

Lesson 33 - The Character of Joy

1. What is the second item listed when one has the fruit of the Spirit? **Galatians 5:22**

EGW: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." Nothing but divine power can regenerate the human heart and imbue souls with the love of Christ, which will ever manifest itself with love for those for whom He died. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. When converted to God, a new moral taste is supplied, a new motive power is given, and he loves the things that God loves; for his life is bound up by the golden chain of the immutable promises to the life of Jesus. Love, joy, peace, and inexpressible gratitude will pervade the soul, and the language of him who is blessed will be, "Thy gentleness hath made me great." {ST, January 2, 1907 par. 1}

2. How does God expect us to serve Him? **Deuteronomy 28:47**

EGW: Many of the believers in Thessalonica had "turned . . . from idols to serve the living and true God." They had "received the word in much affliction;" and their hearts were filled with "joy of the Holy Ghost." The apostle declared that in their faithfulness in following the Lord they were "ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." These words of commendation were not unmerited; "for from you," he wrote, "sounded out the word of the Lord not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but also in every place your faith to Godward is spread abroad." {AA 256.2}

3. What has been given to us that brings much joy to the receiver? **John 17:13-14, Luke 8:13**

EGW: Now let us see what Jesus will do for us if we let him. In his prayer for his disciples he said: "And now I come to thee; and these things I speak in the world, that they might have my joy fulfilled in themselves." Is it possible to have joy in obeying Christ? It is the only real joy that any soul can have. You may have what you call "a good time," and laugh and joke; but your joy will be only a foolish gratification of a mind that is not well balanced by the Spirit of God. Christ continued, "I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." Do you expect that the world will love you when you go contrary to the customs and traditions of the world? Do you expect to be treated better than was the Master of the house? "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth." You have received the truth. Now do not feel that you must hide it under a bushel. Let it be known to others, let it shine forth, that others may be saved, may be sanctified through it. Be a living example, be under the control of the Spirit of Christ. Jesus says, "Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me

through their word." This tells you your duty. The word of those who believe is to be as seed sown in the hearts of others, that will spring forth and bear fruit unto life eternal. {RH, September 3, 1895 par. 6}

4. What ought to fulfill our joy? **John 15:10-11**

EGW: Jesus says, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." If Christians would open their hearts to the joy that Christ is willing to give them, they would represent the religion of the Bible much better than they now do. We are to be in the world, but we are not to be of it. We are to cultivate gratitude and love and praise in our hearts, that through his promises, richer than precious pearls, we may discern the purposes of God toward us. As the flowers gather for themselves the hidden properties of earth and air, and develop into things of beauty to delight our senses, so Christians are privileged to gather from the garden of God's promises, faith and hope, peace, joy, and support. They are to give out again to others a life fragrant with good works. {ST, June 29, 1888 par. 9}

5. What ought to also fulfill our joy? **John 3:29**

EGW: He said, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice." John represented himself as the friend who acted as a messenger between the betrothed parties, preparing the way for the marriage. When the bridegroom had received his bride, the mission of the friend was fulfilled. He rejoiced in the happiness of those whose union he had promoted. So John had been called to direct the people to Jesus, and it was his joy to witness the success of the Saviour's work. He said, "This my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease." {DA 179.3}

6. Having the joy of the Lord will provide us with what? **Nehemiah 8:10**

EGW: Through Jesus the fallen sons of Adam become "sons of God." "Both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." [Hebrews 2:11.] The Christian's life should be one of faith, of victory, and joy in God. "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world; and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our

faith." [1 John 5:4.] Truly spake God's servant Nehemiah, "The joy of the Lord is your strength." [Nehemiah 8:10.] And says Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord alway; and again I say, Rejoice." "Rejoice evermore. Pray without ceasing. In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you." [Philippians 4:4; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18.] {GC88 477.3}

7. What should bring exceeding joy? **1 Peter 4:13, Luke 6:22-23**

EGW: Trials will come upon us that are originated by the prince of evil. The enemy will contend for the life or the usefulness of the servants of God, and will seek to mar their peace as long as they remain in the world. But his power is limited. He may cause the furnace to be heated, but Jesus and holy angels watch the precious ore; and to the trusting Christian, grace will be found sufficient, and nothing but the worthless dross will be consumed. The fire kindled by the enemy can have no power to destroy the true gold. At times the powers of darkness gather about the soul and shut Jesus from our sight, and we wait in sorrow and amazement until the cloud passes over. While under the trial, these seasons are terrible. Hope seems to fail, and despair seizes upon us. But in these dreadful hours we must learn to trust, to depend wholly upon the merits of a crucified and risen Saviour, and cast our souls in their helplessness and unworthiness upon him who is mighty to save unto the uttermost all who come unto God by him. We shall never perish while we do this, never. {RH, April 10, 1894 par. 5}

We need not be astonished at trial. Peter says, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial that is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." {RH, April 10, 1894 par. 6}

