

Fruit of the Spirit - Joy

Galatians 5:22-23

PPT Title

Fruit of the Spirit: Joy

Main Point: Joy comes from being with God.

Key Verse: *(God,) You will fill me with joy when I am with You.* – Psalm 16:11b

Props: A boomerang (or banana, or paper with smile drawn on it, or anything that looks like a smile), a jug of water, two plastic cups (one with several holes poked in the bottom).

BACKGROUND/REVIEW

Say: When the time was right, Jesus went into heaven to be with His Father. And after He left, He sent His Holy Spirit to live inside His disciples, just like He promised (Acts 2:1-4). And today, when we put our trust in Him, we are filled with this same Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:5). When we are filled with God's Holy Spirit, some of God's great characteristics start to grow in our lives. The Bible calls these characteristics fruit. Galatians 5:22 says:

Fruit of the Spirit:
love, joy, peace,
patience, kindness,
goodness, faithfulness,
gentleness and
self-control

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. (NIV)"

Last week we talked about love. We love each other with our actions. Jesus showed His love in the most incredible way: He laid down His life to bring us back to God.

INTRO

Say: What makes you happy? What makes you sad? *Listen for answers.* What if I got a new puppy? Would I be happy or sad? **Hold the boomerang in front of your mouth like a smiley face.** I think I would be happy about that! But what if I broke my leg and had to go to the hospital and get a cast? Hold the boomerang in front of your mouth like a frown. That wouldn't be so much fun. Or what if I were a football player and I won the Superbowl? **Hold the boomerang in front of your mouth like a smiley face.** That sure would give me something to smile about! But what about on the inside? Do we always feel on the inside how we look on the outside? Do you ever look like this (**smile**) on the outside but really feel like this (**frown**) on the inside? What if you could always smile on the inside, no matter what?

JOY

Say: Today, we'll look at joy. **Joy is the smile we have inside,** no matter what is happening around us.

Some people think that joy and happiness are the same, but there is actually a big difference. The word *happy* comes from the same word as *happen*. We feel happy if something good is *happening* to us at that moment. But this means that being happy is just temporary – it doesn't last. One minute something good could be happening and we are happy, but the next minute something bad could be happening and we don't feel happy anymore.

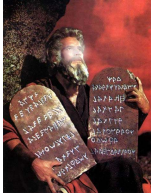
**happ
happen
happy**

Joy is different. Joy does not depend on what is happening to us – it stays deep down in your heart no matter what! (2 Corinthians 7:4)

PPT Key Verse

God is our source of joy. Psalm 16:11 says: "(God,) You will fill me with joy when I am with You." God is so good and everything He does is amazing! When we spend time with Him, we get to know Him more. We are filled with joy because of who God is and how He cares for us.

Moses spent time with God when God gave Moses the Ten Commandments on the top of Mt. Sinai. It was the closest anyone had ever been to God. Moses learned more about God. He saw that God is powerful, full of justice, good, forgiving, caring, loving, and faithful (Exodus 34:6-7). Moses also learned more about God's promises (Exodus 34:10). Because of his time with God, something really incredible happened to Moses!



*Moses came down from Mount Sinai. He had the two tablets of the covenant in his hands. **His face was shining because he had spoken with the Lord.** But he didn't realize it. Aaron and all of the people of Israel saw Moses. **His face was shining.** So they were afraid to come near him.*

But Moses called out to them. So Aaron and all of the leaders of the community came to him. And Moses spoke to them. After that, all of the people came near him. And he gave them all of the commands the Lord had given him on Mount Sinai.

*Moses finished speaking to them. Then he put a veil over his face. But when he would go to speak with the Lord, he would remove the veil. He would keep it off until he came out. Then he would tell the people what the Lord had commanded. They would see that **his face was shining.** So Moses would put the veil back over his face. He would keep it on until he went in again to speak with the Lord. – Exodus 34:29-35*

Spending time with God changes us! Moses' face actually looked different because he had been with God!

God is completely good and everything He created was good (Psalm 100:5, Genesis 1:31). Because God is the source of everything that's good, joy is found by spending time with Him. Over and over in the Bible, we see that spending time with God fills His people with joy (John 15:9-11, Psalm 28:7, Isaiah 58:14).

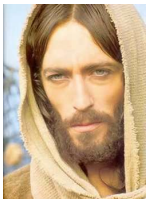
*[God,] You have made known to me the path of life; You will fill me with **joy in Your presence**, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand. – Psalm 16:11*

JOY SHOWN IN JESUS

Say: The more time we spend with God, the more joy we will have. God is the **source** of our joy.

Turn on a lamp. Let's look at it this way. (Call up a volunteer. Do NOT allow the child to touch the light bulb at any point!) Put your hands **near** the lamp. Can you feel the warmth? The closer you get, the warmer it feels. The lamp is the **source** of the warmth – just like God is the source of our joy. As long as you are near the lamp, you'll feel the warmth. The more time we spend with God, the more joy we have.

