



## April 25 – Defining Joy

What exactly is joy? So often it is equated with being a feeling. But what if true joy – the kind we find through Jesus isn't a feeling at all? Then what is it? How do we get? And more important – how do we keep it – even in the hard times of life? Join us this weekend as we begin our journey into the world of joy – it might not be exactly what you think!

### Scripture:

#### Galatians 5:16-26 NLT

<sup>16</sup>So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. <sup>17</sup>The sinful nature wants to do evil, which is just the opposite of what the Spirit wants. And the Spirit gives us desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires. These two forces are constantly fighting each other, so you are not free to carry out your good intentions. <sup>18</sup>But when you are directed by the Spirit, you are not under obligation to the law of Moses. <sup>19</sup>When you follow the desires of your sinful nature, the results are very clear: sexual immorality, impurity, lustful pleasures, <sup>20</sup>idolatry, sorcery, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition, dissension, division, <sup>21</sup>envy, drunkenness, wild parties, and other sins like these. Let me tell you again, as I have before, that anyone living that sort of life will not inherit the Kingdom of God. <sup>22</sup>But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things! <sup>24</sup>Those who belong to Christ Jesus have nailed the passions and desires of their sinful nature to his cross and crucified them there. <sup>25</sup>Since we are living by the Spirit, let us follow the Spirit's leading in every part of our lives. <sup>26</sup>Let us not become conceited, or provoke one another, or be jealous of one another.

#### John 15:8-11 NLT

<sup>8</sup>When you produce much fruit, you are my true disciples. This brings great glory to my Father. <sup>9</sup>"I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love. <sup>10</sup>When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. <sup>11</sup>I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow!

### Questions:

- Think over your life. When was a time when you worked really hard for something? What were you doing? How did it go? How did it feel to accomplish it?
- Pastor Jane talked today about how joy is not a feeling, but a fruit (of the Spirit). Have you ever thought about joy in that way before? How does this change how you think about joy?
- What one thing, might you commit to working on, knowing if you did, your joy in life would increase? What holds you back? Dare to step around those barriers...and start cultivating joy this week!

### Reading for the Week:

**Monday:** 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

**Tuesday:** Philippians 4:4

**Wednesday:** Nehemiah 8:10

**Thursday:** Psalm 118:24

**Friday:** Proverbs 17:22