

 **Fruit of the Spirit: Joy**

Lesson 2: Wednesday, March 23, 2022

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**TEACHING NOTES**

Good evening church family. Turn with me in your bibles to Galatians chapter 5.

I am thankful for Steve’s teaching on love last week to kick of our mini-series on the Fruit of the Spirit. I have the privilege to teach on joy tonight. Look with me at our theme passage and before we look at joy I want to give a few additional thoughts on the fruit of the spirit in general.

**1. The “Fruit” of the Spirit**

**Galatians 5:22-23** …the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23 gentleness, self-control;

When the holy scriptures talk about **Fruit** it is talking about **character!**

While the evidence of fruit is seen on the exterior of ones life (which is why scripture says we are to judge somebody by their fruit). **How can you judge fruit if you can’t see it?** Right?

While the evidence of fruit is seen on the exterior of one’s life it is not just an exterior action but something that comes from within. It is evidence that shows off on the outside what is true on the inside.

This is why it is ultimately about character. It is who someone is, at their core.

It is the **fruit or the character or the attributes of a person.**

So with that in mind, consider these characteristics, these attributes..

 **Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.**

What is unique about these is that these are NOT things sinfulled, selfish, fleshly humans do on their own accord. We don’t produce these things on our own because our flesh is not these things naturally. Quite the opposite as our flesh is full of selfishness, hate, sadness, impatience, meanness, sinfulness, unfaithfulness, harshness and out of control!!!

So, to build on what Steve said in week one, **People don’t produce these things, only God does!!**

Because people are not these things naturally, God is!!

We might put on a good show and or adopt some habits that put on replicas of these things but without God we don’t have this kind of character… we don’t have these attributes.

**2. Fruit of “the Spirit”**

This is why they are called ***“the fruit of the Spirit”*** *a*nd NOT *the fruit of Joshua* or *Justin or Kristen*.

Let me also clarify, that you don’t’ have some of the fruit and not others.

You either have God and are being transformed and sanctified by God in these ways or you are not!!

This is because the fruit is not the result of what you are good at or natural at.

 **It is the result of Christ in you!!!**

**Now our society would say there are a lot of ways you can find or live out Love, patience, happiness, and self-control…**

* Oprah has made millions doing it
* The Self Help section of the book store is the biggest and most lucrative.

But all of these are just selling you on external modifications!

They are manual turns of the steering wheel whereby eventually you will go back to your autopilot. But in Christ, It is no longer you who live but Christ who lives in you and as a result, your life starts to produce the fruit of the SPIRIT.

Jesus said in..

**John 15:5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

Understand this: A Christian does not grow fruit. A branch doesn’t not grow fruit.

The vine grows fruit through the branch. Therefore, Christians do not try to grow fruit. We do not try to be more loving or self-controlled like the world does. No, we **Grow into Christ.**

**Our fruit is dependent on Christ… on the Holy Spirit’s work in us**.

That is why it’s called the.. FOTS.

**I read a pastor who** once said that we need an **“Organic change “through” a new inter-dynamic** (which is God himself) and **not just a mechanical compliance through external actions** (which is trying to be like him or please him by just acting out the Christian lifestyle)

We try to make life better through external actions all the time! **DON’T WE?**

**But think about it like this…** There are two ways you can **Bend Metal.**

1. bend it by force but it will always either bounce back or break

2. or you can heat it and in doing so permanently change it form the inside out

One is an eternal modification by your work and will and the other is an internal work by the application of another source.

**Jesus is the internal organic change….**

The world says, “**just change your ways externally”** but in the end you will never have a living connection to only person that can truly change you form the inside out.. and produce lasting fruit!

**There is an epidemic problem in Christianity that is frustrating many people right out the door of their local church….**

Many have been taught and or have bought into the idea that the Christian life is one of **external modifications.** As a result, sermons in these settings are often just a list of pragmatic do’s or don’ts and cut and paste studies that are often very surface level discussions about how one feels about the topic or passage.

Understand this church: **Jesus didn’t come to give us a casual experience of a better life now.**

He came to die for us so that we could die to ourselves and live in Christ every day as we mature in the good word he gave us.

Paul said it well…

**Ephesians 4:15-16** Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to **grow up in every way into him** who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

“we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ”

**Christian growth is into Christ**

So when Jesus says in **John 15:5** I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing.

He saying is: **I am the key to that! I am the true source for this kind of life..**

How can a selfish person become selfless? - How can mean person become kind?