We have a perfect example of someone who was always with God. Who is that? Jesus! Jesus has always existed (John 1:1-2, 14); He has always been with God. Even when Jesus left heaven to come to Earth, He was filled with God's Spirit (Luke 4:1), and He constantly spent time in prayer listening to His heavenly Father (Luke 5:16).



Jesus said, "I am in the Father and the Father is in Me," meaning that He was always with His Father (John 14:11). Jesus was always with His source of joy! He always had the true joy that comes from being with God!

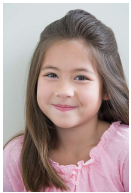
But did Jesus ever have bad days? Did Jesus have some bad things happen to him during his life? Yes. What were some sad things that happened to Jesus? Jesus often felt sadness for the people of Israel (Mark 6:34). His friend, Lazarus, died. His friend, Judas, betrayed Him. And Isaiah 53 tells us that Jesus went through terrible pain and suffering on the cross.



Remember our smile and frown? During these times, Jesus was not smiling on the outside (**hold up the boomerang again like a frown**), but inside, it was a different story (**hold up the smile**). Hebrews 12:2 says, "Let us keep looking to Jesus... He paid no attention to the shame of the cross. He suffered there because of the **joy** he was looking forward to."

This verse says that Jesus looked past the pain and shame of the cross because of the joy He looked forward to. What joy was He looking forward to? *Bringing us to God!* Jesus endured the pain of the cross so that He could experience the great joy of bringing you and me to God!

JOY IN US



As believers in Jesus, we have God's Holy Spirit living inside of us. We are filled with the same Spirit that Jesus was filled with. Our relationship with God is even better than that of Moses! Moses came face to face with God, which is incredible, but we have God's Spirit living **inside** of us, which is even better! (John 16:7) And just like Jesus did, we can go to God at all times to pray and get to know Him more. We can know God just as Jesus did! We can be filled with the same joy that Jesus is filled with!

Remember, joy is deep in our hearts. Joy does not depend on what is happening to us – it stays in us no matter what! Even when Jesus knew He had to die on the cross, He still had joy. And we can be the same way! For instance, I'm not *happy* when I strike out in baseball or when my friends don't treat me right. But I still have *joy* because I know that God is in control, and He can use every situation for my good (Romans 8:28).



Out of all the fruits of the Spirit, joy seems to be the one that is most often overlooked. We always talk about how important it is to love people, be kind, and be peaceful, but we rarely talk about joy. But joy is very important because it is the easiest fruit for people to see, and people are attracted to joy when they see it. When people see joy in you, they will want to know why you are joyful.

Most likely, our face won't glow like Moses' did. But when we are full of God's joy, people will be able to tell. When something bad happens, we won't fall apart or look like this (**show a terribly worried face**) because we know that God is with us and He's looking out for us. If we are full of joy, we can look like this (**show a confident, peaceful face**) even when things aren't going just the way we think that they should. No matter what "happens" we are confident in God. That is true joy.

Optional for Older Kids: Jesus told His disciples about a way to expand their joy – to make their joy even fuller. In John 15:10-12, Jesus says:

"Just as the Father has loved Me, I have loved you. Now remain in My love. If you obey My commands, you will remain in My love. In the same way, I have obeyed My Father's commands and remain in His love. I have told you this so that My joy will be in you. I also want your joy to be complete. Here is my command. Love each other, just as I have loved you."

Jesus says that He loves us and He wants us to spend time with Him, know Him, and do what He tells us to do. Being with Him is how His joy is in us. And if we love others, our joy will be **complete**. Our joy will be it's fullest when we take in Jesus' love, and then share it with those around us. Last week we talked about love, the first fruit of

the Spirit. Here, we see that one fruit leads to another: loving each other leads to the most complete joy!

Illustration: Joy works something like this. Set up your cups and water jug. Have the cup without holes sitting on a table, hold the cup with holes in one hand, and hold the jug in the other. **Make sure you are holding the cup with holes directly above the other cup.** Spending time with God fills us up with joy, like this jug fills up this cup with water. Pour water into the cup you are holding. But we cannot just keep all our joy to ourselves! It leaks out of us and fills up others, just like the cup in my hand is filling up the other one. But what happens if we stop spending time with God? Stop pouring the water. Not only do we stop being filled with joy, but the other people around us are not filled up either. We cannot make joy on our own – all true joy comes from God! When you are filled with His joy, it will spill out to others, and your joy will be complete.

Romans 15:13 says, "I pray that God, the source of hope, **will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.**"

Key Verse: (God,) You will fill me with joy when I am with You. – Psalm 16:11b

PPT Main Point

Main Point: Joy comes from being with God.