



**Scriptures to Study:** Nehemiah 8:10, Psalms 16:11, John 15:5, Galatians 5:22, James 1:2, Romans 14:17, John 16:22, Phil 4:4

### Teacher Notes

Joy is the first fruit named after love. Although all of the fruit flow from love, I believe that the Spirit listed joy next because it is such a powerful force and it requires something that all of the fruit have in common. It requires a choice! In this lesson, we have the opportunity to teach the children that they can always choose to rejoice as they trust in God's love for them even if they cannot always choose what kind of circumstances come their way.

Joy is an unstoppable force of the Spirit. Psalm 16:11 says that In God's presence is fullness of joy and Nehemiah 8:10 says that the joy of the Lord is our strength. Teach the children that if unhappy trials come, the right thing to do is to run TO God's presence (to His Word and to the throne by prayer for grace). It is exactly there that we can be strengthened through the joy of our salvation. Trials will always come and go and while we are here on the earth we will experience some unhappy things. But this life isn't the only life there is! If we teach the children to keep a heavenly perspective and remind them of their true and eternal life in Christ, they will be able to choose joy even in difficult times.

Studies have been done that track statistics of depression and suicide among young people, and even among teens from various cults or religious groups. The sad facts are that young people who have no hope of heaven and a future life often become overwhelmed with the pressures and hopelessness of life here on fallen earth. The more we share with children about the joy of the Lord and the hope of heaven, the more ready they will be to face life with a joy that goes beyond surface happiness.

Finally, joy is an appropriate attitude of faith. First, we hear and believe. Then, we ask and receive. As we trust that God is faithfully working out His promise, we can rejoice, seeing not just the circumstances around us, but our answer with the eye of faith!

**The most important thing you can do to be prepared to teach on the fruit of the Spirit is to have spent time abiding in Jesus yourself, and in pray for the children. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal God's love to the children this week and to manifest in your class.**

Introduction

## Lesson 3 - Joy Under Pressure



**Main Point: Joy is a spiritual force that strengthens us in times of pressure and flows as we rejoice and praise the Lord.**



**Review: John 15:5 Abiding in the Vine, Agape love values others**



**Memory Verse: Phil 4:4 Rejoice always, and again I say, rejoice.**

**A. Joy comes forth and strengthens us in times of pressure.**



**Drama Skit: *Freida Fronka Skit -The Pressure Pumper***

**B. Joy does not depend on circumstances as happiness does.**



**Object Lesson: *Don't Let the Devil Pop Your Joy***

**C. Joy will keep you from grief and depression if you let it.**



**Interview: *Joy Instead of Sorrow***

**D. Rejoicing causes the joy that is in us to bubble up.**



**Illustrated Sermon: *Joy Like a Fountain***

**E. Joy is a powerful force even in tough times**



**Bible Story: *Paul & Silas Rejoice at Midnight***

OVERVIEW



## Freida Skit - The Pressure Pumper

Drama Skit

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<b>Scripture:</b>	James 1:2 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations.
<b>Main Point:</b>	Joy comes forth and strengthens us in times of pressure.
<b>Materials:</b>	Costumes, control board, large balloon, inflated and labeled Pressure Pumper 2000, two chairs, soft rope.
<b>Preparation:</b>	Select an older child from the class who will lay on the chairs and be tied up. Prepare them for their part. Fiona's part can easily be played by a male teacher's assistant or youth with another boy name that starts with an "F."

*(Freida Fronka enters from off stage.)*

- Freida: Hello, Hello, children. My goodness, has it been a week already and here you are faithfully returning for your next stop on the tour. Have all of you been seeing the value in others more this week? I hope so. Well, I told you that love was the most important fruit...and to be sure it is. It is linked almost entirely to our next fruit...Joy. The greatest joy comes when we know how much God loves us and we learn to trust Him in every situation...even most difficult times. I have a very special member of Ms. Freida's Factory team to introduce to you. She is a real ball of energy. It is my pleasure to introduce to you, one of the best joy trainers in the business....Ms. Fiona Franshaw
- Fiona: Oh, hello Ms. Fronka. Hello...children.
- Freida: Ms. Franshaw...
- Fiona: Oh, please call me Fiona....
- Freida: Fine...Fiona...and...you may call me... Ms. Fronka.
- Fiona: Of course, Ms. Fronka.
- Freida: Now, Ms. Franshaw...ah...Fiona...I was telling the children a bit about God's joy, our next fruit and how it can be cultivated in some of the most pressing circumstances. Are you prepared to demonstrate the training that we have perfected here at Ms. Freida's Fruit Factory?