How can a whiner become a person filled with joy? - How can an addict discover self-control?

How can a worrier become filled with peace? - How can a controller become patient?

What Jesus is saying is: ***The Holy Spirit will produce this FRUIT in you when you abide in me!***

**Quickly: one more thing and then we will turn to Joy**

**Notice an essential detail here and it is found in one letter!**

**John 15:5** I am the vine; you are the branches. (Plural) Not you are the branch!! (Singular)

This is huge and often overlooked.. one of the major ways we abide.. remain.. hold fast to Jesus is the constant involvement of the other branche”s”, plural, many, others, that God has put in your life because of his adoption of you into his family. The Christian life is not one we are to do alone.

You are saved into a family, into a redeemed community!

The question you must answer today is: **Who are you doing life with?**

**When I say, “doing life”, I mean who have you invited into your life to really know you and walk with you and point you to Christ?**

This is someone who doesn’t have you ask how you are doing. They don’t have to pry because they are already invited into the details of your life.

They know you. They know your spouse.

They know your struggles, your schedule and your temptations.

Their main purpose in your life at this level is to constantly re-orient you to Jesus!

**When we live in true Christian community we have:**

1. **an example in those we are walking with**
2. **encouragement along the way**
3. **a fuller understanding of the Gospel as I see it lived out in others**
4. **support, prayer and help**
5. **true accountability**

**Do you have people who you have truly invite in to help you stay connected to Him & growing into Him? We need each other, church. God wants us to grow in sanctification in community and not alone. Ok, now, let’s look to joy**

**3. Joy:**

The First thing we need to understand is that **Joy is better than happiness.**

Mankind is really into being happy. And that’s great and fine but not it we stop there and not if we pursue that happiness in the wrong things.

**The Declaration of Independence,** July 4, 1776

**The unanimous declaration of the thirteen United States of America,**

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

**Why is it that happiness has to be pursued? Almost chased? because it is fleeting by nature.**

**Think about it: The things that make you happy, come and go!**

**This is an unavoidable reality of life.**

This is why “Happiness” sells so well. Because you have to keep buying if you want to stay happy.

We live in a society where everybody is peddling happiness.

The legion of professional advertisers tell you that **happiness** can be found in a bottle, new lover, or a new car.

**Now, the pursuit of happiness is defined in broad terms as what?**

🡪Doing great in school, having a great job, owning a big sweet house, going on sweet vacations, marrying the love of your life, having healthy kids! **Right?**

But, before you chase down that road pursuing happiness … Stop and think about:

 \***What if those things don’t happen?**

What if you don’t’…. <>Do great in school, <>what if you lose your dream job,

<>what if you are totally house poor… What if you don’t have healthy kids?

What if your marriage is a real and often lasting struggle?

For many it means **discontent and disappointment and for some even layers of real depression!**

**Blaise Pascal said-** “The only thing which consoles us for our miseries is diversion, and yet this is the greatest of our miseries.”

These are things we use to mask our lack of happiness with life….

**But, What does all of this tell us?**

**It tells us that the pursuit of happiness is an “endless road going nowhere”. A perpetual chase.**

Church: What we have to see this evening is that we have something far greater then Happiness, when we have life in Christ and the Holy Spirit at work in our lives. We have joy!!

**I want you to see tonight that “Joy” is essentially different than happiness because it is not based on our circumstances but in God himself.**

**This is why JOY is a FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT.**

Because to have lasting joy that is bigger than our temporal circumstances we must know the one who is everlasting and surely bigger and better than our temporal circumstances.

**🡪So to experience true lasting satisfying joy** .. **we must know God!!**

**True Joy is only a fruit of the Spirit.**

Pastor John Piper spoke to this well in his flagship book, “desiring God”.

Essentially saying, Man’s sinful pursuit of pleasure and satisfaction and happiness outside of God is not only fleeting but it is idolatry. Instead of this, God has design us to be ultimately satisfied and joyful in Him.

**True Satisfaction is found only in God**

Oh how endless the scriptures are that speak to our hearts greatest satisfaction being found in God.

