

## The Fruit of the Spirit - Joy

15/9/19

### Pray

This term we are thinking about what it means to be Christ-like  
And the character of Christ is the fruit of the Spirit

And inside your pew sheet you have an illustration

The bible doesn't say but I say the fruit of the spirit is an orange  
Because it is one fruit and we all need to have all 9 segments

But the bible does say the words on this hand out  
And I would love us to learn them off by heart  
So let's say them together

*The fruit of the spirit is love joy peace - patience kindness goodness –  
Faithfulness gentleness and self control  
Galatians 5.22,23*

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Today we come to the second segment – which is Joy  
And like last week my first point is

### 1 What is Joy?

In particular what is the difference between joy and happiness?

And the best answer I found was on the website Psychologies.co.uk  
Which said

**Joy is consistent and is cultivated internally  
It comes when you are at peace with who you are  
and why you are here**

In contrast - **Happiness is externally triggered  
and is based on other people or things or circumstances**

and the root word behind happiness  
is the old english word Hap which mean Luck  
as in “It was a happy coincidence”

So JOY is not like happiness  
**JOY is consistent and internally cultivated  
It comes when you are at peace with who you are  
and why you are here**

## 2 Lets choose to be JOYful

And for this point I would like us to look at *Romans 5*

You will find it on *page 1132*

And in *verse 3* we read *We also glory in our sufferings*

Or it could equally well be translated *We also REJOICE in our sufferings*

Which is pretty amazing when you think about it

So it does not say we rejoice because of our sufferings

– that would be masochism

and it doesn't say fake it or “keep smiling and carry on”

but rather it means **Lets choose to REJOICE despite our suffering**

and it is true that relative to most places in the world

we don't really suffer in the UK

but suffering means anything which puts us under pressure

and practically all of us have pressures of one sort or another on us

so **Let's choose to REJOICE despite our suffering**

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and the reason we can rejoice is because in verse 3 – *Suffering produces*

or to put it another way **suffering is PRODUCTIVE**

and I think this is easiest to understand with an illustration

our son is a Maths teacher and when he want to teach someone maths

he sets them a maths problem – a problem which he thinks they can solve

and when they get it right, they know they can do it and grow in confidence

So if God wants to teach me patience – he will give me a patience problem

A problem that he thinks I can solve

So that when I get it right I will know I am growing in patience

Do you see? - **Our suffering produces growth in us**

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and then continuing through Romans 5

and still in *verse 3 Suffering produces Perseverance*

and perseverance is the ability to keep going under pressure

the ability to handle the pressure and to keep on keeping on

and this is what discipleship is all about

so for example Eugene Peterson's book about discipleship is called

**a long obedience in the same direction**

**suffering produces perseverance**

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And still in *Romans 5*

this time in *verse 4 Perseverance produces character*

and the word character is the sort of word they might use on the high street

to describe an antique – it is full of character

which usually means it has been through the wars

or it has been knocked about

and that is what character means in us

it means we have proven reliable under pressure

and the fruit of the Spirit is about our internal character

it is about being able to REJOICE despite the suffering

**Perseverance produces character**

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And still in *Romans 5.4 character produces HOPE*

And HOPE is having Confidence in Christ's power at work through us

And that is the point of the problems of life

They are permitted by God

so that we grow in the confidence that God can work through us

**Character produces HOPE**

But we all know people who have had problems in life  
And they have just become grumpy old people

And so we have a choice  
We can choose to be grumpy Or we can choose to be joyful  
And when we have the right attitude  
So when we **REJOICE despite our suffering**  
**Then God can produce perseverance and character and HOPE in us**

and my third point is going to be **HOW to cultivate inner JOY?**  
And this is going to take the form of **four top tips**

### **Top tip No1 - Let's have an Attitude of Gratitude**

*1 Thess 5.18* says <sup>18</sup> **give thanks in all circumstances;**

Psychologists now tell us that this is the healthiest of emotions

and we could say that saying “thank you” it is just a common courtesy  
but the trouble with that saying is – it is no longer common  
so I want to encourage all of us when we are in the shops  
to make sure we say thank you

and I am sure you have heard me say before  
that I also say thank you to God every day  
and the end of the day when I am in bed I run through the day with God  
and say thank you for all the good things that have happened

**Top Tip No1 – Let's have an attitude of gratitude**

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### **Top Tip No2 – Let's cultivate our inner joy by giving**

*Acts 20.35* says **the Lord Jesus himself said:**

**“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”**

In our culture we are easily consumed by consumerism  
Or possessed by our possessions  
And the antidote is simple – the antidote is giving

Our God is a generous God  
and so let's be like him let's be generous givers  
because when we give we are Restoring God's Original Design

I like the story of the farmer who described giving like this  
I shovel into God's storehouse and he shovels into mine  
It's just he has got a bigger shovel!

### **Top Tip No2 – Let's cultivate our inner joy by giving**

### **Top Tip No3 – Let's cultivate our inner joy through service**

*Mark 10.45* says <sup>45</sup> *For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'*

This term is all about becoming more Christ-like and in the same way that Christ came to serve us if we are followers of Christ then we will serve others

and it is simply true - the best activities in my week are things like the Sunday services, - the toddlers group and alpha  
It gives me great joy to simply love my neighbours in action

### **Top Tip No3 – Let's cultivate our inner joy through service**

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### **Top Tip No4 – Let's cultivate our inner joy by sharing Christ**

I love it when people come to faith  
So for example when Nour turned up at week 4 of alpha  
She indicated that she was wearing a cross and said  
“I am wearing a cross because I prayed the prayer at the end of chapter 3”  
I love it  
and I will probably always remember the cross she was wearing that day

and if you have had the privilege of leading someone to faith  
then you will know just what I mean

### **Top Tip No4 – Let's cultivate our inner joy by sharing Christ**

So our aim this term is **to become more Christ like**  
**To cultivate in us the fruit of the spirit**

And the second segment of this fruit is **JOY**  
**The JOY which comes when you are at peace with who you are**

And we do this by choosing to **REJOICE despite our suffering**  
**And then God can produce in us perseverance**  
**and character**  
**and HOPE**

**Lets pray**