

INSIDE OUT

NINE ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Small Group Notes
The Fruit of the Spirit: #2 "JOY"
Rev. Dr. Jeremy Mahood
February 19th, 2017

1. READ OUT LOUD TOGETHER Galatians 5:22-23

The qualities mentioned in the Galatians scripture are character traits produced in you by the Holy Spirit. They are not qualities that you attempt to reproduce through good living. They are the characteristics of the divine nature of Jesus Christ. If our desire is to become more like Jesus Christ then our desire should also be for the fruit of the Spirit to be birthed in us by the Spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit. There are behaviours that we do that can facilitate or hinder this spiritual growth.

2. In study #2 we are examining the concept of SPIRITUAL JOY.
We are defining joy in the following way:

**JOY IS A GOOD FEELING DEEP INSIDE YOUR SPIRIT, PRODUCED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT,
THAT LETS YOU KNOW ALL IS WELL**

- a. Based on the definition above, how would you differentiate between joy and happiness? Is there a difference?
- b. Do you think it's possible to have joy and not be happy?

3. Jesus is teaching about joy in the following scripture. READ: John 15:1-11

- a. Read verse 11 out loud as a group. What does this verse say will happen if we do what is taught in the verses that come before it?

Note: the word complete means fully matured

- b. How many times is the word 'remain' used in this passage?
- c. What does it mean if someone constantly repeats a word, over and over again?
- d. How important do you think it is to do what Jesus is teaching?
- e. What does it mean to 'remain' (NIV) or 'abide' (NRSV)?
- f. What is implied in this entire portion of scripture? Explain it simply your own words.
- g. What are the dangers of not 'remaining' or 'abiding'?
- h. What are the benefits?
- i. Explain this statement in your own words: "Joy can only survive if it's connected to its source, Jesus."
- j. What are some of the ways we can learn to 'remain in Christ and thereby by improve our conscious contact with the Lord? See vs. 7, 9-10

4. STATEMENT: Christianity Today magazine released a report that states that only 19% of church goes read their bible daily (less than one out of every five). Yet the majority of church goes seek to honour Christ with their life.

- a. What do you see as a great disconnect here?
- b. Why do you think this is an issue?
- c. What could we do to encourage each other to remain in God's word and also practice seeking the conscious contact with the Lord?

5. READ: James 1:2-4. Have someone read the same scripture in *The Message* translation.
 - a. How is 'pure joy' translated in *The Message*?
 - b. How can we learn to turn trials and difficulties to our spiritual advantage?
6. Go back and READ John 15:2.
 - a. Explain the relationship between being pruned and trials? Explain how they could be similar.
 - b. What is the spiritual result of pruning/trials in our lives?
 - c. What do you think is the relationship between learning 'perseverance' and learning to 'remain'?
7. Discuss this statement:

A trial is a pruning that strips away all superficial things in our lives that we think we need to make us happy until we come to realise that all we really need is Jesus.
8. a. What do you think will happen to someone facing a serious trial that has been living a life of superficial happiness but is not deeply and intimately connected to the source of Joy, Jesus Christ?
 - b. Could this lack of deep spiritual connection with Christ be the reason so many Christians are discouraged, defeated and angry at the trials of life? What do you think?
9. In your own words explain why Jesus teaching in John 15 is absolutely critical to the producing the fruit of Joy in our lives, even in the face of great adversity.
10. READ: Habakkuk 3:17-18. Explain how this passage of scripture is a summary of what you have been learning today.
11. READ: Nehemiah 8:10. Again, how the Spiritual Joy can become our strength?

TO DO: we have seen that it is impossible to maintain Joy in the face of trials with first having a deep and abiding connection with Jesus Christ. So many people wait for the crisis and they try to connect only to discover that it's too late. Discouragement, depression, defeat, anger, resentment flood their lives...there is no joy. How many ways could you think of to nurture your connection with Jesus and other believers this week? Begin to put some of those ideas into action. Do not wait. Your joy depends on it.

If you have lost that connection, begin to make the necessary daily changes and take the steps to reconnect with Christ. I am sure someone in your group would help you get started if you reach out to them and ask.



TWO OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE:

1. We are raising \$6,000 to feed the entire community of Attawapiskat in what is called a Community Feast. DeBeers is flying in the food. The Chief has secured a cook and we are providing the food, and a videographer to document the event. Rev Bill Prankard is overseeing the entire operation. This opportunity arose due to the local school being closed for about 3+ weeks due to broken pipes. The young people are bored and at loose ends and the chief is deeply concerned about another round of suicides. ***Prayerfully consider what you could do financially so that we may take full advantage of this amazing opportunity.***
2. February 25 is THE COLDEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR. you have an opportunity to walk in support of our Samaritan centre. Please check out www.cnoy.org for details and to register your small group or team. You can check with Pastor Josh for more details as well. Let get together and support vulnerable people in our community.

REPORTS:

1. I had an opportunity to talk to the young man who sits on St. Raphael St. on Sunday. He came to the Courtyard to show me that he had raised enough money to get his birth certificate and other ID. That will now allow him to begin the process of applying for OW, and hopefully then some social housing. Let's continue to pray for Phil, and just love him as best we can.
2. We have just completed our first full year in our Mission Outpost! In a few weeks we will provide you with a report on our operating expenses and what our budget situation is. Thank you for giving faithfully and regularly to the Kingdom of God through All Nations Church.