

The Church of Our Saviour

Practicing God's Graciousness

Adult Christian Formation

Lenten Bible Study Week 3: The Fruit of the Spirit

This week we will look at the source of Christian joy and how we find the joy that is God's blessing in our lives, whatever our circumstances may be. Christian joy is not dependent on outward circumstances, but on the "knowing and experiencing the present and perspective of God" (Sandi Swanson).

The Greek word for joy (*chara*) is found 60 times in the New Testament. "Joy" is mentioned over 200 times throughout the Scriptures. A related verb, "to rejoice", is found 175 times in the Old and New Testaments.

Week 3: Study Guide and Discussion Questions

1. Who/what is the source of joy? (See Psalm 16:11; Isaiah 29:19; John 16:22).

Read each of these passages describing various aspects of joy and reasons to rejoice, and complete the table for discussion.

Passage	Describe the key point(s) you learned about joy?	How can you use this knowledge in your own life?
Deuteronomy 16:13-15		
1 Kings 8:65-66		
2 Chronicles 30: 21-27		
Ezra 6:22		
Nehemiah 8:10-17		
Luke 2:8-12		
Matthew 28:5-8		
John 15:9-17		
Philippians 4:4-7		
1 Peter 1:3-9		

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2. How have you experienced God's joy in your own life? How would you describe that joy?

Joy by Samuel Dickey Gordon

Joy is distinctly a Christian word and a Christian thing. It is the reverse of happiness. Happiness is the result of what happens of an agreeable sort. Joy has its springs deep down inside. And that spring never runs dry, no matter what happens. Only Jesus gives that joy. He had joy, singing its music within, even under the shadow of the cross. It is an unknown word and thing except as He has sway within.

3. Do you agree with Mr. Gordon? Why or why not?
4. What does our society say about the pursuit of happiness?
5. From a Christian perspective what do you think or feel is the difference between happiness and joy?
6. How do we hold on to joy even in trials and suffering?
7. What barriers do you think there may be to experiencing the fullness of joy in our lives?
8. What do you think we might do to attract more of this fruit of the Spirit to our parish life?

And to the life of the broader community?

9. How has God showed you His joy in Jesus Christ this week? Will you share?