

FRUITS OF THE SPIRIT 9-WEEK STUDY

April 1: Joy

TEXT: Galatians 5:22-23

INTRO: Many people are not very good at telling the difference between plants or trees. But it is made a lot easier when we can see the fruit hanging on a tree. Fruit marks the tree out as belonging to a distinct family. The purpose of an apple tree or a cherry tree is to grow and bear fruit. If it isn't bearing any fruit, we would say that the tree is dead, not fulfilling its purpose, and therefore worthless. In the same way, people should be able to look at us and, by our fruit, determine if we belong to the family of God. It's not judging...the Bible says that we can know people by their fruits. This is not an optional extra for really awesome Christians – no, demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit is a major purpose of our Christian life.

THE SECOND FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS JOY

TEXT: Psalm 16:11; 118:24; Habakkuk 3:18; Nehemiah 8:10; Romans 5:2-3; Philippians 4:4; John 15:9-11

DEFINITIONS: (Listen to the video to help you fill in the blanks.)

Gladness of _____; the happy state that results from _____ and serving God; a deep, abiding, inner rejoicing in the Lord.

This is not the same as _____. Happiness depends upon _____, but joy is based on _____. Joy is deeper than happiness. It is completely independent of the good or bad things that happen in the course of the day.

DISCUSSION: (Look up the verses given and answer the questions/discuss)

- Joy is the second most important fruit of the Spirit after love. What does this say about God's desire for it to be priority of the Christian life?
- What does our joy or lack of joy communicate about how close we are to God and how real we sense His presence is? (Psalm 16:11) Should God be enough for us to be joyful?
- Why should we find joy simply that we have another day to live? (Psalm 118:24)
- What does it mean that David asked to be restored to the joy of His salvation? What removed it? (Ps. 51; Hab. 3:18) Should the forgiveness of our sins be a major cause for joy?
- In light of this, and since joy is a fruit of the Spirit, can a lost person ever truly experience joy?
- How can the joy of the Lord be our strength? (Nehemiah 8:10)
- Can you describe a time when God brought you unexplainable joy in the middle of a trial? (Rom. 5:2-3)
- How can the Holy Spirit help us rejoice in the Lord always? (Philippians 4:4)
- What is the correlation between obedience and joy? (John 15:9-11)
- How is happiness all about you, but joy is all about God and others?

DECISION:

You will be the most joyful when you are right with God and spending time in His Word. Since joy is a byproduct of obedience, you need to spend time with God this week, walking with Him daily in His Word.

What do you plan to do this week to demonstrate the Spirit's fruit of joy?

Take some time to pray over the Wednesday prayer sheet attached to this Realm post.