



Galatians 5:22-23

Kevin Portillo

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a. Reading of the **Word**:

Galatians 5:22-25

“By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.”

Karl Barth: “Laughter is the closest thing to the grace of God.”

Karl Barth: “The theologian who labors without joy is not a theologian at all. Sulky faces, morose thoughts and boring ways of speaking are intolerable in this field.”

Aristotle [384 B.C. – 322 B.C.]: Humans are “the only living things that laugh.”

“A human child does not have a soul until the moment it laughs for the first time.”

*What is Joy? What does it look like to be filled with Joy?
What is joyful about the Christian Faith?*

b. **The Letter to the Galatians: Biblical Background and Context**

Paul was the first to preach the good news about Jesus Christ to the people of Galatia:
Galatians 4:13-14

“You know that it was because of a physical infirmity that I first announced the gospel to you; though my condition put you to the test, you did not scorn or despise me, but welcomed me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus.”

Paul saw himself as a “spiritual mother” to these Gentile (Non-Jewish heritage) Galatian believers: Galatians 4:19

“My little children, for whom I am again in the pain of childbirth until Christ is formed in you.”

Paul’s prayer and longing is for **Christ to be formed in us.**

Pastor Paul commands the Galatian believers to be governed by the Holy Spirit:

Galatians 5:16: *“Live by the Spirit, I say, and do not gratify the desires of the flesh.”*

Galatians 5:18: *“If you are led by the Spirit, you are not subject to the law.”*

Galatians 5:25: *“If we live by the Spirit, let us also be guided by the Spirit.”*

What does it mean to “live by the Spirit”?

Here’s what it looks like when we **do not live by the Spirit: Galatians 5:19-21**

“Now the works of the flesh are obvious: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, anger, quarrels, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these. I am warning you, as I warned you before: those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.”

c. **Fruit**

The “Fruit” (singular) of the Holy Spirit.

“Fruit is the natural product of life in a tree.”

“Fruit is what you get when there is *life within the tree.*”

Why does tree bear fruit?

Because it has life.

In the same way, God’s life is within us; therefore, we will be overflowing with God’s life and produce the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

The fruit of the Holy Spirit is none other than **Jesus Christ!**

What Paul is highlighting when talking about the fruit of the Holy Spirit:

Christian Character.

d. **The Pastoral Word: On Joy**

What is Joy?

1. Joy is Relational

Romans 15:10

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with God’s people!”

Ephesians 2:12-13

“Remember that you were at that time without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

There is Joy in Jesus relationships.

2. Joy in the Gospel of Jesus Christ

The word, “Gospel”, means “Good News.”

And Good News brings Joy.

What is the Gospel? 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

“For I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures, and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the scriptures.”

Through Jesus, the Father promises us forgiveness, immortal life, and a future of hope with the whole creation.

It is possible to have joy *through* suffering--not because of suffering:

Matthew 5:11-12

“Blessed are you when people revile you and persecute you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.”

Acts 16:25

“About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.”

For Christians suffering from clinical depression, your depression is an illness, not a sign of failure or a weakness.

e. Closing Word

John Stott, Anglican Pastor, Priest and Theologian, and a leader of the evangelical movement in the UK. In 2005, Time Magazine declared that he was among the 100 most influential people in the world. He dies in 2011.

“Heavenly Father,

I pray that this day I may live in your presence and please you more and more.

Lord Jesus,

I pray that this day I may take up my cross and follow you.

Holy Spirit,

I pray that this day you will fill me with yourself and cause your fruit to ripen in my life: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.”