

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT - JOY

Galatians 5:22-23 - “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control”.

NATURAL JOY

All of us seek pleasure or joy from our sometimes uneventful or repetitious lives, and are always looking to bring some element or excitement by continual change or novelty.

It may bring us great joy following the latest fashion and spending large sums of money on clothes. Or buying the latest electronic gadget or tool, taking an exotic vacation to a faraway place, buying a new house, or changing your car.

This may result in a temporal joy or pleasure, but it has no element of permanency and we soon tire of these things and their novelty soon wears off and we become dissatisfied with them.

SPIRITUAL JOY

“Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God”. (Hebrews 12:2).

The fruit of the spirit is the outcome of the life of Christ in the believer. Jesus promised His disciples that they should receive His joy, **(John 15:11) “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete”**. Jesus is teaching his disciples to remain in Him as He is the Vine and they are the branches, and to bear much good fruit.

To remain in Jesus, we must: -

Abide in His LOVE

Obey His COMMANDS

Do His WILL

In verse 14 of the same chapter (John 15) Jesus tells the disciples they are His friends if they do what he commands, they are no longer servants because Jesus has imparted to them everything that He learned from His Father in Heaven. (A trusted relationship).

We are a chosen people who are called to go and bear good fruit that will last. The secret of God answering our prayers and bringing us much joy is to remain grafted into **“THE VINE”** and to love each other as Jesus commanded us. **Read John 15:17.**

In John 17:13 - Jesus prays for His disciples - “I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them”.

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The component parts of this joy have three basic essentials: -

1. Joy in doing His Father's Will (John 4:34).
2. Joy in seeking "lost sheep" (Luke 15:5).
3. Joy in His Father's Wisdom and Love. (Luke 10:21).

OUR JOY

The three sources of Our Lord's earthly "joy" correspond with the three phases of our own joy as a fruit of His Spirit.

1. Our joy in deliverance from sin and willingly and gladly doing God's Will, will therefore link us with the pure joy of Christ's perfect obedience to His Father in everything.
2. Our joy in service, and sharing in His great task of seeking and finding the lost and pointing them to "The Great Shepherd of our Souls".
3. Our ultimate and fullest joy when we receive the revelation of the Wisdom and Love of God to our own souls by the Spirit, and learn to Love Him more and more.

In **Nehemiah 8:10** - Nehemiah encourages Israel just after completion of the walls of Jerusalem "**Do not grieve, for the joy of the Lord is your strength**". May we put on that eternal joy that only God can give and let your hearts today rejoice in Him the author and finisher of our faith.