

CHIEF MINISTRIES

September 2023

Before I get started, I need to address something as I am trying to be in compliance with the changes of TDC going to digital mail. Only one of the original units that went to digital mail in July rejected my August newsletter. However, because of the contraband being sent in in the guise of faith-based mail, ALL correspondence/letters, including these, will have to be sent to the Dallas address and you will receive them on your tablets. Those who don't have a tablet will be receiving a physical copy according to TDCJ. As your units start the digital mail process, I will be changing my database to reflect those updates. I will continue to check monthly on your unit assignment so if you are moved to a unit that is not yet delivering digital mail you will still receive the newsletter as before. I apologize to anyone who may not receive their newsletter, but they will not make exceptions because of those few who continue to make it difficult for everyone.

This is the first of three in the series of the Fruit of the Holy Spirit. Hopefully, over the last month, you have really thought and prayed about where you fit. So, this month we are going to focus on the first three fruit that really defines our relationship with God. Those fruit are Love, Joy, and Peace.

Love

We are commanded to love God first, and to have only one God before us. The word says God is love, everything He does is love, if we were created in His image, we too need to love, Him first, ourselves and others, including our enemies.

When you love someone your focus and desire is to do whatever it takes to make sure you don't hurt them, offend them, or do anything that will jeopardize your relationship with them. I can hear you say, but Ms G., it doesn't matter what I do, cause Jesus (God, Holy Spirit) will love me no matter what. I say to you, read deeper in your Bible and see what God says about sin, sin separates us from Him. There is no gradation of sin, sin is sin! Yes, He loves us and shows us grace and mercy, but sin still separates us from Him. I don't mean to sound hard, but I want to always speak the truth to you and that is the truth. So, since WE ARE ALL SINNERS, yes saved by grace and thru His mercy of taking our sins to the cross and dying, our part in that relationship is now to walk in and out our salvation in purity, righteousness, holiness, and truth. We can't do that on our own, we need the Holy Spirit to lead, guide, instruct, teach, keep us in line, discipline, and bring us to the understanding (which then leads to actions) that allows us to walk in the fullness God has for us. Why am I saying this, because, as we seek the things that are "precious" to Him (good fruit) we are putting off the things that are "precious" to us (usually bad fruit). Hopefully, you can see these two very different categories. As we go thru each of the fruit, we will look at what that fruit looks like and what it doesn't.

The first fruit of the Spirit is love, it is the key to all the others. Along with temperance (self-control), love is like a bookend that helps hold the other fruit in place. Its divine characteristics are detailed in I Corinthians 13. *It is a love that surpasses human understanding and causes a person to be filled with the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:18-19). This supernatural love is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5).*

The spiritual fruit of love is not a feeling or an emotion, but rather it is a decision. This fruit of the Spirit causes us to make a decision to love even when we don't feel like it. Paul writes in Philippians 1:9 : *"And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more."* The word abound means "to grow." God wants our love to grow so big that it will chase people down and overtake them. When we walk in the love of God, everything else will fall into place.

One of the main messages that come through loud and clear from studying our Bible is the extreme importance that God the Father is placing on that everyone learn how to love Him, love ourselves, love one another, and to even go as far as to be able to love our enemies and those who will try and hurt us. Here are some points on what that looks like:

- Unselfish, benevolent concern for another; brotherly concern; the object of brotherly concern or affection
- The self-denying, self-sacrificing, Christ-like love which is the foundation of all other graces.
- Unselfish, loyal, and benevolent concern for the well-being of another
- The high esteem which God has for His children and the high regard which they, in turn, should have for Him and other people.
- To love, to have affection for someone; to like; to be a friend; the love of brothers for each other.

However, our abilities as fallen humans to love one another are very limited. This is why it is so important for each person who claims Christ as their savior to work very closely with the Holy Spirit to get this fruit worked into the core of our being. It is only when the love of the Holy Spirit starts to flow and enter our being that we can even begin to love God, love ourselves, and love one another to the degree and to the intensity that God would really like to see from each one of us. To those of you who will be entering into this sanctification process with the Lord – love should be listed as the #1 quality you should really attempt to put into the core of your soul and being.

