

A Word from Our Pastor

Welcome to *The Gathering Place. An Act of Love.* The story is told of the mother who came home after a long hard day. Her little girl ran out of the house to greet her. “Mommy, Mommy, wait until I tell you what happened today.” After listening to a few sentences, the mother said the rest could wait as she needed to get dinner started. During the meal, the phone rang, then the other family members’ stories were longer and louder than the little girl’s. Once again, she tried after the kitchen was cleaned and the brother’s homework questions were answered, but then it was time for her to get ready for bed.

The mom came to tuck her little girl in and quickly listened to her prayers. As she bent down to tousle the little one’s curls and to kiss her soft cheek, the child looked up and asked, “Mommy, do you really love me even if you don’t have time to listen to me?”

Ecclesiastes 5 tells us that we should draw near to God to listen. Paul told the Church of Rome, “*Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ*” (Romans 10:17, ESV). Hearing is vital to be successful in our Christian walk with Christ.

Bonhoeffer gives us something to avoid: “a kind of listening with half an ear that presumes already to know what the other person has to say.” This, he says, “is an impatient, inattentive listening, that . . . is only waiting for a chance to speak.” Perhaps we think we know where the speaker is going, and so already begin formulating our response. Or we were in the middle of something when someone started talking to us, or have another commitment approaching, and we wish they were done already.

Bonhoeffer goes on to say that when we are not attentive or active listeners, it shows that we really don’t care for the person we are listening to. I don’t know if I would go that far, but it does show that the person addressing us is not at the top of our priority list.

Good listening is a great means of grace in the dynamic of true Christian fellowship. Not only is it a channel through which God continues to pour his grace into our lives, but it’s also his way of using us as his means of grace in the lives of others. It may be one of the hardest things we learn to do, but we will find it worth every ounce of effort. The reason is because it demonstrates to others how loved and valuable, they are to us.

Blessings
Dr. Anthony W. Adams

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newvision church

THE GATHERING PLACE

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Mission Statement

New Vision Church seeks to win the lost and develop them into responsible, reproducing, fully functioning followers of Christ.

Lesson Notes:

The Fruit of the Spirit (Part 3)

Love

Text: Galatians 5:22-23



Today is a great day for your miracle!

Quote of the Week

“Moses spent forty years thinking he was somebody; forty years learning he was nobody; and forty years discovering what God can do with a nobody.”

— D.L. Moody

Lesson Notes

The Fruit of the Spirit (Part 3)

Text: Galatians 5:22-23

Intro: It is important to understand that the nine characteristics are not a complete list. Rather, it is a representation. Just like the fifteen acts of the flesh (vv. 19-21) are not exhaustive. For example, lying is not on the list, nor is gluttony, materialism, or murder. The same is true for the Fruit of the Spirit. Two of the three great Theological virtues, faith and hope, are missing from Paul's list (1 Corinthians 13:13). Also missing is thankfulness, gratitude, forgiveness, moral purity, and humility.

I. Joy in the Greek is *χαρά*.

- A. The Holy Spirit gives the joy in the midst of the tribulations as Paul learned (1 Thess. 1:6).
 - 1. Romans 5:3.
 - 2. The question is how?
- B. Have you ever heard someone say, "You should be happy. You should have joy."
 - 1. Jesus Himself experiences sorrow and sadness.
 - 2. Hebrews 4:15

II. Joy is not always the absence of sadness or the presence of the spectacular.

- A. Hebrews 12:2
 - 1. The Father set joy before Jesus.
 - 2. He did not find joy in the event of the cross.
 - a. He felt the pain of the nails.
 - b. He felt the shame.
 - c. He felt the thorns on His brow.
 - 3. He found joy in the guaranteed outcome of the event.
- B. Steven Furtick said, "Joy is a focus before it's a feeling."
 - 1. He knew that His Father was in control.
 - 2. He knew His Father was moving things for His good.
 - 3. Romans 8:28

III. How to have Joy

- A. 1 John 1:4
 - 1. Joy comes through having a relationship with Jesus Christ.
 - 2. Joy also comes through being a part of a local community of faith (church).
- B. Nehemiah 8:10
 - 1. Ezra read the Word of God and the Levites helped to interpret what it meant.
 - 2. The people were moved to tears, some was Godly sorrow and for others it was tears of joy.
 - 3. The people were then instructed to give to the poor and celebrate.
 - 4. One reason for celebrating was because the "Joy of the Lord is your strength and stronghold" (Nehemiah 8:10, Amp).
 - 5. What does this passage tell us about Joy?
- C. Philippians 4:4, 13
 - 1. Focus- We have strength for all things because Jesus empowers us.
 - 2. We are ready for anything and equal to anything through Him who infuses strength into me.
 - 3. When I focus on the guaranteed outcome of the event, Philippians 4:4 will become a reality in your life.
- D. Proverbs 13:12
 - 1. The loss of hope is equal to the loss of joy.
 - 2. My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness
I dare not trust the sweetest frame
But wholly lean on Jesus' name
On Christ the solid rock I stand
All other ground is sinking sand
All other ground is sinking sand
 - 3. However, when we place our hope in Jesus for all of our needs, we find joy.
 - 4. Again, Joy is a focus before it's a feeling.