 “Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!” **Psalm 34:8**

 “Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart” **Psalm 37:4**

They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house; and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures. **Psalm 36:8 KJB**

**Now, to be clear the abundant satisfaction is not** the streets of gold or the reunion with relatives or any other blessing of heaven. We must not reduce God to a key that unlocks a treasure chest of gold and silver. Rather, the bible says, the Almighty himself will be your treasure. He will be your precious silver! -**Job 22:25**  NLT **--Our exceeding joy is found in the Lord Himself!**

This is how David is able to say in…

**Psalm 23:1** The LORD is my shepherd,  **I shall not want.**

**Or said another way*, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not lack any good thing.***

**One of the main things we do not Lack when we are in Christ is that we have an all Sufficient Savior.**

**Jesus was the perfect atonement that stood in our place.**

He suffered. He died physically.

He did so as a substitute in our place. He died the death we deserve.

He did so to pay the penalty for our sins because the wage for sin is death.

Jesus alone can reconcile a holy God to a sinful people because he, as God, became a man, took upon himself sin. Paul said it so well in..

**2 Corinthians 5:21** For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.

**The LORD is my Shepherd I do not LACK the essential savior I need to have life!**

**Praise GOD!**

**Psalm 23:1** The LORD is my shepherd,  **I shall not want.**

**Is this true of you?**

**Do you really believe God is the Greatest Prize?**

**Have you tasted what it is like to not LACK ANY GOOD THING?**

Do you truly agree with Paul when he says in, **Philippians 3:8** Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

***I have all I need in Jesus!******In Christ, there is nothing I lack or need!***- **AMEN?**

Another sweet way Joy is better than happiness is that we have lasting…

**Joy in the midst of suffering**

Jesus said it this way to the disciples in…

**John 16:20-24** Truly, truly, I say to you, you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice. You will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will turn into joy. 21 When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. 22 So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice, and no one will take your joy from you. 23 In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Jesus just got finished saying..

***“ The world will persecute you and hate you and even attempt to kill you. “***

*And now* he says here that his disciples will indeed ***“weep and lament”***

**The reality is:**  **We too will suffer like the disciples did and like our savior did..**

And when we do.. the world will look like they are winning.. they will look to be celebrating.. they will look to be at times even the more desirable way forward… and our flesh will desire to join them instead of continue to be persecuted. **WHY?** because our flesh loves the path of least resistance.

This is why Jesus us undergirding them with truth and He is telling them, **following me will mean sorrow and suffering..**

Don’t be unaware church, don’t be naive or guilty of ignoring the reality of the Christian life in this world. The world will not work right for us.. Oh how we want it to.. we want our kids to be safe and we want a fair chance to succeed but our kids are not safe.. we will not be given a fair chance. .. .

But things often don’t work out that way…

**The authorities of that day are going to get away will lying about Jesus…**

**They are going to successfully have the most innocent person to ever live be condemned to death. how that is a sign of the world working for us or with us.**

But, we must see that God is over all of it.. even the injustice of Jesus death is for the sake of justice for his elect. For those whom He would graciously redeem. WOW.

It wouldn’t take long for the disciples to experience this too

They would lose their lives but before that they would experience regular beatings and false imprisonments for standing for and preaching the name of Jesus.

We too must suffer well for the name of Jesus! Jesus did this to show us the way to great joy!!!

**Hebrews 12:1b-2** let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

**He knew Joy was coming. Endless, unrelenting Joy!**

We need to know that our sorrow will turn into joy as well… look at the rest of Jesus words in…

**John 16:20b** but your sorrow will turn into joy.

Jesus is saying, you must remain steadfast and walk in the living hope you have in me because..

“your sorrow will turn into joy”

This is the promise of God for us… this is what we must we hang our hat on, church.

Not our circumstances… but on the promises of God!!

This is the truth that picks us up when we are in the pit of despair and our life is crumbling.. when our health is failing.. when our loves ones are abandoning.. when our boss is firing.. when our kids are running…

Later, Peter will say it so well in … **1 Peter 1:6**In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,

In this **you rejoice,**

**Who is the You?** We are! The Church is! The Elect Exiles. IN THIS WE REJOICE!

Peter is saying, ***God’s elect exiles are to have joy!*** -We are to rejoice upon the great truths he just got done proclaiming!

He says, “in this you rejoice” **IN what?** The previous verses..

According to his great mercy, **he has caused us to be born again** to **a living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 **to an inheritance that is imperishable, undefiled, and unfading, kept in heaven for you**, 5 who **by God's power are being guarded** through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. **1 Peter 1:3-5**

It is important that our Joy is based on this these great truths and not on our circumstances!

