

September 20 – Love & Joy – Fruit We Receive

Two things in life everyone wants (there's probably more, but we're going to recognize two): to be loved and to feel joy. Unfortunately, too often we think we can earn these, or work hard to get these two fruits. But can you? What if God wants to gift you these? How does that happen? Join us this weekend as we look at two of the fruit of the Spirit – and how we access them in our own lives!

Scripture:

Galatians 5:13-18, 22-23 NLT
For you have been called to live in freedom, my brothers and sisters. But don't use your freedom to satisfy your sinful nature. Instead, use your freedom to serve one another in love. **14** For the whole law can be summed up in this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself." **15** But if you are always biting and devouring one another, watch out! Beware of destroying one another. **16** So I say, let the Holy Spirit guide your lives. Then you won't be doing what your sinful nature craves. **17** 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…

22 But the Holy Spirit produces this kind of fruit in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against these things!

Luke 19:1-10 NLT
Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. **2** There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. **3** He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. **4** So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way. **5** When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today." **6** Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. **7** But the people were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled. **8** Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!" **9** Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. **10** For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."

Questions:

- How much time do you spend trying to "find" love? Joy? How successful have you been?
- Pastor Jane talked today about true love and joy being a gift from Jesus as we align our lives with His. How do you feel about that statement?
- How might your life be different this week, if instead of trying to "find" love and joy, you spent time aligning your heart with the heart of Jesus, spent time being knowingly in the presence of God? Try it and see if love and joy don't come creeping or bounding in!

Reading for the Week:

Monday: Romans 15:5-13
Tuesday: 1 Peter 1:8-9
Wednesday: John 15:9-17
Thursday: Psalm 96:11-13
Friday: Luke 1:46-47