The Holy Spirit will be moving to impart this quality early on in your walk as it is that important and the foundation for the other fruit to incorporate into your mind, soul, and emotions due to the extreme importance of it in your walk with the Lord. You can be the greatest man or woman of God and have some of the greatest gifts of God flowing through you – but if you are not walking with all of this in the spirit of love and humility, it will have all been for naught.

There are many scriptures that speak about God's love for us and how we are to love Him and each other. Because I want to challenge you to study these for yourself and not just give you a bunch of information to read, I will include some of the most common ones. But please as the Holy Spirit leads, dive deeper into each of these and find others to incorporate into your daily walk.

- Song of Solomon 8:7 says; *"Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it."*
- John 13:34-35 says; *"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another." v35 *"By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."**
- John 15: 13 says; *"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."*
- John 16:27 says; *"For the Father himself loveth you because ye have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God."*
- 1 Peter 4:78 says; *"And above all have fervent love among yourselves; for love shall cover the multitude of sins."*

- 1 John 3:11 says; *"For this is the message that ye heard from the beginning, that we should **love** one another."*
- 1 John 4:7-8 says; *"Beloved, let us **love** one another: for **love** is of God; and every one that **loveth** is born of God." vs "He that **loveth** not knoweth not God; for God is **love**."*

There are even verses to tell us what love is not: Here's one, find others and study them out too.

- 1 Corinthians 13:4–8a (ESV) says; *"Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth."*

Joy

Joy is defined as "cheerfulness or calm delight;" however, it has nothing to do with your emotions. Joy is something that is manifested in the spiritual realm; it is a supernatural joy that gives spiritual strength (Nehemiah 8:10). The Psalmist and the Prophet Isaiah both refer to it as the joy of salvation (Psalm 51:12; Isaiah 12:3).

It is a divine joy that results from an experiential knowledge of God's Word (John 15:11; Jeremiah 15:16).

In this rough and tough world, we live in with all of the hate, disorder, and bad things that can happen to any one of us at any time, and of course prison has its own variables that steal joy which compounds the factors that affect us on the outside. With the imperfections of our own fallen nature, and then you combine that with how people react differently to adversity – some Christians have literally had most, if not all of their joy in the Lord, knocked right out of them. No matter how bad of a beating you may have taken in this life – God can still fully heal, deliver, and restore you if you are willing to work with Him in this healing process. The word says laughter (joy) is like a medicine, one of the things that God can fully restore in you is your joy in Him. And not only can the Lord fully restore what joy you used to have in Him, but He can also increase it to a much greater degree and intensity.

Here are some of the different definitions of what real joy is all about: Do a word search/study on these to get more revelation from the Word.

- Great delight; gladness of heart
- The happy state that results from knowing and serving God
- That deep, abiding, inner rejoicing in the Lord
- To rejoice, to be glad
- Happy, joyful, cheerful, rejoicing, festive

If we allow it God can transmit this divine quality right up into our being – and this will be His joy, not our joy, once it starts to flow up into you. And once God starts to release His joy into our being, we won't be able to help but feel it. And once we are able to start feeling it again, it will become much easier to learn how to walk back in it in our own daily walk with the Lord.

The Bible says that the joy of the Lord is your strength. This is why it is so important that every Christian have some level of God's joy operating through them in this life. Without God's joy operating in your life, things can begin to dry up. Nothing is ever fun anymore. Everything can start to become a chore. Before you know it, you will want to start to withdraw from others and life in general. The joy of the Lord can really give you an incredible surge of strength in your own daily walk with God – especially when you have to take on some really tough situations. This is why each Christian should work very closely

with the Holy Spirit in not only getting Him to release His joy into their being but to also keep it running through them on a very regular and consistent basis. The Holy Spirit will do this for you if you are open to receiving this **divine infusion** from Him and are willing to work with Him to keep it properly flowing through you on a regular basis.

Here are some scriptures on joy to ponder and again I encourage you to find more.

