

The Fruit of the Spirit: "Joy"
(Galatians 5:22-23)

Introduction:

1. "The Fruit of the Spirit" consists of the 9 special characteristics listed in Galatians 5:22-23.
2. In our lesson we are studying the second characteristic: "joy."
3. Let us begin by showing that . . .

Discussion:

I. CHRISTIANS ARE TO BE FILLED WITH JOY

A. We are taught to be filled with joy in:

1. Philippians 3:1
2. Philippians 4:4
3. 1 Thessalonians 5:16.

B. It is easy to be filled with joy when things go well.

1. However, these verses do not teach us to rejoice only when things go well.
2. We are told to rejoice "*always*" and "*evermore*."

C. The Bible actually teaches us to be filled with joy while we undergo trials.

1. See Matthew 5:10-12; James 1:1-2.
2. Thankfully, we have examples which show that this can be done, including:
 - a. the apostles (Acts 5:40-41)
 - b. Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25)
 - c. Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2).

D. Before we go further, we must understand what "joy" is so we will know what the Lord requires of us.

II. DEFINITION

A. The dictionary defines joy as "the emotion experienced as a result of well-being, success, or good fortune or by the prospect of possessing what one desires."

1. Illustrations: the birth of a baby, athletes winning a championship, etc.
2. This type of joy is based on external circumstances.

B. Joy, in the Bible, is gladness of heart that a Christian possesses because he has a right relationship with the Lord.

1. This type of joy is not based on external circumstances.
2. This type of joy can be and must be maintained even when things may not be going well for us.

C. Now that we understand what joy is, let us consider some instructions which show us . . .

III. HOW TO BE FILLED WITH JOY

A. We must put away the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21) because sin will rob us of joy (see Psalm 51:1-4, 8, 12).

B. We must put the Lord's teachings into practice (John 15:7-11).

C. See Philippians 4:4-9

1. (vs.5) We must practice "*moderation*" [forbearance].
2. (vs.6) We must not be "*careful*" [anxious, filled with worry].
3. (vs.8) We must think on the right things.
4. Following these instructions will allow us to enjoy the blessings mentioned in vs.7, 9b [joy].

Conclusion:

1. Joy is an important part of Christianity.
2. We have reason to rejoice when we become Christians (Acts 8:35-39).
3. We are to continue to rejoice after we become Christians (Acts 2:46-47).