

LIFE IN THE KINGDOM:

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Joy: Romans 5:1-11

July 19, 2020

WORSHIP

Take a moment to remind yourself why you are meeting together: To grow as disciples of Jesus by cultivating our relationship with God and friendship with others.

Listen to a song of worship: [Joy - Niyoki](#) or [Joyful Joyful We Adore Thee - Chris Tomlin](#)

Or read the following together:

“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope” (Romans 15:13).

INTRODUCTION

Joy based upon one's circumstances will always be fragile, unstable and fleeting. Yet we all want joy. One of St. Augustine's prayers, written in the fifth century, speaks timeless words about true joy found in the unwavering, eternal God, “For there is a joy that is not given to those who do not love you, but only to those who love you for your own sake... This is happiness and there is no other. Those who think that there is another kind of happiness look for joy elsewhere, but theirs is not true joy. Nevertheless their will remains drawn towards some image of the true joy.” Today we will explore together the source of unshakeable joy—a right relationship with God.

SCRIPTURE

20 MINUTES

Read the following Scripture together. Then invite the group to respond through the questions below.

Romans 5:1-11, English Standard Version (ESV)

¹ Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

² Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³ Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

- ▶ How would you describe joy? Where does New York City, or where do you, look for joy, especially as we walk through a pandemic and the tumult of racial tensions?
- ▶ Romans 5 links joy to hope of the glory of God (v. 2), suffering (v. 3) and reconciliation with God through Jesus Christ (v. 11). Therefore, we see that true joy comes from unlikely and sometimes unwelcome sources. How does a Christian's status as a child of God provide access to unwavering joy?
- ▶ A hymn writer¹ states, "Well may the accuser roar of sins that I have done, I know them all and thousands more, Jehovah knoweth none!" What are signs that a Christian is rejoicing in his or her reconciliation with God?
- ▶ What difference could joy make for you and those in need around you today? What is one concrete way you can be a conduit of joy?

GOING FURTHER THIS WEEK

Use the [Fruit of the Spirit devotional guide](#) to go deeper on the topic of joy.

FELLOWSHIP AND PRAYER

25 MINUTES

- ▶ Thank God for joy that is rooted in justification by faith and withstands any suffering.
- ▶ Pray for our city, neighbors and coworkers to taste the Spirit's joy through Christians.
- ▶ Pray for those who do not know the hope of Christ by using the prayer below:

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you, especially...
 [members of the group name particular people].
 For the honor of your name. Amen.

Then with the Scripture discussion in mind, pray for each other and the particular needs in our city and world.

- ▶ Want to continue meditating on Scripture throughout the week? Join Virtual Noonday prayer:
eastside.redeemer.com/prayer

¹ Samuel Whitlock Gandy (1780-1851).