

Fruit of Joy  
Gal.5:22-23  
2-7-2010

The second quality of the Fruit of the Spirit to be examined is Joy. Love is the greatest characteristic and has influence over everything else. Joy is less influential in that it does not have the power to sustain ones action like love does and yet it flavors the attitude and lends power to motivate.

Joy might be compared to how gratitude affects the quality of ones service to another. It improves the service or action at the deeper level of drive from devotion. If we use color to make another comparison to these qualities we know that there are three primary colors; red, blue and yellow. From the primary colors other colors can be made.

Paul tells us that the primary characteristics of the Spirit are faith, hope and Love. (**1Cor.13:13**) From these three primaries other attributes can be derived. Joy if it were a color might look like a green. Joy is not completely attached to the experience of the moment but may be affected to some degree by it.

So what is Joy? Is it an emotion? Is it an attitude or a philosophy? Can you know you have? Can it be grown or matured? To start with joy is a noun. (All of the attributes listed as the Fruit of the Spirit are nouns.) Rejoicing is an action that can flow out of joy. Joy is not produced by circumstance and yet events can affect it. Joy can be given and received and even increased but does not seem to be something one can create. (**Lk.15:7; 1Thes.1:6**)

Consider this; is laughter created by a joke or cartoon or is it imbedded or contained within it? As an example, Jesus' parable of the seed sown (**Mat.13:20**) speaks of the

ones who received the word with joy. Those who did not receive the word also did not get joy. Kind of like those who don't get a joke don't laugh.

Some examples of joy as a product of the Spirit that might help us grasp its depth are: **3John 1:4** – "...I have no greater joy than this..." **Mat.13:44** – "...then in his joy went..." **Lk.10:17-22** – "...returned with joy...full of joy through the Holy..." **Jn.15:9-17** – "...my joy...your joy..." **Jn.17:13-19** – "...the full measure of my joy..." **Act.16:34** – "...filled with joy..." **Rom.14:17** – Kingdom of God...peace and joy..." **2Cor.8:1-2** – "...overflowing joy..." and **Heb.12:2-3** – "...who for the joy..." just to name a few.

So why is joy important? I think joy is the validation of the message received just like laughter proves the success of a joke. Joy proves the success of the message. Joy is imbedded in the message because of the teller. Joy started in the heart of God and it has been poured out on us through His Son Jesus. Did Jesus live His life in demonstration of Joy? Yes!

Does your joy shine in the midst of your suffering? Jesus did not suffer pointlessly; He endured for the sake of joy. (**Heb.12:2**) You also do not suffer pointlessly! (**James 1:2**) You have been called into the same joy. (**2Cor.7:4**)

If eyes do not twinkle with the joy of the Lord at the telling of His greatness towards us, how real is the message in the heart of the teller? Joy is imbedded in the message because of the teller. (God is the teller, and we His instruments.)

What builds joy? An increase in understanding the need that each of us has for Jesus' sacrifice and His total fulfillment of our need. Jesus' total sufficiency! My Joy: Jesus! Your Joy: Jesus!