

## Introduction

This week we are continuing our study on Joy. That it is a joy to serve Jesus. That ministry brings us joy, and as we look at the vine, the branch, and consider everything a loss, we will come to know Him and joy will flow out of us abundantly.

## Scripture

- **John 15:5** (AMP)

<sup>5</sup>I am the Vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in Me and I in him bears much (abundant) fruit. However, apart from Me [cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing.

- **John 15:5** (Message)

<sup>5-8</sup>"I am the Vine, you are the branches. When you're joined with me and I with you, the relation intimate and organic, the harvest is sure to be abundant. Separated, you can't produce a thing. Anyone who separates from me is deadwood, gathered up and thrown on the bonfire. But if you make yourselves at home with me and my words are at home in you, you can be sure that whatever you ask will be listened to and acted upon. This is how my Father shows who he is—when you produce grapes, when you mature as my disciples.

1. **He is the vine.** He is the source of which life exists. A branch cannot exist without a vine or life source. They are connected and must remain together to produce fruit.
2. **We are the Branches.** If I am the branch of Christ and I produce the same fruit on the branch that Jesus did, part of that fruit will be joy because a vine does not produce fruit, only the branch produces fruit.
3. **We are IN Christ.** Sin cannot cut me off from the vine when I have been grafted into Christ, this concept is totally unacceptable and unscriptural.

Because I am sure sin does not stop me from being a Son. So we have so many sad Christians around beating themselves up trying their best to stay right with God which results in lack of joy in their life and a lack of fulfilment because of what they listen to.

4. **We will bear fruit naturally and abundantly.** Being connected to Jesus gives us the security of knowing we will become fruitful.

Nothing we have to work at or do to make fruit happen. We will have the same chemistry the vine has just by being part of Him.

We will bear the same fruit, have the same design, produce the same seeds, and carry the same destiny as the vine because we just ARE..not because of what we do.

The vinedresser takes care of the vine, and the vine takes care of the branch, resulting in harvest of Joy!

5. **Apart from God we can do nothing!** We are made to be in union with Christ. He created us to have relationship with Him.

There is a vital connection between God, (the Vine), and Man, (the branch). He designed it that way so that we would remain intimate and relational with each other.

No man is an island and we need God to exist.

God takes pleasure in us, His creation and wants to be so vitally connected to us, that apart from Him, we can do nothing.

God is our source, He is the beginning and the End, He is the First and the Last, He is everything and everything we have comes from Him. He wants us to flourish, grow and be fruitful.

How do we do that? Become intimate with and stay connected to the vine, and let the Vinedresser take care of the rest. When you rest in the peace then He brings the results, or the fruit, there is a joy in just being a part of Gods family.

**6. Make Yourselves at home with God.** God wants us to be so comfortable with Him that it's easy to come into His presence.

When you are in close relationship with someone there is no awkwardness in going to their home.

There is something that happens in close relationships that God wants with us. He wants us to be able to come to him and have such intimacy that there is no shame, no fear, no cares, in coming to him.

There should be a joy of meeting with God each day.

He draws us to Himself. He is a great Master, a wonderful Host, and we can come to Him knowing that whatever He has is ours, just because of Whose we are.

We are Heirs, we are a part of His family, and He is a good Father, who takes care of His own. You cannot become separated from Him unless you cut yourself off from the vine.

We have to become total reprobates and deny the blood of Jesus to cut ourselves off from the vine.

Stay connected, and be fruitful and enjoy the journey of maturing.

**7. Listening to His Word brings results.** How can we be sure that He listens to us? Because when we are In Him, we think like Him, we speak like Him, our hearts desires line up with His desire's, and because of our connection and unity, he says we can be SURE that whatever we ask will be listened to and acted upon because He and His word are inseparable.

He cannot lie, He is one with His word and He stands behind it.

So we have so many sad Christians around beating themselves up trying their best to stay right with God which results in lack of joy in their life and a lack of fulfilment because of what they listen to instead of what they are connected to.