**Because the rejoicing Peter is telling us to have is in the middle of various trials and suffering.**

Look at the rest of **1 Peter 1:6**with me…

In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been grieved by various trials,

**Peter says this again so clearly later in chapter 4..**

**1 Peter 4:12-13** Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. [**13**](http://biblehub.com/1_peter/4-13.htm) **But rejoice** insofar as you share Christ’s sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed.

Like Peter here, Paul too will speak often of rejoicing in the middle of our suffering …

* I rejoice in my sufferings **Col 1:24**
* give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. **1 Thes 5:18**
* giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **Eph 5:20**
* rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer dishonor **Acts 5:41**
* but we rejoice in our sufferings **Romans 5:3**

**It is so important that in all these we see that our joy is not linked to our circumstances but only to Christ and that is why it is constant in the worst of what we are going through and in the best of what we are going through.**

**Will there be pain, and sorrow and hardship that affects us? YES!**

**So,** do not be surprised at the fiery trial … as though something strange were happening to you.

**But it also tells us,** as we experience these things.. **it is always on the FOUNDATION of Joy in Christ. Of thanksgiving and praise!**

This is how Paul is able to say that he is: “sorrowful, yet always rejoicing” in **2 Corinthians 6:10**

**I plead with you to NOT dismiss this truth tonight.**

**I know many of you are in the middle of hard things… painful stuff.**

**This life.. in the here and now is really hard.**

-Death of loved ones, -Financial stress, -Wrestling with addictive habits,

-Flesh driven motivations of a loved one is ripping your marriage or family apart,

-broken relationships where by the other party is content to do nothing to reconcile,

-your health is really failing you.

I don’t have to show you more than five minutes of the nightly news,

Or read for you the daily aliments of our local hospitals patients,

Or share with you just a few stories of what many of your friends and families have gone through.

And the reality is for us here in America and in Bakersfield we have it pretty good compared to most of the world.

Yet the fact remains….. **You will suffer and struggle and experience various trials!**

**Notice Peter says, “though now for a little while**” **In other words, it’s temporary**

Believers can **rejoice in Suffering** in their exile because they have a living Hope that will not last forever.

Now, this doesn’t mean the suffering will be brief. **-It will be brief in comparison to eternity**

**Romans 8:18** For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us.

Also… **1 Peter 1:6**In this you rejoice, though now for a little while, **if necessary,** you have been grieved by various trials,

 “**if necessary**, What this means is **“if God decides it is necessary.”**

Peter later makes this clear in **1 Peter 4:19** So then, those who suffer **according to God’s will** should commit themselves to their faithful Creator and continue to do good.

This is also good news because our suffering or various trials are not outside of God’s sovereign hand.

This is good news for our heart because it means We are not forgotten to our struggles and exile.

**It means what we face is only what God deems is necessary.**

**And since we are his and his is God and his has us eternally in his victorious grip in Christ we can be assured that what he deems necessary is necessary.** AMEN?

Now, Jesus says, “you will weep and lament, You will be sorrowful” **John 16:20**

So the trials the disciples and the church would face will grieve us..

Do you ever feel like, **being in the church means you can’t say ouch?**

**Like you have to be strong all time and show no wear and tear?** This just not the case!

Christians hurt, they say ouch, exiles mourn and slow down. Jesus himself said it will affect you.

But the difference between Christian Exiles and the worlds citizens is we have Joy in Christ despite our trials and sorrow. Our struggle is not our end. It doesn’t undo us.. There is a hope.. a Living Hope. There is a Joy in the midst of the teats that is based on that living Hope. That rises to the top. That Carries us through a tears.

[**Psalm 34:19**](http://biblia.com/bible/esv/Psalm%2034.19) says, "Many are the afflictions of the *righteous*; but the Lord delivers him out of them all."

Hear this today, Neither the Old Testament nor the New Testament promises that believers will escape affliction in this life for God in his Sovereignty uses suffering to do eternal things in the lives of people and ultimately carries out his purposes for his Glory! This is good news, Church.

Now… look at the example Jesus gives for how our sorrow turns to Joy

**John 16:20b -22a** but your sorrow will turn into joy. 21 When a woman is giving birth, she has sorrow because her hour has come, but when she has delivered the baby, she no longer remembers the anguish, for joy that a human being has been born into the world. 22 So also you have sorrow now, but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice,

What an amazing truth Jesus gives here. It is so true.. I have been there.. I know.

