

Sabbath School Today **With the 1888 Message Dynamic**

The Fruit of the Spirit **Lesson 3: “The Fruit of the Spirit Is Joy”**

How often do we focus only on our own joy or joyfulness? But let’s take a look at what has brought or will bring great joy to our Savior

Christ went to an enormous expense in His life and death, even to hell and died our second death in order to save us. Would it not seem reasonable for Him to select at least *one* person to hold up before the world as a “model” Christian, “Here is what Christ died to achieve? Here is a sample of the fruit of His infinite sacrifice”? [1]

When Mary broke the alabaster flask of precious ointment to anoint Jesus, she was giving to the world her unconscious expression of that same spirit of love and sacrifice which Jesus’ life and death exemplified. This poignant act at Bethany is the most beautiful, heart-touching deed ever performed by a repentant sinner. (How can one who disbelieves that Jesus of Nazareth is the Son of God explain the amazing fact that Jesus is the only man in world history who has had His feet washed with tears?) It was welcome evidence to Jesus and to the watching universe that humanity is indeed capable of attaining a profound heart-appreciation of the sacrifice Jesus made.

Imagine how her noble deed cheered the heart of the Saviour in His darkest hours! No mighty angel from heaven could have brought to Him the comfort which the memory of her tearful sacrifice imparted; for in her sacrificial love to Him He discerned a pledge of His eventual joy. The travail of His soul will purchase for Him a precious reward—the making of many righteous through “faith which works by love” (Gal. 5:6). The evoking of such repentant love in human hearts changes lives. Surely this is the end to be achieved by the Savior’s sacrifice! [2]

But, it can’t be a “satisfaction” to Christ to see billions of people physically “saved” who have no heart-appreciation of what it cost Him to save them; He has *that* now! What will make Him happy is what we read in Psalm 22, the joy that flooded His dying heart those last few moments of His consciousness: “All the ends of the world shall remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations shall worship before You” (vs. 27). There, almost word for word, is the first angel’s message! [3]

And where does *our* joy come in? In summarizing the 1888 message of justification by faith, Ellen White declared that it makes the believer “obedient to *all* the commandments of God,” which of course includes the Sabbath commandment, and the seventh one, too. (People learn to regard their body as the temple of the Holy Spirit.)

And in this New Covenant joy is revealed the truth that prepares a people for translation. It’s a more mature glimpse of the grace of God that *effectively* “teaches” that self-denial is a joy (see Titus 2:11-14, NIV).

No one can know justification by faith in its end-time setting who does not render heart-felt obedience to *all* the commandments of God. When received and proclaimed by the corporate body of God’s people, it will be like blowing trumpets with the heavenly news, “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and *His wife has made herself ready*” (Rev. 19:7). [4]

Yes, “God commanded” that the “most precious message” go to the world; and Jesus said clearly that wherever the gospel is preached “throughout the whole world,” Mary Magdalene’s story must be included.

This message is on God’s agenda for coming events, and no one can stop it if “God commanded” that it go. Some have delayed it now for a long time, but His blessing will attend its proclamation. We are told that when we proclaim the message clearly, “everywhere the laborers go, they will triumph.” That’s interesting! In fact, that’s exactly what happens. Just let the message be proclaimed, and opposition melts “like frost before the morning sun.” And talk about joy—there is none like that of being a humble agent through whom the life-giving message flows to others. You look in their eyes and see the burdens being lifted. The joy of Jesus was in proclaiming this Good News and watching people’s eyes light up, and that joy will be yours, too.
[5]

—Robert J. Wieland

Endnotes (from the writings of Robert J. Wieland):

[1] “A New Look at Christ’s ‘Model’ Christian.” [Christ’s ‘Model’ Christian](#)

[2] *In Search of the Cross*, p. 98.

[3] “‘Model’ Christian,” op. cit.

[4] “1888” for Almost *Dummies*, pp. 35, 36.

[5] “Dial Daily Bread.”

Short Supplementary Reading:

For the beautiful story of the “good tidings of great joy,” please read E. J. Waggoner’s “The Gospel Message” in *The Everlasting Covenant*, pp. 13, 14 (Glad Tidings ed.), or read it on this Website: [CLICK HERE](#)