8. What should be counted as joy? **James 1:2**

EGW: Temptation will come upon all the children of God. James writes: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." The word does not say that we are to count it all joy when we fall under temptation, but when we fall into temptation. It is not necessary to fall under temptation; for temptation comes upon us for the trying of our faith. And the trying of our faith worketh patience, not fretfulness and murmuring. If we put our trust in Jesus, he will keep us at all times, and will be our strength and shield. We are to learn valuable lessons from our trials. Paul says, "We glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given

unto us." {RH, May 19, 1891 par. 2}

9. What can no man do if you have the joy in Christ? **John 16:22**

EGW: Will not heaven be appreciated by the worldly wise men? Oh, yes; there they will find rest and peace and repose from all trifling, all ambition, all self-serving. Urge them to seek for the peace and happiness and joy that Christ is longing to bestow upon them. Urge them to give their attention to securing the richest gift that can be given to mortal man--the robe of Christ's righteousness. Christ offers them a life that measures with the life of God, and a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. If they accept Christ they will have the highest honor, honor which the world can neither give nor take away. They will find that in the keeping of the commandments of God there is great reward. {9T 114.2}

10. What event should, even in thought of today, bring us much joy while those that do not think upon it will end up being ashamed? **Isaiah 66:5**

EGW: Many were persecuted by their unbelieving brethren. In order to retain their position in the church, some consented to be silent in regard to their hope; but others felt that loyalty to God forbade them thus to hide the truths which he had committed to their trust. Not a few were cut off from the fellowship of the church for no other reason than expressing their belief in the coming of Christ. Very precious to those who bore this trial of their faith were the words of the prophet, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified. But he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." [Isaiah 66:5.] {GC88 372.2}

11. What ought we do joyfully towards them that watch for our souls? **Hebrews 13:17**

EGW: Those who bear the message of mercy to perishing souls must themselves be under the discipline of God. The Lord is waiting to qualify men to carry his word to those that are afar off and to those that are nigh. He speaks to his people, warning them not to corrupt their simplicity and their trust in the Lord by sinking their individuality in any living person. The Lord will teach all who will seek him for wisdom, whatever their calling or profession. "Obey them that have the rule over you," he says, "and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief." Those who give evidence that they are chosen of God will fulfill these specifications. The soul that is imbued with the Spirit of Christ becomes one with Christ in his deep, unresting love for perishing souls. Christ is formed within, the hope of glory,

and he works through the human instrument. {RH, October 16, 1900 par. 1}

It is an extremely delicate thing to tell people of their faults. The reprover is likely to find that in those reprov'd, pride and stubbornness assert themselves, and the will is arrayed in defiance and opposition. But for all this, advice should be given, and faults should be laid bare. Let the young cultivate a teachable spirit, that they may be benefited by the efforts of those who seek to help them. You may feel that you are doing your best, and that you have been reprov'd for very trifling matters, and you may be impatient that any one should feel it his duty to reprove you for such small matters; but this is the injunction given by the apostle: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for this is unprofitable for you." These specific directions would not have been given, unless there were those who needed reproof and counsel. {YI, August 31, 1893 par. 4}

12. When we have the joy of the Holy Ghost after receiving the Word of God, even during afflictions, what do we become? **1 Thessalonians 1:6-7**

EGW: In his first Epistle to the Thessalonians, Paul says, "For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake. And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost; so that ye were ensamples to all that believe in Macedonia and Achaia." {LP 86.1}

Those who preach unpopular truth in our day meet with determined resistance, as did the apostles. They need expect no more favorable reception from a large majority of professed Christians than did Paul from his Jewish brethren. There will be a union of opposing elements against them; for however diverse from each other different organizations may be in their sentiments and religious faith, their forces are united in trampling under foot the fourth commandment in the law of God. {LP 86.2}

13. Being filled with joy in Christ, what else do such people become? **Philippians 2:2**

EGW: Faith and love are precious treasures, represented by pure gold. These graces are to dwell in our hearts, making our characters complete in Christ. But until these graces possess the soul, how can we understand Paul's words, "If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not

every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." {RH, August 6, 1901 par. 10}

14. What leads to entering into the joy of the Lord? **Matthew 25:21, 23**

EGW: We have only a little while to urge the warfare; then Christ will come, and this scene of rebellion will close. Then our last efforts will have been made to work with Christ and advance his kingdom. Some who have stood in the forefront of the battle, zealously resisting incoming evil, fall at the post of duty; others gaze sorrowfully at the fallen heroes, but have no time to cease work. They must close up the ranks, seize the banner from the hand palsied by death, and with renewed energy vindicate the truth and the honor of Christ. As never before, resistance must be made against sin,--against the powers of darkness. The time demands energetic and determined activity on the part of those who believe present truth. They should teach the truth by both precept and example. If the time seems long to wait for our Deliverer to come, if, bowed by affliction and worn with toil, we feel impatient for our commission to close, and to receive an honorable release from the warfare, let us remember--and let the remembrance check every murmur--that God leaves us on earth to encounter storms and conflicts, to perfect Christian character, to become better acquainted with God our Father and Christ our elder Brother, and to do work for the Master in winning many souls to Christ, that with glad heart we may hear the words: "Well done, good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." {RH, October 25, 1881 par. 10}

