

Keeping Ourselves Unspotted from the World
(Lesson 34)

Introduction:

1. According to James 1:27, "keeping ourselves unspotted from the world" is an important part of "pure and undefiled religion before God."
2. God has blessed us by revealing information in His Word that will help us to avoid being spotted by the world.
3. A careful study of the Scriptures leads us to conclude that "joy" plays an important role in keeping ourselves unspotted from the world.
4. Let us begin our study of "joy" by showing that . . .

Discussion:

I. WE DEVELOP JOY WHEN WE BECOME CHRISTIANS

A. This principle is illustrated by:

1. the people in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:37-38, 41, 46-47)
2. the 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. These people were spotted by the world; however, they were filled with joy after they were cleansed.

II. WE ARE TO MAINTAIN OUR JOY AFTER WE BECOME CHRISTIANS

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 1:2-3; Matthew 5:10-12).
2. We are fortunate to 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 12:1-3).

C. In the Bible, joy is the 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 how well things are going for us.
2. 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 JOY SO WE WILL NOT LOSE IT

A. We must put away "the works of the flesh" (Galatians 5:19-21).

1. Activities such as these cause us to be spotted by the world.
2. David showed in Psalm 32:1-5 how they will rob us of joy.
3. To keep ourselves unspotted from the world so we can maintain our joy we must put away the works of the flesh.

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. When we develop true joy and strive to maintain it by following these instructions, we will want to keep ourselves unspotted from the world.