

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Devotional



JOY

Monday, 23 – Sunday, 29 June 2025

June 2025

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Agápē-Shaped Joy

“But the fruit of the Spirit is...” — Galatians 5:22

In this series, we began with a captivating insight into Galatians 5:22, where Paul uses a linguistic tool to present the fruit of the Spirit as a singular, multifaceted expression of **agápē**—divine love. From this one fruit radiates a full spectrum of spiritual virtues: joy, peace, patience, kindness, and more. These are not separate fruits from separate trees, but rather the varied expressions of one supernatural source—God’s love, shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Spirit.



As I reflect on this, I recall my elementary physics class, where I first encountered the acronym **ROYGBIV**, a mnemonic for the colours of the visible light spectrum: red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. The beauty of light lies in its composition: although white light appears singular, it holds within itself a spectrum of colours, each visible when refracted.

A similar phenomenon occurs in a diamond or a precious stone, which glitters in many colours depending on the angle and quality of light striking it. One gem, many glimmers. One beam, many rays. One fruit, many expressions.

In that same way, joy is not a separate fruit but a particular glimmer of agápē. It is agápē rejoicing—divine love overflowing with delight.

Joy is not the shallow happiness that depends on favourable circumstances. It is a deeper gladness, one that remains when external pleasures fade. It is the echo of heaven resonating in the soul, even in the midst of sorrow or trial.

To understand joy as agápē rejoicing is to see it not merely as a mood but as a manifestation of divine presence. Like light illuminating the facets of a gemstone, joy reflects the richness and depth of agápē, giving witness to the transformative power of God’s Spirit within us. Through this joy, we experience and express the fullness of divine love, radiating its brilliance into the world.

Where love abides, joy naturally springs forth. It is the reflex of a heart rooted in God’s unwavering affection—a celebration of being known, loved, and secure in Him. As we explore this glitter of the Spirit’s fruit, we do so with reverence and delight, inviting the Light to shine more brightly through us.

Welcome to the joy that flows from love—the rejoicing of agápē.

Adewale Adefuye
Ipswich
19 June 2025

Seasons of the Soul

As we walk the path of discipleship, we soon recognise that just as nature has its seasons—spring, summer, autumn, and winter—our spiritual lives do too. In John 15:1–8, Jesus uses the imagery of a vine and branches to describe the rhythms of abiding in Him. Each verse echoes a spiritual season we all encounter.

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener...” (John 15:1)

This passage points us to four seasons of growth: **pruning**, **abiding**, **growing**, and **fruitfulness**. All of them centre on one essential call: *Remain in Me*.

Pruning – Jesus says the Father “cuts off every branch... that bears no fruit,” and prunes fruitful ones so they become more fruitful. Pruning seasons can be painful—marked by loss, endings, or change. Relationships shift. Ministries pause. Yet this season isn’t punishment; it’s preparation. God is making space for greater growth by returning us to the core: who He is, what we believe, and how we abide in Him.

Abiding – This season follows pruning. It’s a time of rest, restoration, and renewed focus on God’s love and our identity in Him. Here, we are called not to produce, but to dwell. Jesus reminds us, “*Apart from Me, you can do nothing.*” Abiding is about simplicity—meditating on truth, receiving grace, and realigning our hearts.

Growing – After abiding comes new life. Fresh opportunities arise. Relationships blossom. New spiritual rhythms can take root. This is a season of stretching—of exploring new ground and stepping into the assignments God gives. It’s exciting, but it still relies on deep roots formed in abiding.

Fruitfulness – This is the visible outworking of the journey. We see answered prayers, lasting impact, or inner transformation. Fruitfulness is not just success; it’s evidence of walking faithfully through the other seasons. And yet, even fruitful branches are pruned again, beginning the cycle anew.

Recognising your current season helps you respond wisely. Just as we don’t plant seeds in winter, we shouldn’t force fruit in a pruning season. As we learn the rhythm of the seasons, we become more fruitful disciples—rooted in Christ and responsive to the Gardener’s hand.

Joy: Agápē Rejoicing



Galatians 5:22

²² But the fruit of the Spirit **is** agápē, joy



Joy is to love as wet is to water. You can't separate the two. Wherever agápē—God's self-giving, unconditional love—is truly present, joy naturally follows. It is not forced, and it's not shallow. Joy is the spontaneous overflow of a heart rooted in divine love.

When agápē is in our hearts, joy follows like sunlight through stained glass. It isn't circumstantial—it's relational. Joy is how agápē expresses itself when we abide in Christ. Joy is agápē rejoicing.

