

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT SERIES

LUKE 24:33–53

JOY

The Holy Spirit brings joy to every Christian. He fills our hearts with praise and thankfulness to God. Yet as you look back over the past few weeks, how joyful have you been? How can you experience this refreshing fruit of the Spirit more fully?

After Jesus' crucifixion, two of his disciples were walking to Emmaus. Suddenly a stranger joined them and began explaining the Scriptures about the Messiah. They did not recognize the stranger until they began to eat with him. Then their eyes were opened, they realized it was Jesus, and he vanished from their sight! They were so excited that they rushed back to Jerusalem to tell the others. This passage helps us recapture the joy of the early disciples.

1. What do you think of when you hear the word joy?
2. Read Luke 24:33–53. Try to picture those first few moments when the two find the eleven and the others (vv. 33–35)> Now describe what you see!
3. Suddenly, something happens to interrupt the story (vv. 36–39). How does the climate in the room change?

What does this reveal about the disciples' true state of belief regarding Jesus' resurrection?

4. Why did Jesus show them his hands and feet, and ask them to touch him (vv. 39–40)?
5. For a moment, think of your wildest dream, the one thing in life you would rather see happen than anything else. Describe how you would feel if your dream were to come true.

How does this help you understand what it meant for the disciples to be too joyful and amazed to believe (v. 41)?

6. In what ways would their faith in him have been increased by seeing Jesus eat (vv 41–43)?

7. Why were these activities—showing them his hands and feet and eating before them—so necessary before he could open their minds to understand the Scriptures (v. 45)?

8. The disciples, along with almost all other Jews, expected that the Messiah would be a political conqueror who would stamp out Rome’s rule and restore Israel to her former glory. How does Jesus change their vision and understand at this point in the narrative (vv. 46–47)?

9. What the Father has promised (v. 49) is the Holy Spirit who would be sent to the disciples in the near future. In light of what Jesus has just been saying (vv. 46–48), why is the Spirit’s presence so important?

10. In verses 52–53 the disciples have changed from wondering and disbelieving for joy to having “great joy.” How does Jesus’ resurrection and the promise of the Holy Spirit help you to define joy?

11. How can telling others about Jesus (v. 48) help us to experience this joy as fully as possible?

12. Spend time now praising God for who he is and what he has done for us.