

The Fruit of the Spirit Lesson 3 1Q 2010

The Fruit of the Spirit is Joy

SABBATH

What is Joy?

Dictionary definition: the emotion of great delight or happiness caused by something exceptionally good or satisfying; keen pleasure; elation

Read memory verse- John 15:11 – thoughts?

What things did He speak to them that would be the cause of their joy?

This conversation is happening in the upper room, the last supper – which starts in Chapter 13 verse one. What did Jesus communicate to the disciples in the upper room that was to be for them the source of their joy?

- All power was given to Jesus, why would this bring joy?
 - What did He do with all power?
 - He washed their dirty feet
 - What truth is being revealed by Jesus?
 - Does it tell us something about God, His character, how He operates?
 - Does it tell us something about the impact service has on a life?
 - How does this inspire joy?
- Jesus predicts His betrayal
 - What is being communicated in this that is to be a source of joy?
 - How did Jesus treat His betrayer?
 - He washed his feet and protected his reputation, does this bring you joy?
 - Can a God like this be trusted?

- What does it say that God foreknows yet such foreknowledge does not change how God treats us?
- Jesus tells them that He is going to glorify His Father and thereby be glorified, what does this tell us to bring us joy?
 - How does Jesus glorify the Father?
 - How is Jesus glorified?
- A new command to love one another – how is this connected to joy?
 - When have you experienced the most joy – when someone gave or did something for your or when you gave or did something for another?
- Jesus predicts Peter's betrayal, how does this bring joy?
 - How did Jesus treat Peter knowing Peter was going to let Him down?
 - How does God treat us knowing we make mistakes?
 - What does this tell us about God's attitude toward sinners?
- Jesus promises to go to the Father, prepare us a place and return to get us – does this bring you joy?
- Jesus tells us He is the way to the Father because He and the Father are one and anyone who has seen Jesus has seen the Father – is this a source of joy? How? Why?
 - In fact isn't this the very core to what Jesus meant would be the source of their joy?
- We may ask for anything in Christ's name and He will do it for us – what does this mean?
 - But to pray in Christ's name means much. It means that we are to accept His character, manifest His spirit, and work His works. The Saviour's promise is given on condition. "If ye love Me," He says, "keep My commandments." He saves men, not in sin, but from sin; and those who love Him will show their love by obedience. {DA 668.2}
 - Does this bring joy?
- Jesus promises to the send the Holy Spirit and not leave us as orphans and through the Spirit give us His peace– how is this a source of joy?
 - What does the Holy Spirit do for us?

- Jesus then tells the parable of the vine and the branches – how does this parable communicate our foundation of joy?
- Jesus tells them if they love Him they will obey His commands
 - How does our obedience to the commands of Christ produce joy?

Read last paragraph, “Joy is a delight...” thoughts? Does it depend on what kind of God a person believes in? If you believe god is punishing, critical, watching to take away any happiness a god who takes mummies to heaven in car crashes or looks the other way when children are abused – would such awareness bring joy?

Could one of the primary messages of Jesus to His disciples as the source of their joy be, “if you have seen me you have seen the Father”? The Father is not like you have always thought Him to be?

SUNDAY

Read first paragraph, “Many believers allow...” – thoughts? What do you think about the solution offered to a group of people who have a mindset described here in this paragraph?

You have a child who hates spinach, “I command you – ENJOY it!” would such a command work? Is this what God is saying to people? Is a command a way to instill joy?

What about instead of a command we gave a prescription to rejoice in the Lord? Would a prescription be different? If we offer this as a remedy, an intervention, a treatment and as with all remedies and treatments we explain the basis for it, the reasons why to do it and the underpinning rationale behind it – in this case why God is worthy of our praise and what it means to rejoice in Him. Does such a prescription provide more than a command to rejoice?

The lesson indicates this in the second paragraph when it states that our spiritual stability is related to knowing God. This is the key, to actual know Him for who He is. And further down in the lesson it asks us to list what “reasons” there are for rejoicing. If there are reasons for it then it is more than a mere command!

What reasons do we have for rejoicing in the Lord? The lesson asks us to consider Psalms 139:

¹ O LORD, you have searched me
and you know me.

² You know when I sit and when I rise;
you perceive my thoughts from afar.

³ You discern my going out and my lying down;
you are familiar with all my ways.

⁴ Before a word is on my tongue
you know it completely, O LORD.

[What reason for joy in verses 1-4?