True joy is more than just a happy feeling. It is a deep, abiding gladness that springs from knowing we are held in God's perfect love. This kind of joy is based on God's unchanging nature and reality—not on fleeting moods, personal success, or perfect circumstances. It is undisturbed by trials, pain, or uncertainty, because its roots go deeper than the surface of life.

The world offers momentary happiness that rises and falls with events. But the Spirit gives joy that stands firm, because it flows from the unshakeable love of God. Even in grief, disappointment, or struggle, joy can remain—not by pretending everything is fine, but by knowing that in every season, we are still deeply loved, and never alone.



(a) Have I mistaken temporary happiness for the Spirit's joy?



(b) How can I cultivate a heart that rejoices in God's love, regardless of my situation?

Pray Honestly



Thank God for joy that flows from His love, not from outward situations.

Ask the Holy Spirit to grow joy in your heart today.

Pray for eyes to see joy as a reflection of God's love within you.

Joy: Abiding in the Father's Love



John 15:9–11, BSB

⁹ As the Father has loved Me, so have I loved you. Remain in My love. ¹⁰ If you keep My commandments, you will remain in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and remain in His love. ¹¹ I have told you these things so that My joy may be in you and your joy may be complete.



Notice the progression of joy:

- i. The Source – The Father's love for the Son
- ii. The Channel – Christ's love for us
- iii. The Condition – Our remaining in that love
- iv. The Result – Fullness that overflows

True joy is not found in chasing happiness, but in remaining in the unshakable love of Christ. Jesus reveals the secret of complete joy: it flows from abiding in His love just as He abides in the Father's love. This is not a superficial emotion, but the deep, settled delight of a soul securely held in divine love.



- (a) What distractions or worries make it difficult for me to "abide" in Christ's love today?



- (b) How might obeying Christ's commands (v. 10) increase my joy rather than restrict it? _____

- (c) In what ways do you try to create joy apart from God's presence?

Pray Honestly



Lord Jesus, thank You for inviting me into the same love You share with the Father. Help me to sink my roots deep into Your love today through prayer, obedience, and trust. Let Your joy rise in me until it overflows to others. Amen.

GIVING
as an act of worship
BEFORE GOD
2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-15

3 ways you can give in



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Joy: Drawing from Salvation's Wellspring



Isaiah 12:2–3 (BSB)

² Surely God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid. For the LORD GOD is my strength and my song, and He also has become my salvation.” ³ With joy you will draw water from the springs of salvation...



This is a stunning image: salvation is not merely a one-time legal declaration—it is a living well, deep and overflowing with the refreshing water of God’s presence. The Hebrew word for “salvation” here is **yeshua**¹—a word rich with meaning: deliverance, healing, rescue, and wholeness. And from this well of yeshua, we draw with joy.

In the ancient world, drawing water was essential and laborious, especially in arid lands. Drawing water symbolised receiving life, representing an active engagement in obtaining divine blessings and grace. In Scripture, it often symbolises God’s sustenance—spiritual nourishment, cleansing, and provision. But notice what Isaiah says: joy is how we draw. Not willpower. Not striving. Not guilt. Joy is the bucket lowered into the deep well of God’s saving love.

This connects beautifully with John 4, where Jesus offers the Samaritan woman living water. She responds, “Sir, You have nothing to draw with, and the well is deep.” How often we feel the same—God’s promises feel out of reach, the well seems deep, and we have nothing in hand. But Isaiah tells us exactly what to bring: bring joy. It is the vessel that enables us to receive what God has already provided.

¹ *The name “Jesus” derives from this “yeshua”.*



(1) How have you been approaching salvation: as a one-time event, or as a continual source of life? _____

(2) What would it mean for you to draw from God’s well with joy today? _____

(3) Have you been trying to “draw” with fear, shame, or duty instead of joy? _____

Pray Honestly



Heavenly Father, thank You that salvation is not just past tense—it’s a present wellspring of joy. You are my endless well of deliverance, healing and rescue and wholeness. Teach me to daily draw from Your endless well, that my life might overflow with grateful praise. May Your yeshua in me become a fountain for others. Amen.

Joy: The Paradox of Trials



James 1:2–3, BSB

² Consider it pure joy, my brothers, when you encounter trials of many kinds, ³ because you know that the testing of your faith develops perseverance.



True biblical joy defies human logic. James doesn't say feel joy in trials but **consider** it [**count** in many translations] joy—a deliberate reckoning that transforms our perspective. This joy isn't about the pain itself, but about what God is producing through it: a faith that cannot be shaken.

Agápē doesn't disappear when life is difficult—it digs deeper. Joy based in God's love can exist even in sorrow, because we know something eternal is being formed in us.

This joy is possible because:

Trials reveal what we really trust in. Suffering burns away superficial faith. Hardship trains us to cling to Christ alone.



(1) Can trials and joy really coexist? How?

