

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS JOY

BIBLE PASSAGE: Galatians 5:22-26; Psalm 43:4, 21:6, 119:111; Proverbs 10:28; Isaiah 51:11, 55:12; Nehemiah 8:10; Habakkuk 3:18-19; John 15:11, 16:20; Hebrews 12:2; James 1:2

STORY POINT: God is our joy, from His Word comes joy, and our hope for eternity gives us joy.

MEMORY VERSE: Galatians 5:22-23

BIG PICTURE QUESTION: What is the Fruit of the Spirit? The Fruit of the Spirit is what we can expect to see in our lives when we are guided by the Holy Spirit.

PARENT DEVOTIONAL

This Bible lesson continues our study of the Fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5. Each installment will focus on a specific character quality that God creates in us through His Spirit.

Scriptures Pertaining to Joy: Galatians 5:22-26; Psalm 43:4, 21:6, 119:111; Proverbs 10:28; Isaiah 51:11, 55:12; Nehemiah 8:10; Habakkuk 3:18-19; John 15:11, 16:20; Hebrews 12:2; James 1:2

Learning Objectives: After this lesson, the children will demonstrate:

1. An understanding that joy is a fruit of the Spirit.
2. An understanding that God is our joy, from His Word comes joy, and our hope for eternity gives us joy.

Bible Verse to Memorize: Habakkuk 3:18: "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation." (ESV)

Fortunately, we don't have to guess what the fruit of a Christian's life is to be, since Galatians 5:22-25 tells us. When God and others look at our trees—our lives—they should see nothing but "love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Model for your kids what it looks like to live by the Spirit, showing and sharing with them the fruit of your life. Much of Paul's discussion in the book of Galatians focuses on opposites. He looks at the differences between the gospel of Christ and false gospels, faith and observance of the law, promise and law, freedom and slavery. One pair of opposites that he looks at in detail is living by the flesh (following human desires) and living in the Spirit (following God's desires). The decision of which way to live makes an impact on all aspects of life. Paul is clear about the results of each way. People who choose to follow the flesh can expect their lives to hold the things that way of life produces. Ultimately, that choice means eternal separation from God.

On the other hand, the choice to follow the Spirit produces very different results for this life and for eternity. The fruit of the Spirit includes different attitudes and actions that become more and more evident in our lives as we follow God's way. They grow in our lives just as fruit grows on a tree that is properly cared for.

These characteristics of Christians are quite varied. They include such all-encompassing ideas as love, joy, and peace. They deal with our behavior toward others: forbearance, kindness, and gentleness (power under control). And they describe our inner values of goodness, faithfulness, and self-control.

These characteristics identify us with Christ. Paul uses an interesting image when he stresses our need to live by the Spirit. Anyone who has watched a marching band knows how obvious it is if one person is out of step with the others. In the same way, if we are not living the way that the Spirit directs us, that fact will be immediately noticed, and the results can be disastrous.

Each tree is recognized by its own fruit" (Luke 6:44).

KINDERGARTEN - 5TH GRADE BIBLE STORY

The Fruit of the Spirit is JOY

We are going to start learning about the fruit of the Spirit! When we trust Jesus and live with him he helps us be these things: loving, kind, joyful, patient, gentle, peaceful, good, faithfulness, and have self control. When we say fruits, we aren't talking about the fruit we eat, we are talking about the characteristics we have.

Because we have the Holy Spirit, we can have joy. Let's read together Galatians 5:22-23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law." (ESV)

What do we already know about joy? (If we have the Spirit, we can have joy, no matter what.) Remember that after we believe and trust in Jesus Christ, He gives us the Holy Spirit, who lives within us. It is the Spirit who produces this fruit in us as we abide in Him.

Where can we look to discover what joy truly is? (God's Word!) There are many verses that talk about joy in the Bible. Since His Word is our truth, it is the first place we should turn to learn more about this fruit of the Spirit. Let's turn together to Psalm 43:4. "Then I will go to the altar of God, to God my exceeding joy, and I will praise you with the lyre, O God, my God." (ESV) What can we discover about joy from this verse? (God is our joy!) Not only did the psalmist say that God is his joy, but his exceeding joy, joy that goes above and beyond even regular joy!