To watch my wife rightly screaming in pain as she pushes a little person out of her body…

Screaming, tears, sweating, blood, pain… and then all of the sudden.. the most amazing turn of events.

Despite that the pain is still there, the body is still bleeding and the sweat is still running down the face… the room is transformed to Joy! **A new life has immerged..** The work of God on display in the one of the most amazing ways. **Right?**

But consider how much greater it was for the disciples who saw.. their savor.. their master.. who torn apart.. brutally tortured and mocked and celebrated in his death… when they saw him alive and well.

The turn in their morning.. and sorrow to utter JOY! He is God.. he is victorious… he is bigger than death and so are we who are in Him! UTTER JOY!

So when Jesus says, “but I will see you again, and your hearts will rejoice,”

This is what he is pointing to.

But this is not just for them. It is for us too.

This is the joy we cling to in our suffering. The victory and power and promise of our Savior and bloodied champion.

*Hear Jesus get very personal here with the disciples...* ***I will see YOU again. YOUR hearts will rejoice.*** We to look forward with great anticipation and joy to his second coming.

But it gets better.. look at the second part of verse 22

**John 16:22b** and no one will take your joy from you.

Not only will our sorrow turn into Joy but no one will be able to take it from us…

Because it is true Joy established and held by God. It is not happiness that is fleeting and momentary and dependent on our current circumstances.. It is Joy.. Joy in God! Held by his power.

**The highest power is God! And he is the one who secures our eternity!**

**--He is able because He is God!**

**Jeremiah 32:17** - “Ah, Sovereign Lord, you have made the heavens and the earth by your great power and outstretched arm. Nothing is too hard for you.”

**CHURCH:** we need to NOT see our security for eternity as divine walls of protection that surround the heavenly city. It is so much bigger than that. It is the active, always present power of God by whom no one and nothing can break in. Remember Jesus said this in chapter 10 and chapter 6…

**John 10:27-29.** My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish, and no one will snatch them out of my hand. 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand.

He did not make a mistake in their election. He did not make a mistake at the cross.

He did not make a mistake in their new birth. And He does not make a mistake in their enduring to the end.. Therefore no one can take away their greatest JOY.. the joy we have in Christ. In being reconciled to God.. in being his elected and adopted children.

Finally, look at what Jesus says in verse 23 and 24.

**John 16:23-24** In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

Don’t forget who you are and who you live for. Remember to ask for something in Jesus name is to say, I want to do your work and fulfill your will. It is to align ourselves with God and his perfect plan to accomplish his perfect will.

 **We get to do this.. we get to participate In the work of his name for his glory and for our JOY!.**

Oh Church family: We are so blessed to have the joy of the Lord and for him to produce it in our lives.

The fruit of the Spirit that is joy … joy that is full and overflowing in Christ.

Not happiness that is built on fleeting circumstances but the joy of God who is eternal and perfect and satisfying.

David understood this which is why the psalmist says it again and again…

“Delight yourself in the LORD, and he will give you the desires of your heart.” - **Psalm 37:4**

“In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.” - **Psalm 16:11**

To close listen to these words from Christ…

**Matthew 13:44**"The kingdom of heaven is like **treasure** hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then **in his joy** went and sold all he had and bought that field.

What does it look like to be so welled up with Joy for God that we would sell all we have to have him… that he truly would be our source or lasting satisfaction instead of all the mundane things you & I pursue every day looking to make us happy?

Jesus has made it clear that he is the Resurrection and the Life.

He is the prize and the one worthy of our trust and praise. ***Is he your treasure? Your highest aim?*** Not just in concept but in daily life and practice. In your prayer and your ongoing reformation and sanctification.

Is God.. your exceeding joy! As it says in **Psalm 43:4**

Is the Almighty himself your treasure.  … your precious silver.. as it says in **JOB 22:25**

Is the Lord your overflowing Joy?

Like what David said in the famous Psalm 23…

**Psalm 23:5-6** You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.  6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

Jesus said in John 16:24, ***“That your joy may be full!”***

If it is full.. that means it is flowing over.. it is brimmed out and running over.

Church: This is the joy we have only in Christ.

The joy that endures and carries us through the valley of the shadow of death.

The joy that we will have forever more in God.. in his kingdom.

I pray you know and grow in this wonderful fruit of the Spirit and that it truly transforms your life and testimony!!

We have much to Rejoice in today.