

JOY IS A FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Galatians 5:22-23

(Not entirely original withme)

Introduction: "Joy" is a word used often in expressing an attitude of pleasure. "Happy" might be another word associated with the same idea. Sooner or later everybody experiences moments of "joy" and happiness. For the Christian, one of the benefits of being indwelt with the Holy Spirit is that there is a "joy" that nobody else has. Just what kind of "joy" is that the Christian enjoys? When does it happen? How long does it last?

I. "JOY" DEFINED

1. The New Testament Greek word translated "joy" is "Chara:"
 - meaning joy, gladness, delight
 - means also "to rejoice"
2. The word "Charis" is a similar word:
 - translated as "grace"
 - that which bestows or occasions of pleasure, delight or causes favorable regard.
 - "Grace" produces joy
3. Grace and Joy used together:
 - One's joy is directly proportional to the grace received or at least knowing grace was received.
 - A small gift and one has a little bit of joy.
 - A large gift and one's joyful reaction is greater.
 - There is something wrong with a Christian if there's not much joy in his/her life - a leak somewhere?
 - One reason a Christian may not have joy is that he/she has so little light of Gospel knowledge in his/her mind - for the further one stands from the light of truth, the further he/she will be from comfort.
4. The Joy of the Lord is abiding:
 - Jesus does not want Christians to be unhappy, joyless - John 15:11
 - Jesus gives "inexpressible and full glory" - able to sustain a person in the worst of circumstances - 1 Peter 1:6-8
 - Jesus has made it possible for every Christian to say with Paul: ***"...Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice..."*** Philippians 4:4
5. Failing to remember the things that have been graciously given to the Christian to make joy in his/her life can explain why one does not have very much joy in his/her life.

II. WHERE JOY COMES FROM FOR THE CHRISTIAN

1. Joy is a consequence of faith:
 - Joy comes from the result of having a confident faith, trust in God - Philippians 1:25
 - Without faith in God and Jesus, one cannot experience any joy that abides.
 - What has faith to do with joy?
 - It puts down any attitude that may prevent joy from happening.
 - Worry, doubt, fear - Matthew 6:25-30; 14:27-31
 - The Word of God is instrumental in producing joy:
 - Faith comes from the Word of God - Romans 10:17

- The Word of God produces faith.
- In turn faith produces joy - Romans 15:13
- The teachings of Jesus are designed to give one joy - John 15:11; 17:13

2. Joy is also the result of being obedient:

- Obedience to the Word of God produces joy in the heart of the obedient.
- The Samaritans were joyful when saved - Acts 8:5-8
- The Ethiopian was joyful when he was saved - Acts 8:35-38
- The Thessalonians were joyful when they were saved - 1 Thessalonians 1:6
- Disobedience, however dispels joy and produces fear - Hebrews 10:26-27

3. Joy is based upon forgiveness:

- The guilt of sin is a major reason why so many Christians lack joy:
 - Being aware of guilt causes stress, unhappiness and worry.
 - Paul struggled with the problem of sin and was unhappy - Romans 7:22-24
- Where there is forgiveness, there can be joy.
 - Psalm 32
 - "blessed, joyful" is the one whose sins are forgiven - 32:1-2
 - his guilt of sin affected him inwardly - 32:3-4
 - upon confession of his sins, he was forgiven - 32:5
 - joy was experienced - 32:10-11

4. Joy comes also from Christian fellowship:

- Seeing other Christians having fellowship can bring joy:
 - Paul had joy by experiencing love and fellowship in Philemon - Philemon 7
 - Paul had great joy when he learned that some believers had been restored - 2 Corinthians 7:7
- Having fellowship with other Christians can also bring joy:
 - Paul found joy in fellowship with the Philippians - Philippians 4:10
 - John spoke of joy that comes when Christian fellowship happens - 2 John 12

5. Joy comes from Christian service:

- There is joy in helping spread the Gospel:
 - Barnabas rejoiced in those saved at Antioch - Acts 11:20-23
 - The Christian Jews rejoiced to hear of the conversion of Gentiles - Acts 15:3
- There is much joy in seeing the spiritual progress of others:
 - Often Paul rejoiced to see others growing spiritually - Romans 16:19; Colossians 2:5; 1 Thessalonians 3:6-9
 - John wrote that it was the highest form of joy - 3 John 4
- Jesus also spoke of the "blessedness" - joy of giving to others - Acts 20:35
- Anyone willing to serve the Lord in any way or time will experience joy in serving the Lord.

CONCLUSION:

1. The JOY of the Lord is open to all who would receive it through:
 - Faith in Jesus, obedience, forgiveness, fellowship, service.
2. Being a Christian one has been born of the Spirit, is walking in the Spirit, is led by the Spirit and all bring joy
3. YOU can have joy today!

