

Nehemiah 8:10 says, *“The joy of the Lord is your strength.”*

Isaiah prophesying about Jesus says,
“He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” Isaiah 53:3

Hebrews 12:2 says *“But He endured the cross,”* – which is what’s being described in Isaiah 53, and why?-- *“for the joy that was set before Him, enduring the shame.”*

Jesus went to the cross *for the joy set before him*, because the suffering could never stop the promise of God; but only fulfill it.

Tim Keller-Definition of Biblical Joy-Delighting in God and His salvation for the sheer beauty and worth of who He is.

Opposite of Biblical Joy-Hopelessness and despair.

Counterfeit of Biblical Joy- Elations that come from blessings and not the Blesser; mood swings based on circumstances.

Community Group Questions:

1. How do you best hear the Holy Spirit’s leading? (Listening, reading, through a friend or?)
2. How does *“Walking in the Spirit”* free us from Paul’s experience in Romans 7?
3. Does the idea of being rewarded for *“Walking in the Spirit”* appeal to you?
4. Can you see the difference between *“feelings of joy”* versus the joy of the Spirit?
5. How does our salvation work with genuine biblical joy?
6. What does Biblical joy look like in the presence of suffering?



Walking by the Spirit What is it and how does Joy work? Galatians 5:16-25

So I say, walk by the **Spirit**, and you will not gratify the desires of the **flesh**.¹⁷ For the **flesh** desires what is contrary to the **Spirit**, and the **Spirit** what is contrary to the **flesh**. They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want.¹⁸ But if you are led by the **Spirit**, you are not under the law.

¹⁹The acts of the **flesh** are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery; ²⁰idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹and envy; drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God.

²²But the fruit of the **Spirit** is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law. ²⁴Those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the **flesh** with its passions and desires. ²⁵Since we live by the **Spirit**, let us keep in step with the **Spirit**. Galatians 5:16-25

Part I- The Holy Spirit

Who/What is the Holy Spirit anyway?

The Bible clearly declares that the Holy Spirit is God.
The third person of the Triune God...
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

He is a personal being, with a mind, emotions, and a will.

The commands in Galatians vs.16 & 25

Walk by the Spirit; Keep in step with the Spirit.

are followed by recognition of a conflict in vs 17

For the flesh desires what is contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the flesh. They are in conflict with each other.

That's the conflict; we are simultaneously righteous and sinful.

We desire to walk in the Spirit, but the flesh fights against that.

Here's our warning:

They are in conflict with each other, so that you are not to do whatever you want. Vs. 17b

So how do we know what's what?

When the flesh is in control you get what's in verses 19 to 21.

When the Spirit is in control you get what's in verses 22 & 23

Paul talks about it a lot in Romans 7.

Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me.²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law;²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me.²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Romans 7:21-25

How do you know when someone is a follower of Christ?

¹⁸ A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. ²⁰ Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.

Matthew 7:18-20

What is the evidence of salvation?

The Answer: What does your life look like?

Brothers and sisters, I could not address you as people who live by the Spirit but as people who are still worldly—mere infants in Christ. ² I gave you milk, not solid food, for you were not yet ready for it. Indeed, you are still not ready.³ You are still worldly. For since there is jealousy and quarreling among you, are you not worldly? Are you not acting like mere humans?

1 Corinthians 3:1-3

For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

1 Corinthians 3:11-16

Part II- The fruit of the Spirit- (Joy)

"The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control;

Galatians 5:22,23

Today people believe that your feelings are the standard for joy. Momentary pleasures have superseded meaningful joy.

How do we gain genuine joy?

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. ... ¹¹ I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.

John 15:5,11

Dallas Willard: *"Joy is not a passing sensation of pleasure, but a pervasive sense of well-being that is infused with hope because of the goodness of God."*