Now let's turn to Psalm 119:111. "Your testimonies are my heritage forever, for they are the joy of my heart." (ESV) The psalmist is talking about God's Word. He is saying that God's Word is his forever, and it is the joy of his heart, or his deepest joy.

As we read God's Word, we discover more and more of who He is. We learn about His promises to us and all that He has done. We can experience joy when we read and know God's Word, just like the writer of this psalm!

We know that we can have joy through the Holy Spirit producing His fruit within us. We also know that God is our joy and that we experience joy through His Word. James tells believers to consider it joy when they go through difficult times in their lives (James 1:2). Joy is very different from happiness. Happiness cannot be present when someone is sad. But joy can always be present, even at the same time as sadness.

Now let's look at another verse to find out how joy can be present at the same time as sadness! Turn to Proverbs chapter ten, verse 28 "The hope of the righteous brings joy, but the expectation of the wicked will perish." (ESV) If we are Christians, we have something the rest of the world does not: the hope of eternal life with God. After we die, we know we will live forever with God. He will wipe away every tear from our eyes and there will be no more sorrow. When we understand that we have this to look forward to, it gives us joy! We know that the hard times we experience on earth will not last forever because of Christ. Knowing this truth allows us to have joy even in the midst of sadness and sorrow.

We can experience joy when we know God. He is our joy, and the more we know Him, the greater our joy becomes. We can experience joy when we read God's Word. In His Word we discover His truth, His promise, and who He is. We can experience joy when we remember how much Christ suffered for us and how He is worth suffering for now. And we can experience joy when we remember the hope we have of spending all of eternity with God without suffering or sadness. However, if we are not abiding in God (coming to know Him more each day and living for Him), we cannot expect to have the fruit of joy produced within us. It would be like taking away the water and sunlight from a fruit tree. The fruit will die and no more will be able to grow.

If we are abiding in Christ, we will have the fruit of the Holy Spirit, and we can say, although I am suffering, "...yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation." (Habakkuk 3:18, ESV) This is our memory verse for this week, "Yet I will rejoice in the Lord; I will take joy in the God of my salvation." Let's work together to memorize this verse!

Memory Verse: Galatians 5:22-23 "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."

K-5th DISCUSSION:

BIBLE PASSAGE: Galatians 5:22-26; Psalm 43:4, 21:6, 119:111; Proverbs 10:28; Isaiah 51:11, 55:12; Nehemiah 8:10; Habakkuk 3:18-19; John 15:11, 16:20; Hebrews 12:2; James 1:2

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Ask the following questions and discuss:

1. What do we already know about joy? (If we have the Spirit, we can have joy, no matter what.)
2. Where can we look to discover what joy truly is? (God's Word!)
3. Why do you think God's Word is the joy of the psalmist's heart?
4. How is it possible to have joy, to praise God, in difficult times? (Allow them time to think and offer explanations.)
5. What are the habits that can help grow the fruit of the Spirit in your life?
6. What fruit do you most recognise in yourself? Which fruit do you have most trouble submitting to the will of the Holy Spirit? What would others say?
7. Do you think that the Fruit of the Spirit usually shows gradually? Have you seen evidence of this in your life or someone else's life?

Additional Discussion Questions:

- What does this story teach me about God or the gospel?
- What does this story teach me about myself?
- Are there any commands in this story to obey?
- How are they for God's glory and my good?
- Are there any promises in this story to remember?
- How do they help me trust and love God?
- How does this story help me to live on mission better?

Fruit of the Spirit weekly activity idea

For the fruit of the Spirit lessons, make a tree for the wall labeled "Believer" or "Christian." (On a poster board or large piece of paper, draw or use construction paper.) Make paper "fruits," each labeled with an attribute of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control. Each week add the particular attribute you are teaching about. This week, you would add "joy," allowing a child to place it on the branch of the tree. Use only one type of fruit, for though there are several virtues produced by the Spirit, they are all one type of fruit: the fruit of the Spirit.

Craft - Use this blog post for some really fun JOY craft and activity ideas.

<http://thelittlesandme.com/the-fruit-of-the-spirit-is-joy-kids-activities/>