

Cooperating with the Holy Spirit (7)

Introduction

- A. While Christianity finds its basis in the Person of Jesus Christ, His historical work, and the Holy Scripture—an important characteristic of true Christianity is found in the experience of the believer.
- B. To be a Christian, therefore, means in part, to experience what it means to be in fellowship with God (1 Corinthians 1:9), to participate in love, joy and peace (Galatians 5:22), to put to death our sinful functions (Romans 8:12-14), to obey the Scripture (Romans 6:16-18), to be a good witness for Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3:15).
- C. The Holy Spirit has been sent to enable us to enter, more and more, into what it means to “walk with God.” One important facet of His work is to teach us how to have “the joy of the Lord” in our daily life. Many believers live a defeated and discouraged life because they have not learned “to cooperate with the Holy Spirit.”

I. The Joy of the Lord is an Important Part of the Holy Spirit’s Ministry.

- A. It will be our experience in reference to the presence of God.

And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. Acts 13:52

- B. It will be our experience in reference to the Kingdom of God.

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Romans 14:17

- C. It will be our experience in reference to the will and desire of God.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

- D. It will be our experience in reference to the Holy Spirit’s ministry in our life.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, Galatians 5:22

- E. It will be our experience in reference to the message of salvation.

You became imitators of us and of the Lord; in spite of severe suffering, you welcomed the message with the joy given by the Holy Spirit. 1 Thessalonians 1:6

II. Explanations Regarding the Joy of the Lord.

- A. The joy of the Lord will accompany our personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.
John 15:11

- B. The joy of the Lord is supposed to accompany our prayer life.

Until now you have not asked for anything in my name. Ask and you will receive, and your joy will be complete. John 16:24

- C. The joy of the Lord is so important our Savior prayed we would experience it.

I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. John 17:13

- D. The joy of the Lord can accompany even our times of trial.

Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy. 1 Peter 1:8

III. Summary Principles Related to the Joy of the Lord.

- A. The joy of the Lord is clearly a characteristic of salvation. Therefore, if we do not have His joy to some degree—**we need to be very concerned whether we belong to Him.**

- B. The joy of the Lord is clearly God's will for every believer—even during trials. Therefore, if we do not experience His joy most of the time—**we need to find out why.**

1. Perhaps we need to repent and confess some errors and sins to God.
2. Perhaps we need to forgive, give up our grudges, and get right with some people.
3. Perhaps we need to change some basic priorities of our Christian life.
4. Perhaps we need to change our attitude of negativism, criticism, and skepticism.
5. Perhaps we need to humble ourselves and get help and healing prayer.

IV. Personal Recommendations Regarding the Joy of the Lord.

- A. Practice the joy of the Lord by faith. Express your gratitude, praise and thanksgiving to God in joyful songs, with appropriate gestures, and with cheerful expressions. This is not pretending but practicing God's will just as you practice the assurance of salvation.
- B. Develop appropriate Scripture into a clear-cut affirmation of your faith. (See Psalm 107:1,2; 2 Cor 4:13, Rom 10:9,10; Rev 12:11)
- C. Example. Use Romans 15:13 as follows. **I Believe / in the God of Hope / Who wants to fill me / with all joy and peace / as I trust in Him / so I may overflow with hope / by the power / of the Holy Spirit.** Repeat the verse a few times with aggressive determination.