Joy: The “Shout-It-from-the-Rooftops” Fruit
A Study on “The Fruit of the Spirit”
Summer Soul 2014, St. Michael’s Church, Paris

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! (…) The Lord is near. Philippians 4:4-5

1. The American Dictionary of the English Language defines joy as “a shout, a proclamation that can manifest in singing, a triumph and a cheerful and a calm delight.” What do you think of when you hear the word joy?

2. What is the difference between joy and happiness?

3. Luke 2:10 says: But the angel said to them, “Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people.” What is this ‘good news’ that will cause great joy?

Tim Keller¹ Talks about Joy: “A Christian is not a person free from sorrow. On the contrary, when a person becomes a Christian, God softens that person’s heart so that they become even more vulnerable to the world’s pains. Yet, a Christian is someone who has a deep joy that can never be taken away. Sorrow is temporary, but a Christian’s joy is permanent.”

*Scriptural references made in this sermon are: John 16-22; Psalm 30:5; Proverbs 8; John 1:1; Zephaniah 3:17; Hebrews 12:2; Ezekiel 36:26; Job 1:22; 1 Peter 1:6; Romans 5:3-5; 1 Thessalonians 4:13.

¹ Dr. Timothy J. Keller is an American Christian apologist, author, speaker, and the founding pastor of Redeemer Presbyterian Church in New York City, New York.
John 16-22: 16 Jesus went on to say, “In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me.”

17 At this, some of his disciples said to one another, “What does he mean by saying, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me,’ and ‘Because I am going to the Father’?” 18 They kept asking, “What does he mean by ‘a little while’? We don’t understand what he is saying.”

19 Jesus saw that they wanted to ask him about this, so he said to them, “Are you asking one another what I meant when I said, ‘In a little while you will see me no more, and then after a little while you will see me’? 20 Very truly I tell you, you will weep and mourn while the world rejoices. You will grieve, but your grief will turn to joy. 21 A woman giving birth to a child has pain because her time has come; but when her baby is born she forgets the anguish because of her joy that a child is born into the world. 22 So with you: Now is your time of grief, but I will see you again and you will rejoice, and no one will take away your joy.

4. What is Jesus saying about joy in this passage?
   1. Joy is of the essence of being a Christian (v.22); it’s an attribute of God.

   2. Joy overlaps with sorrow. (v 20-21)

   3. Joy is permanent and deep. (v. 22)

   4. What is joy produced by?
      1. 

      2. 

   5. What is the definition of joy?
6. What is the opposite of joy?

7. What is the counterfeit of joy?

8. How do we cultivate joy in our lives?

9. The Holy Spirit brings joy to every Christian. Its part of the fruit of the Spirit planted in us. He fills our hearts with praise and thankfulness to God. Yet, as you look back over the past few weeks, how joyful have you been? How can you experience this refreshing fruit of the Spirit more fully?

10. Joyce Meyer says: “Joy is the inward and outward manifestation of walking in obedience to God. It’s being deliberately mindful of the good things God has done for you and then giving full expression of your gratitude.”. How can you express joy and gratitude in everyday life?

11. The outward expression of joy has other positive effects. What are they?

12. Psalm 41:1 (Amplified Bible) says *Blessed (happy, fortunate, to be envied) is he who considers the weak and the poor; the Lord will deliver him in the time of evil and trouble*. According to this Psalm, those who give to the poor are filled with joy. How do intentional acts of kindness and generosity lead to joy?

13. What can we do to increase our joy?
Let’s Pray:

Lord, today I thank You for all the ways you have blessed my life and will continue to bless it. Thank you for Your love for me—past present and future. Thank You that You use even my trials to bless me. You use everything for my benefit! Lord, help me to remember Your faithfulness, goodness and mercy. I could not really live my life and enjoy this life without You. I praise you for your amazing grace! Amen.

REFLECTIONS ON JOY:

Paul said: Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Philippians 4:4-5. Joy in the New Testament has its source in the Lord rather than in mere physical comfort and well-being. Joy is also grounded in the hope of Christ’s return. That is why Paul could rejoice even in prison.

Unlike happiness, joy is gladness that is completely independent of the good or bad things that happen in the course of the day. In fact, joy denotes a supernatural gladness given by God’s Spirit that actually seems to show up best during hard times. This is a product of fixing your focus on God’s purposes for the events in your life rather than on the circumstances.

Spend time this week praising God for who He is and what He has done for us. Think about what you can do to bless someone and joy will be released. When we pay attention to what God feels is important, joy is released in us.

Today is the day to go forward. Remember, joy can override all your discouragements and disappointments in life. Jesus gave us His joy, and the joy of the Lord is our strength. All it takes is a decision. Choose joy!

Question: Am I experiencing a joy of life on a regular basis, or is my happiness dependent on things going smoothly in my day?

For a long time it had seemed to me that life was about to begin, real life, but there was always some obstacle in the way, something to be gotten through first. Unfinished business, time still to be served, a debt to be paid, then life will begin. At last it dawned on me that these obstacles were my life.

Dance like nobody's watching.
Love like you've never been hurt.
Sing like no one is listening.
Work like you don't need the money.
Live life every day as if it were your last.

Alfred D. Souza

2Father Alfred D. Souza was an inspirational writer and philosopher from Brisbane, Australia. He died in 2004.
Joyful Joyful

Text: Henry Van Dyke
Music: Ludwig van Beethoven
Sung by Amy Grant

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee,
God of glory, Lord of love;
hearts unfold like flowers before thee,
opening to the sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness;
drive the dark of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness,
fill us with the light of day!

All thy works with joy surround thee,
earth and heaven reflect thy rays,
stars and angels sing around thee,
center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain,
flowery meadow, flashing sea,
chanting bird and flowing fountain,
call us to rejoice in thee.

Joyful music leads us sunward,
in the triumph song...
Joyful music leads us sunward,
in the triumph song of life.

Resources Used For This Handout:
“Life Application Bible NIV and notes”
“Fruit of the Spirit” by Hazel Offner. A Lifebuilder Bible Study
“Fruit of the Spirit Action Plan: How to Water God’s Word in Your Life and Relationships” and “Secrets to Exceptional Living: Transforming Your Life Through the Fruit of the Spirit.” by Joyce Meyer.

Secrets to Exceptional Living: Transforming Your Life Through the Fruit of the Spirit by Joyce Meyer


“Joy: Overcoming Boredom” by Dr. Timothy J Keller, 1990 Redeemer Church

The Life You Always Wanted by John Ortberg