(2) How can I "count it joy" today, even if I don't feel joyful?

(3) How does God's love help us endure difficult seasons with joy?

Pray Honestly



Thank You Father for staying close to us in every trial. Give us eyes to see beyond our present difficulty to the eternal work You're accomplishing. Help us embrace the paradox that our deepest joy might come through our hardest trials, as they drive us closer to You.

Pray for someone going through difficulty to experience joy from God's love.

Joy: The Eternal Dwelling Place



Psalm 16:11 BSB

¹¹ You have made known to me the path of life; You will fill me with joy in Your presence, with eternal pleasures at Your right hand.

ESV ...in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.



David's psalm unveils a profound and comforting truth: the truest, deepest, most enduring joy is not found in changing circumstances or fleeting pleasures—it is found in the **presence of God**.

Joy, in this verse, is not just an emotional state—it is a **dwelling place**. It is where we are most alive, most whole, and most at peace. David's words show us that joy is:

- **Personal** – “*You have made known to me...*” This joy is revealed in relationship. God doesn't hide it; He shows the path of life to those who seek Him.
- **Positional** – “*...at Your right hand...*” The right hand is the place of honour, nearness, and power. Joy flourishes when we are close to God.
- **Permanent** – “*...pleasures forevermore.*” This joy isn't seasonal or situational. It's eternal. No loss, failure, or death can reach it.

In a world where joy is often reduced to entertainment or escape, Psalm 16 reminds us that joy is ultimately about **presence**—God's presence. To live close to Him is to live in joy.



(i) What does it mean for you to see joy as a location rather than just a feeling? _____

(ii) How can you intentionally dwell in God's presence today? _____

Pray Honestly



Thank You, Father that in Your presence there is fullness of joy—nothing lacking, nothing missing. Forgive us for chasing broken cisterns when You offer living water. According to James 4:8, when we draw near to You, You will draw near to us, today, we choose to draw near to You, Lord—the only place where joy is full and lasting. We set our hearts toward Your presence, where true delight dwells and never fades. Let us not settle for lesser pleasures. Open our eyes to the forever-joy that is ours in You. Amen.

Joy: Strength for the Journey



Nehemiah 8:9–10 (BSB)

⁹ Nehemiah the governor, Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who were instructing the people said to all of them, “This day is holy to the LORD your God. Do not mourn or weep.” For all the people were weeping as they heard the words of the Law. ¹⁰ Then Nehemiah told them, “Go and eat what is rich, drink what is sweet, and send out portions to those who have nothing prepared, since today is holy to our Lord. Do not grieve, **for the joy of the LORD is your strength.**”



When the Israelites heard God's Law and realised how far they had fallen, they wept. But Nehemiah declared this surprising truth: real strength for obedience doesn't come from guilt or grim determination, but from receiving God's joy. When life is exhausting, joy rooted in agápē revives us. It gives courage to continue, power to persevere, and hope to keep going. God's joy doesn't just make us smile—it makes us strong.

This joy-strength empowers us to face our failures without despair and fuels obedience more effectively than guilt ever could.

Like ancient Israelites rebuilding Jerusalem's walls, we need joy-strength to rebuild broken relationships, restore neglected spiritual disciplines and resist cultural compromise.



What does it mean for the Lord's joy—not your own—to be your strength?

How might receiving God's joy make me stronger in my weaknesses?

Pray Honestly



Father, thank You that Your joy doesn't run out, even when ours does.

Pray for someone who needs spiritual strength today. May they allow Your joy to rebuild what sin has broken. Amen.

PAUSE

Change—or growth—comes from acting on God’s word.

OBSERVE

Jesus says, “**When anyone hears the message of the kingdom but does not understand it, the evil one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart.**”

REFLECT

James puts it more starkly, “**Be doers of the word, and not hearers only. Otherwise, you are deceiving yourselves.**”

What am I thankful for in this week’s devotional? _____

What have I done this week in response to what I heard or read? _____

How do I understand what I have read and heard in the last five days?

What is God is telling me?

PLAN

What am I going to do about it -

and

Immediately?

DO

In the next few days?

How can I be accountable?

Declare boldly

I don’t want to deceive myself. I hear the Word; I read the Word & I do the Word.



Pray boldly: Father, I am Your child, I carry Your DNA. I am who You say I am, can do what You say I can do, have what You say I have. Your grace is sufficient for me 🙏

Life in the kingdom of God was not designed to be lived in isolation. Did you know that most of the 'you' in the New Testament are plural? They are for 'all of you.' Check the 'one another's' in the New Testament. How many can you find? And what do they tell us?

GIVING
as an act of worship
BEFORE GOD
2 CORINTHIANS 9:6-15

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