- Are you glad to know God knows everything about you? If you are cheating, He knows. If you are harboring resentment, He knows. If you are unkind, rude, gossiping, hard hearted, addicted to something – He knows. If you are in an adulterous relationship, He knows. He knows before you do any of it.
- Does this bring you joy? Why or why not?
- Does it depend on how you understand God?
- What is God's attitude toward you knowing all of this?
- What is the attitude of a doctor toward a patient severely ill, with many symptoms? Even a non-compliant patient?]

⁵ You hem me in—behind and before;
you have laid your hand upon me.

⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me,
too lofty for me to attain.

⁷ Where can I go from your Spirit?
Where can I flee from your presence?

⁸ If I go up to the heavens, you are there;
if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

⁹ If I rise on the wings of the dawn,
if I settle on the far side of the sea,

¹⁰ even there your hand will guide me,
your right hand will hold me fast.

¹¹ If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me

and the light become night around me,”

¹² even the darkness will not be dark to you;
the night will shine like the day,
for darkness is as light to you.

[What message in these verses give you joy? God is not constrained by time or space. God is actively working in your life for good, guiding your life to eternal salvation. There is nothing hidden from Him and nothing can separate us from Him!]

¹³ For you created my inmost being;
you knit me together in my mother’s womb.

¹⁴ I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;
your works are wonderful,
I know that full well.

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you
when I was made in the secret place.
When I was woven together in the depths of the earth,

¹⁶ your eyes saw my unformed body.

All the days ordained for me
were written in your book
before one of them came to be.

[Thoughts about this passage? What message brings joy?

- God is the Creator, we didn’t evolve over millions of years from slime,
- God has a purpose for our lives and oversees our destiny.
- God created us with individuality, unique identity, the ability to think and love and make free choices “my inmost being.”
- We don’t need to fear the unknown or the future because God has perfect foreknowledge!

How can this passage be misapplied to destroy joy and bring discouragement?

- That each of us was created directly by a divine act of God from heaven as we are.
- That a child born with congenital defects is that way because God wanted the child to be defective, sick, broken – or
- That God was having a bad knitting day, which means God isn’t someone we can trust, or

- When men rape women and they get pregnant God is creating – again, says terrible things about God and makes Him a being who can't be trusted.
- Any other ways this text is misapplied to distort God's character?]

¹⁷ How precious to me are your thoughts, O God!

How vast is the sum of them!

¹⁸ Were I to count them,
they would outnumber the grains of sand.

When I awake,
I am still with you.

¹⁹ If only you would slay the wicked, O God!
Away from me, you bloodthirsty men!

²⁰ They speak of you with evil intent;
your adversaries misuse your name.

²¹ Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD,
and abhor those who rise up against you?

²² I have nothing but hatred for them;
I count them my enemies.

²³ Search me, O God, and know my heart;
test me and know my anxious thoughts.

²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me,
and lead me in the way everlasting.

[What joyful message do you hear in this text? Honest communication with God and acknowledgment that God can be trusted. No hiding of the heart from God but a willingness to be fully known and transformed by Him. Do we pray such prayers?]

Read bottom green section – thoughts? Does rejoice in the Lord mean we will not to experience sadness, grief, heartache or pain? Or does it mean in the face of such we have hope that pierces through the pain to an eternal restitution and re-creation. We rejoice not in the hardship but in God who will overcome all hardships and ultimately bring healing and peace.

- But does the person with a cavity rejoice over dental drills and fillings?

- Does a person with a broken leg rejoice in surgeons, pins, rods and physical therapists?
- Does a person with defects of character rejoice in trials and opportunities to exercise their will in harmony with God to overcome?

MONDAY

Read top dark section, “To understand fully...” – thoughts? Where do you think Christ’s joy came from?

- Knowing His Father
- Being fully known by His Father
- Doing His Father’s will
- Helping others
- Not focusing on self
- Not concerned with other’s opinion of Him for His need sake
- The knowledge of what His mission would accomplish
 - The exoneration of the Father and the Son
 - The exposure of Satan as liar and fraud
 - The redemption of humanity and earth
 - The permanent eradication of sin from the universe

The lesson asks us to consider the three parables of the lost sheep, the lost coin and the prodigal son as illustrations of joy – what thoughts do you have? From where did joy arise in these parables?

- From finding that which was lost, from being restored to that which the heart cherishes.
- What does God’s heart cherish? His creatures!
- And what brings God joy? Bringing us back to Him!

TUESDAY

Read second paragraph, “There is no greater...” thoughts?

Why does obedience bring joy? Does all obedience to God’s laws and commands bring joy? Can you obey God’s commands and not experience joy? How and why?