What they've been taught doesn't come from a kingdom message of grace, but comes from a message of law and sacrifice based on what I can do and not the completed work of Calvary.

The word says that He desires obedience, not sacrifice. Even though He asks us to give things up, what we gain is greater than what we lose.

We know what we have to give up in advance, because He will just confirm His word already in our hearts.

## Scripture

- **Philippians 3:7-9** (NIV)

<sup>7</sup> But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. <sup>8</sup> What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ <sup>9</sup> and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in<sup>[a]</sup> Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.

- **Philippians 3:7-9** (MSG)

<sup>7-9</sup>The very credentials these people are waving around as something special, I'm tearing up and throwing out with the trash—along with everything else I used to take credit for. And why? Because of Christ. Yes, all the things I once thought were so important are gone from my life. Compared to the high privilege of knowing Christ Jesus as my Master, firsthand, everything I once thought I had going for me is insignificant—dog dung. I've dumped it all in the trash so that I could embrace Christ and be embraced by him. I didn't want some petty, inferior brand of righteousness that comes from keeping a list of rules when I could get the robust kind that comes from trusting Christ—God's righteousness.

So if Paul considered it a joy serving Jesus and considered all things garbage (dung) that he may gain the knowledge of Christ, and having a joy and understanding of righteousness which brings peace and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Hard work (the flesh) never brings joy. So why is the body of Christ so work orientated, performance driven, position seeking when we need to come into a rest and a peace of the completed work of Christ.

Accepting that God chose the weak things to confound the strong and the foolish to confound the wise that He chooses and puts His anointing on people that systems don't accept.

Serving Christ is not a profession, it is a calling. Your calling brings joy, your profession brings performance.

I believe we have been so deceived and taught from a works based program instead of revealed knowledge in our hearts and drawing from the wells that He has put inside us.

When something is completed, and finished, it brings joy. When Jesus said on the cross "it is finished", he actually meant it is finished!

So if we rest in the completed work of Christ, and understand that we don't have to work, we just have to accept, even though, God has prepared good works for us before hand, He has equipped us to perform those works, and there is no greater joy than working with the Master!

We need to start living on this side of the cross, in the victory of the cross which brings joy.

We are not like Lazarus wrapped up in grave clothes.

We are unwrapped, now clothed in righteousness with the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding deposited in our hearts so that joy rises above all circumstances and focuses on the very character of God.

- 1) Joy gives us a positive attitude
- 2) This joy is a fruit of a righteous person
- 3) This Joy looks beyond the present
- 4) This joy relies on God for the future

#### Scripture

- **John 16:24** (Message)

<sup>23-24</sup>"This is what I want you to do: Ask the Father for whatever is in keeping with the things I've revealed to you. Ask in my name, according to my will, and he'll most certainly give it to you. Your joy will be a river overflowing its banks!

#### Scripture

- **John 16:24** (Amp)

<sup>24</sup>Up to this time you have not asked a [single] thing in My Name [as [b](#)]presenting all that I AM]; but now ask and keep on asking and you will receive, so that your joy (gladness, delight) may be full and complete.

For our joy to be complete, Jesus says we need to ask.

Sometimes it's very hard to ask someone for something if you don't feel right with that person. But the job of Jesus was to come and make us right with the Father.

We are not beggars. We are not clones, and we are definitely not mistakes so when we have an assurance of who we are it allows us to enter into His presence with confidence and thanksgiving and we can ask in His name and it will come to pass making our joy complete.

Hope deferred is a terrible thing. Man will let you down, but your Father in Heaven will never let you down because His word does not lie. As it says in:

#### Scripture

- **Romans 15:13** (Amp)

"the God of your Hope"..so our hope is in God. So Paul is saying may the God of your hope fill you with joy and peace that you may abound and be bubbling over with hope. As hope and joy are one.

Example:

I have a friend who was hoping for a motor car. This week the Lord blessed her with one so now she is full of Joy and bubbling over with hope that her Father in Heaven will bring to pass everything He has promised her!