- Nehemiah 8:10 says; *"And do not be grieved, For the **joy** of the Lord is your strength."*
- Psalm 16:11 says; *"Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence if fullness of **joy**; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."*
- Psalm 35:9 says; *"And my soul shall be **joyful** in the Lord: it shall rejoice in his salvation."*
- Psalm 89:15-16 says; *"Blessed is the people that know the **joyful** sound: they shall walk, O Lord in the light of thy countenance." v16 "In thy name shall they **rejoice** all the day: and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted.*
- Acts 2:28 says; *"Thou hast made known to me the ways of life; thou shalt make me full of **joy** with thy countenance."*
- Romans 14:17 says; *"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, peace, and **joy** in the Holy Ghost."*
- Hebrews 12:2 says; *"For the **joy** set before Him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." We can have **joy** in the eternal life that awaits us after death."*

When I started looking for what joy was not, according to the scriptures, I found it meant mournful, hopelessness, and miserable, and one scripture referring to David when he lost his joy during his transgression (sin) with Bathsheba.

Peace

Another fruit that we all need operating in our lives, especially with all of the uncertainty of this life and never knowing what is going to happen next is peace. Jobs are no longer as secure as they used to be. You never know when the company you work for may be bought out and your job will be gone in a flash. Half of all marriages are still ending up in divorce. We are all constantly living under the threat of future terrorist activity, never knowing when or where the next attack will come from. With all of this kind of heightened activity that we are all forced to deal with on a daily basis, it becomes very easy to lose your sense of peace, especially your peace in the Lord. The Holy Spirit can really help you pick up the slack if you start losing your own sense of peace over some of the storm clouds that could come against you in this life. Once His peace starts to flow up into your mind, soul, and emotions, it really is as the Bible says – a peace that surpasses all human understanding – especially when that peace comes in right in the middle of a severe storm that you may be going through.

We must learn to maintain peace in three important relationships: with God, with our fellow man, and with ourselves. We maintain peace with God by believing and trusting Him. We maintain peace with our fellow man by not allowing strife to be a part of our relationships with other people. We maintain peace with ourselves by refusing to live in guilt or condemnation thus recognizing that God is greater and He paid for and overcame death and the grave. WE win!

This kind of peace doesn't come through drugs, alcohol, sex, wealth, or entertainment. It is a supernatural (not worldly) peace that is a gift of God (John 14:27). The spiritual fruit of peace results from being justified by faith (Romans 5:1). and loving God's law. (Psalm 119:165)

This is a peace that surpasses all human understanding, and it keeps our heart and mind through Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7)

Here is how the quality of peace is described in some of the different Bible Dictionaries and Commentaries:

- The presence and experience of right relationships
- The tranquility of soul
- Sense of well-being and fulfillment that comes from God and is dependent on His presence
- The inner tranquility and poise of the Christian whose trust is in God through Christ
- Tranquility, rest, harmony, the absence of agitation or discord

The quality of peace should be one of the main qualities that you should try and get worked up into your soul through the Holy Spirit in the sanctification process. Without the peace of God operating in your life, you could become very easily rattled, shaken, tormented, and knocked right off your game in the Lord the first time any kind of adversity should ever come your way.

Here are some scriptures for you to study and find more;

- Psalm 4:8 says; *"I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety."*
- Psalm 119:165 says; *"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."*
- Isaiah 26:3 says; *"Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee."*
- John 14:27 says; *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."*
- Romans 8:6 says; *"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."*
- Philippians 4:7 says; *"And the peace of God which passeth all understanding shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."*
- James 3:18 says; *"And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace."*

Look closely at these first three fruit, love, joy, and peace. Your job will be to get into the Word to find out exactly what it is God is going to want to change about you. You will need to find out exactly what godly qualities God will want you to try and **"put in"** your being, and what qualities He will want you to try and **"put away."** Find the appropriate Scripture verses showing you exactly which qualities and attributes God will want to get worked into you, and which qualities He will want to pull out of you. And there is no better time or place to start than here and now!

Praying we all develop and produce good fruit,

Ms. Chief (aka Ms.G)

If you want to know more about CHIEF Ministries or would like to be a part, please go to www.chiefministries.com

Christ's Heart In Every Felon



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