- The man who attempts to keep the commandments of God from a sense of obligation merely--because he is required to do so--will never enter into the joy of obedience. He does not obey. When the requirements of God are accounted a burden because they cut across human inclination, we may know that the life is not a Christian life. True obedience is the outworking of a principle within. It springs from the love of righteousness, the love of the law of God. The essence of all righteousness is loyalty to our Redeemer. This will lead us to do right because it is right--because right doing is pleasing to God. {COL 97.3}
- A sullen submission to the will of the Father will develop the character of a rebel. By such a one service is looked upon as drudgery. It is not rendered cheerfully, and in the love of God. It is a mere mechanical performance. If he dared, such a one would disobey. His rebellion is smothered, ready to break out at any time in bitter murmurings and complaints. Such service brings no peace or quietude to the soul. {ST, July 22, 1897}

Thoughts? How do you understand these passages? What is required to enter into the joy of obedience? Understanding! Understanding of God, understanding of God's law, understanding of sin, understanding of what Christ accomplished, and when we understand, it is a joy to obey! But obedience without understanding, blind obedience, is the type of obedience the Pharisees rendered, rule keeping because the rules must be kept. Such obedience destroys!

Why did disobedience bring war in heaven and sin and death to this planet? What was the cause of the disobedience? And when we "disobey" God what happens?

How does obedience help restore joy?

Read last paragraph "However clear the Bible..." thoughts?

Can any human, since the fall of Adam and excluding Jesus Christ, by human effort alone save Himself? Can any human by his or her own hard works reverse the damage of sin? No! So let's be clear, no human being could be saved without Jesus Christ!

Do works reveal to others the outworking of God's healing of our lives? Of course – but is that all works do? Do our works play any role in our individual salvation or is our individual salvation completely independent from our works?

- Through heathenism, Satan had for ages turned men away from God; but he won his great triumph in perverting the faith of Israel. By contemplating and worshiping their own conceptions, the heathen had lost a knowledge of God, and had become more and more corrupt. So it was with Israel. **The principle that man can save himself by his own works lay at the foundation of every heathen religion; it had now become the principle of the Jewish religion. Satan had implanted this principle. Wherever it is held, men have no barrier against sin.** {DA 35.2}

Are we all comfortable with this passage? Do we all believe that the idea that man can save himself is a lie? Is this the same thing as saying that man has no work to do in his salvation? Can it be true that salvation is completely of the Lord and yet we have a work to do as well? Let's consider some Bible texts:

- Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling,¹³ for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose. Phil 2:12,13
- For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.¹⁰ For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. Eph 2:8-10

- Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows. ⁸The one who sows to please his sinful nature, from that nature will reap destruction; the one who sows to please the Spirit, from the Spirit will reap eternal life. Gal 6:7,8
 - Who is doing the sowing?

- Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. ²Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things. ³For you died, and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. ⁴When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. ⁵Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. ⁶Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. ⁸But now you must rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. ⁹Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices ¹⁰and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator...¹²Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Col 3:1-13

Thoughts? Who is doing the work? Is this work of life transformation only of God? Does it matter? Is our salvation dependent upon this ongoing work?

These Bible passages have been a source of great tension within Christianity resulting in two primary camps – the work your way to heaven camp in which our works commend us to God or somehow save us from sin – legalism, opposed by the camp which says our salvation is of God's grace without our work and our works only reveal what He has done within us.

Here are some thoughts from one of the founders of our church, what do you think?

- While God was working in Daniel and his companions "to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13), they were working out their own salvation. Herein is revealed the outworking of the **divine principle of cooperation, without which no true success can be attained. Human effort avails nothing without divine power; and without human endeavor, divine effort is with many of no avail. To make God's grace our own, we must act our part.** His grace is given to work in us to will and to do, but never as a substitute for our effort. {LHU 193.4}
- We are laborers together with God. This is the Lord's own wise arrangement. **The cooperation of the human will and endeavor with divine energy is the link that binds men up with one another and with God.** The apostle says, "We are laborers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (1 Corinthians 3:9). **Man is to work with the facilities God has given him.** "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," He says. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure" (Philippians 2:12, 13).--MS 113, 1898. {2MCP 694.3}
- **There are two grand forces at work in the salvation of the human soul. It requires the cooperation of man with the divine agencies--** divine influences, and a strong, living, working faith. **It is in this way only** that the human agent can become a laborer together with God. **The Lord does not sanction in any one of us a blind, stupid credulity. He does not dishonor the human understanding,** but, far from this, He calls for the human will to be brought into connection with the divine will. **He calls for the ingenuity of the human mind, the tact, the skill, to be strenuously exercised in searching out the truth as it is in Jesus. . . .** Ye are labourers together with God. {OHC 310.5}
- In the work of redemption there is no compulsion. No external force is employed. Under the influence of the Spirit of God, man is left free to choose whom he will serve. In the change that takes place when the soul surrenders to Christ, there is

