

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT
WEEK 03
THE FRUIT OF JOY

JOY

Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. -Romans 5:3-5

- *Charo*
 - In both OT and NT joy is consistently the mark both individually of the believer and corporately of the church. It is a quality, and not simply an emotion, grounded upon God himself and indeed derived from him (Ps. 16:11; Phil. 4:4; Rom. 15:13), which characterizes the Christian's life on earth (1 Pet. 1:8), and also anticipates eschatologically the joy of being with Christ forever in the kingdom of heaven (cf. Rev. 19:7).
- Is very different from happiness
 - Joy is a quality, where happiness is more of an emotion & based on situation & circumstance
- Is derived from God's love for us & our love for God
 - The closer you draw to God, the more that you understand that he loves & cares for you & the more you love Him
 - Which then produces joy!
- Is often produced by enduring suffering & sorrow
 - It forces us to trust & rely on God more, making us more grateful & thankful for Him & remembering all that He has done for us
 - It causes us to remember God's faithfulness & promises
 - We look forward to the day of Christ's return & making all things new
- Historically, has been a great tool for evangelism
 - As Christians have endured suffering or persecution, their joy in the face of such adversity has been a great testimony for what God has done in their lives

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

1. What do you think is the difference between happiness & joy?
2. How do you typically respond to hard times, failure, disappointment? Do you get angry? Do you lash out? Do you sulk?
3. What are some areas in your life, or people, that you need to do a better job of responding to them with joy?
4. Why should we remember AND look forward to help us produce more joy in our lives?
5. What are some other concrete things you can do to produce more joy in your life?
6. What are some people, things, situations that are stealing joy in your life?