

LESSON TWO



JOY

**BIBLE READING(S):***Romans 5:1-11**Hebrews 12:2***ELEMENTARY LESSON**

The Fruit of the Holy Spirit is also joy. We are specifically talking about Christian joy, which is special because it comes only from the Lord. Joy is the good feeling in our heart when we see the beauty of Jesus and His world. Let's read our passage in Romans to find out about the joy God gives us.

— Read Romans 5:1-11

That long passage tells us a lot about joy and where it comes from. It also says that as believers, we "rejoice in our sufferings." This is where we see that joy and happiness are different things. Happiness is the temporary (short-lived) feeling we get when things are going well in our lives, that is, when we are not suffering. But the Bible says that we can have joy in our suffering. Why is that? It's because the joy we have doesn't come from the things in our life that may or may not be going well. Rather, it comes from a good God whose love does not come and go, but is always with us.

We said at the beginning of our lesson that joy is the good feeling in our heart when we see the beauty of Jesus and His world. The beauty of Christ that we're talking about comes from the knowledge that Jesus loved us so, so much that He died in our place, sacrificing Himself to save us. That amazing love that can never be taken away from us fills us with joy!

Even when things are difficult, even when we feel sad and unhappy, we can still feel the joy poured into us by the Holy Spirit. When we are sad, we can take a deep breath and listen to the Holy Spirit tell us, "I love you and I have saved you. You are safe." That moment, when we are assured and soothed by the truth of what God has done and has promised to do, even if there are tears in our eyes or if there's a smile on our face, that feeling is joy. There are many opportunities in Christian life to feel joy and invite the Holy Spirit to fill up our hearts with it. When we sing worship songs and are praying, we can do this. When we are



out on a walk on a beautiful day and see all the amazing things God has created, we can do this. When we are sitting and praying with our family or laughing with our siblings, we can do this.

Paul also writes that Christ died for us while we were still sinners. That means He died in our place even when we had badness in our hearts, when we weren't close to Him and didn't want to do His will. We didn't have to do anything to get God to love us. We didn't have to try our hardest to be really good, or follow certain rules. Our amazing God loves us so much that He died for us without us needing to do good things for Him.

Because Jesus will never stop loving us, we always have a reason for joy regardless of what's going on around us. Because of the joy the Holy Spirit gives us, we can endure (go through) anything, because Jesus endured the cross.

Jesus Himself experienced joy, and just like we've talked about, His joy was alongside pain and suffering. In Hebrews 12, it says that "for the joy set before Him, [Jesus] endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God." This means that Jesus was joyful because He wanted so badly to be with us, His beloved children.

OBJECT LESSON

You'll need: two balloons, some water, a permanent marker, and a candle with an open flame (i.e. one that is not in a jar).

Blow up both balloons, filling one of them with a little water before blowing it up with air. Draw a smiling face on both balloons so they look the same. Light the candle in front of you.

Say, "Both of these people are happy. Things are going well in their lives. But when the person without the Holy Spirit goes through something difficult (hold the air-only balloon over the flame so the flame is touching it), they lose their joy (the balloon will pop). When the person who has the Holy Spirit in them goes through the same trial, they are not overcome, because their joy is in Jesus, and it is a joy that can never go away because Jesus' saving love cannot be taken away." At this, tilt the water/air balloon on its side so the water portion is touching the flame. It shouldn't pop like the previous balloon. For more



details, watch this tutorial: <https://tinyurl.com/yao82r5k>

CLOSING PRAYER

Dear God, thank you for giving us joy in all circumstances. We know that even when we're sad and things aren't going our way that you have died in our place and love us no matter what, and that truth gives us joy. Help us to be more joyful each day that we get to know You better. Amen.

JOY CHALLENGE

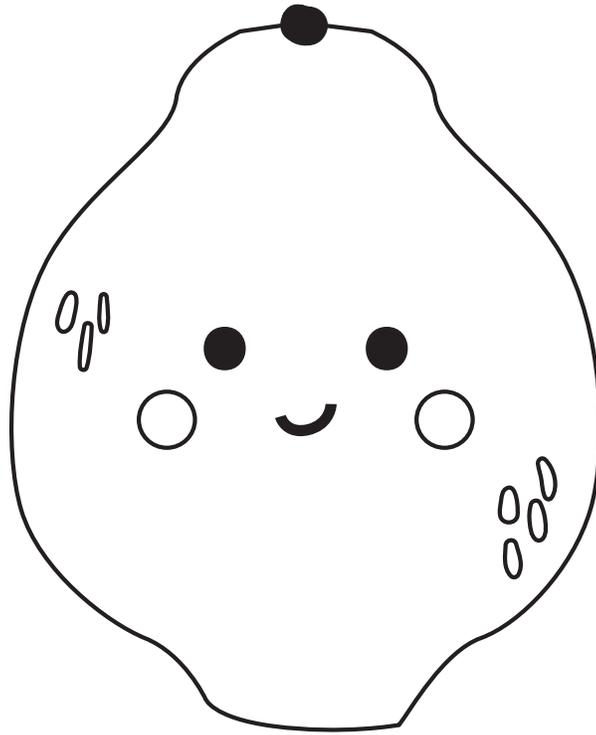
Take a video of yourself alone or with a friend joyfully dancing to your favorite worship song. "Joy" by Rend Collective is a good choice for this!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How are joy and happiness different?
- How can we be joyful even when the circumstances of our life are sad?

SONG RECOMMENDATIONS

- "Joy" by Rend Collective
- "Sing for Joy" by Don Moen
- "Joy" by For King & Country
- "Joy to the World (Unspeakable Joy)" by Chris Tomlin



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