the highest sense of freedom. **The expulsion of sin is the act of the soul itself.** True, we have no power to free ourselves from Satan's control; but when we desire to be set free from sin, and in our great need cry out for a power out of and above ourselves, the powers of the soul are imbued with the divine energy of the Holy Spirit, and they obey the dictates of the will in fulfilling the will of God. {DA 466.4}

- Remember, your character is being daguerreotyped [photographed] by the great Master Artist in the record books of heaven, as minutely as the face is reproduced upon the polished plate of the artist. What do the books of heaven say in your case? Are you conforming your character to the Pattern, Jesus Christ? Are you washing your robes of character and making them white in the blood of the Lamb? "Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be" [Revelation 22:12]. . . . {TSB 62.1}

Thoughts? How do we put all the texts together? After Adam's sin humanity was changed from beings who operated in perfect accord with the law of love, the template of life. Mankind believed lies about God and didn't trust Him. Christ came to reverse all of this. First He came to reveal the truth to destroy lies and win us to trust, but more than this Christ, as our substitute, took our infirmities, our sick condition upon Himself in order to cure, reverse, recreate, rewrite God's perfect character into the human species. He did this in His own person! He procured the remedy to sin and now offers this to us through the application of His Spirit!

- The atonement of Christ is not a mere skillful way to have our sins pardoned; it is a divine remedy for the cure of transgression and the restoration of spiritual health. It is the Heaven-ordained means by which the righteousness of Christ may be not only upon us but in our hearts and characters (Letter 406, 1906). {6BC 1074.2}

Thus, when we are won to trust we open the heart, surrender our will to Him and the Spirit infuses us. We partake of the divine

nature. We are inspired, enlightened, empowered, encouraged and we then choose daily to eliminate from our lives everything we know is harmful and embrace all that is good. As the apostle says, via the indwelling Holy Spirit – a cooperative arrangement, we choose to rid ourselves of the old life and live a life of love!

Is this more than a mere reflection or evidence of our salvation? Is it a cooperation in which we participate to experience the salvation which Christ alone achieved? In other words, Christ achieved the cure for sin alone, without any human effort and with no work from any human being. However, the application of that remedy to each human life occurs only when the human being actively cooperates with divine agencies. Is this correct?

If we hold a primarily legal view of salvation what problems arise? How do such legal views impair God's healing of our lives?

WEDNESDAY

Read Bible text at top of page, "These things..." thoughts? What does this tell us about those who are suffering, who are in tribulation? Does it mean they are abandoned by God? No, can we have peace in the midst of tribulation? How?

THURSDAY

Read Bible text at the top, "By faith Moses..." then read the paragraph below, "Moses' decision..." thoughts?

What does this text mean? Why did Moses leave Egypt? Did he leave Egypt because God told him to? Did he leave Egypt and turn his back on the throne because he didn't want the throne? Did Moses leave Egypt because he murdered someone and Pharaoh sought to kill him? But why did he murder someone? Because he was trusting God?

Below the lesson asks, "Think upon the last time you made a wrong decision based on 'good' reasons. What hard lessons did you learn?"

Did Moses make a wrong decision based on good reasons when he murdered the overseer?

What lessons do we learn from all of this? Did God cast Moses off because Moses made a wrong decision? Or was it the right decision to murder the overseer?

In Scripture what is God concerned with when it comes to choosing people as His agents?

Noah – drunk

Abraham – liar, polygamist

Jacob – liar, polygamist

Moses – murderer

Balaam – traitor and extortionist

David – adulterer and murderer

Solomon- mega polygamist, idolater and murderer

Samson – womanizer

Rahab – harlot

Mary Magdala – harlot

Saul of Tarsus – Racist, bigot, abuser,

When it comes to being a worker for God what is the criteria? History of a sin free life? Or experiencing a change of heart where we know God, trust Him and tell the truth about Him? What about today?

How would we respond today if we heard our pastor murdered someone at age 40 like Moses did? What if we heard our elder was a former prostitute? What if we heard our deacon, years ago, had sex outside of marriage?

What is the issue? The history of past sin or the condition of the heart today?

Bottom green section read – what has Jesus done and what is He doing today?

FRIDAY

Questions 1,3,4,5 read and discuss