are going for us.
 - b. This type of joy can be experienced when things are not going well for us.
 - D. In addition to teaching us to maintain our joy, . . .
- III. THE BIBLE TEACHES US HOW TO MAINTAIN OUR "JOY" SO WE WILL NOT LOSE IT
- A. We must put away "*the works of the flesh*" (Galatians 5:19-21) because they will rob us of joy (Psalm 32:1-5).
 - B. We must practice the Lord's teachings (John 15:10-11).
 - C. We must avoid anxiety (Philippians 4:6-7).
 - D. We must think properly (Philippians 4:8-9).

Conclusion:

1. "Joy" is certainly an important part of Christianity.
2. We have reason to rejoice when we become Christians.
3. We are to continue rejoicing after we become Christians.
4. By following the guidelines that the Lord has given in His Word we will not lose our joy.
5. When you look in a mirror, do you see someone who is filled with "joy?"