15. What spiritual object ought to bring us great joy when obtained? **Matthew 13:44**

EGW: In ancient times it was customary for men to hide their treasures in the earth. Thefts and robberies were frequent. And whenever there was a change in the ruling power, those who had large possessions were liable to be put under heavy tribute. Moreover the country was in constant danger of invasion by marauding armies. As a consequence, the rich endeavored to preserve their wealth by concealing it, and the earth was looked upon as a safe hiding place. But often the place of concealment was forgotten; death might claim the owner, imprisonment or exile might separate him from his treasure, and the wealth he had taken such pains to preserve was left for the fortunate finder. In Christ's day it was not uncommon to discover in neglected land old coins and ornaments of gold and silver. {COL 103.2}

A man hires land to cultivate, and as the oxen plow the soil, buried treasure is unearthed. As the man discovers this treasure, he sees that a fortune is within his reach. Restoring the gold to its hiding place, he returns to his home and sells all that he has, in order to purchase the field

containing the treasure. His family and his neighbors think that he is acting like a madman. Looking on the field, they see no value in the neglected soil. But the man knows what he is doing; and when he has a title to the field, he searches every part of it to find the treasure that he has secured. {COL 103.3}

This parable illustrates the value of the heavenly treasure, and the effort that should be made to secure it. The finder of the treasure in the field was ready to part with all that he had, ready to put forth untiring labor, in order to secure the hidden riches. So the finder of heavenly treasure will count no labor too great and no sacrifice too dear, in order to gain the treasures of truth. {COL 104.1}

In the parable the field containing the treasure represents the Holy Scriptures. And the gospel is the treasure. The earth itself is not so interlaced with golden veins and filled with precious things as is the word of God. {COL 104.2}

16. In what of God is our fullness of joy? **Psalms 16:11**

EGW: I hear one say, "I can never reach that standard." But this is what you must be, or you will never enter heaven. We want to gain heaven; for there, there is no disappointment, no sorrow, no sin, no one who shall say, "I am sick;" no burial trains there, no mourning, no death, no parting, no broken hearts; but Jesus is there, peace is there. O, we must be with him; for in his presence is fulness of joy, at his right hand there are pleasures forevermore. And it is here that we must behold him, and become changed into his image. "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." How much comfort it gives to behold him here by the eye of faith, that we may by beholding be made like him, but what will it be to behold him as he is, without one dimming veil between? {BEcho, January 15, 1892 par. 4}

17. What aspect of God ought to bring us joy? **Habakkuk 3:18, Psalms 51:12**

EGW: In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death. See Revelation 13:11-17. But to the obedient is given the promise, "He shall dwell on high: his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." Isaiah 33:16. By this promise the children of God will live. When the earth shall be wasted with famine, they shall be fed. "They shall not be ashamed in the evil time: and in the days of famine they shall be satisfied." Psalm 37:19. To that time of distress the prophet Habakkuk looked forward, and his

words express the faith of the church: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Habakkuk 3:17, 18. {DA 121.3}

18. What activity can turn a depressed heart into a joyful one? **Psalms 67:4, Psalms 95:1, Psalms 51:8**

EGW: Family worship should not be governed by circumstances. You are not to pray occasionally, and when you have a large day's work, neglect it. In thus doing you lead your children to look upon prayer as of no special consequence. Prayer means very much to the children of God, and thank offerings should come up before God morning and evening. Says the Psalmist, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation." {ML 29.4}

19. Those living a hypocritical life thinking they have joy, how long does it last? **Job 20:5**

EGW: Those who profess godliness, yet are not sanctified by the truth which they profess, may become quite bold because they are able to conceal their sins from others, and because the judgments of God do not come in a visible manner upon them. They may appear to prosper in this world. They may deceive poor, short-sighted mortals, and be regarded as patterns of piety, while in their sins. But God cannot be deceived. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil. Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his days be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him. But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong his days, which are as a shadow; because he feareth not before God." Although the life of a sinner may be prolonged upon the earth, yet he shall have no place in the earth made new. He shall be of that number whom David mentions in his psalm: "For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be; yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth." {RH, May 5, 1885 par. 8}

20. Graduating from school, landing a great job, accomplishing great tasks, reaching milestones, are all happy moments in life, but what should bring the greatest amount of joy? **3 John 1:4**

EGW: And will not his workers rejoice when they, too, behold the fruit of their labors? The apostle Paul writes to the Thessalonian converts, saying, "What is our hope, or joy or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? For ye are our glory and joy." And

he exhorts the Philippian brethren to "be blameless and harmless," to "shine as lights in the world; holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither labored in vain." {RH, January 5, 1905 par. 10}