## Freida Skit - The Pressure Pumper (Cont.)

### Drama Skit

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- Fiona: *(Cracking knuckles and stretching neck side to side)* Oh, I'm ready, Ms. Fronka But I need a volunteer. Preferably a strong child, because as you know this training can be a bit of a strain.
- Freida: No problem. I have the selection all picked out from a drawing of the child's names *(aside to Fiona)* and a quick glance at their medical records...*(Pull's paper from pocket and reads a name.)*
- Fiona: Now \_\_\_\_\_. Let's make sure you are stretched and ready. Follow me. *(She leads child in a series of silly calisthenics, warming up weird parts like fingers or nose.)*
- Please lay on these chairs. *(Tie the child down)* This procedure will only hurt a little bit. I will set the Pressure Pumper 2000 to the correct levels and place it directly on your stomach. Once we turn on the power, you will feel a slight pressure that will increase. You may feel like getting up and getting out from under the pressure, but please do not attempt to do so, for this will ruin your training completely and you will not develop the fruit of joy.
- (Fiona checks and rechecks the dials and lays the balloon near the child's stomach.)*
- Fiona: Something's not right. *(Sound effects?)* We don't seem to be getting enough power.  
All the controls seem fine. Could it be a problem with the energy source?
- Freida: I will contact Frisco at once! *(Freida goes to the control board.) (Split stage or by pre-recorded video insert if possible.)*
- Mr. Frisco - we are having difficulty maintaining power levels up here. Is there a problem?
- Frisco: Howdy, Ms. Fronka. *(Coughing and waving his hand to see.)* We've definitely got some problems down here! The pressure's really getting high. I haven't sweat this much since the Rio Pecos Pig Wrestling Championship back in '72...*(whistles)* now you wanna talk pressure, that was a cooker if ever I seen one....
- Freida: Yes, yes, Mr. Frisco... your report.
- Frisco: Well, Ms. Fronka...it's our boiler -- Ole' Bessy. She's crackin' some seams down here in the joy chamber.
- Freida: Well, then we'll just have to get a new one. And quickly too!



## Freida Skit - The Pressure Pumper (Cont.)

### Drama Skit

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- Frisco: No, no that's not the answer. You see....Ole' Bessy's about as fine a boiler as you'll ever find. But the pressure needed to produce the kind of quality of joy we're looking for ...well it'll tax any system. She'll hold together alright! I just need some time to reinforce her before the next batch. Why she's a tough ol' bird that Bessy. When she gets ta pumpin', she's hotter than an old bull fixin' to strike. I remember facing Mad Dog Diablo back at the '69 Laredo Rodeo Bare Back Expedition. It was me an old Mad Dog coming down to the wire....
- Freida: Yes, yes, Mr. Frisco I understand. Reinforce Bessy as best you can and get her ready to put the pressure on. I want nothing but pure joy!
- Frisco: *(Shaking his head, and wiping the sweat off his brow.)* Will do, Ms. Fronka, will do.  
**Adios and out!**
- Freida: Well...Fiona. It may be some time before the full power is restored. Is there something to be done?
- Fiona: Oh, don't worry. The Pressure Pumper 2000 has a manual operation mode.
- Freida: Manual operation? Quite good, how does that work?
- Fiona: Well...see, I just sit on the Pressure Pumper and press down like this...*(Grunts...pretends to lay across balloon and press down straining. Object is to get child to laugh. Make lots of straining faces. Tickles if need be.) (Through grunts and stains..)* And it would help, Ms. Fronka if you would rub the child's stomach vigorously back and forth while I apply pressure to the Pressure Pumper 2000.
- (Freida rubs child's stomach.)*
- Fiona: There...do you hear that...that's the kind of joy we're talking about.
- Freida: Yes, I see. Very effective indeed, Fiona. Good show.
- (They let child up.)*
- Freida: Very good \_\_\_\_\_. You were an excellent sport. Thank you Fiona for your fine work! Give Ms Fiona Franshaw you warmest thanks children. *(Fiona exits to kids' applause.)* Now, children, you can understand that joy is often developed under extreme pressure. But you must determine sometimes to go through the pressure and not avoid it. True joy shines best in some very heavy circumstances indeed. Continue to let the joy of the Lord be developed this week in whatever situation may arise. I will see you again soon. *(Freida exits)*



## Don't Let the Devil Pop Your Joy

### Object Lesson

#### Scripture:

Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

#### Main Point:

Joy does not depend on circumstances as happiness does.

#### Materials:

Two yellow balloons, one white balloon, small helium tank or hand pump, and a pin.

#### Preparation:

**Do Ahead:** Draw smiley faces on all three balloons with a permanent black marker. On the back side of the white balloon, write "God Loves Me." Under the smiley face on the white balloon write the word "joy". To prepare a "balloon within a balloon:" Fold the white balloon lengthwise and insert the white balloon into one of the yellow ones so that the neck of the white balloon is sticking out of the neck of the yellow balloon. While holding the white balloon neck away from the opening of the yellow balloon, blow air into the outer yellow balloon until it is blown to half capacity. Now blow the white balloon up a small amount. Finish blowing both up until the yellow balloon is almost to capacity and the white one is at half-capacity inside the yellow balloon. Tie both ends together. Second yellow balloon is blown up in class during presentation.

*Tip: Add a small amount of baby powder to the white balloon before inserting it into yellow balloon to prevent the two from sticking. Also, practice with double balloon and pins and consider having two set ups.*

Okay, kids. I'm really curious...*(Excited, fun voice)* What makes you really happy? *(Allow answers. Get all excited with the kids as they mention things that make them happy.)* Oh yeah! That's awesome! *(If necessary suggest ideas. Each time they offer a suggestion of something fun or entertaining or you mention something that kids like, slowly blow up the empty yellow balloon either with a hand pump or helium tank.)*

I love going to Disneyworld!! *(Blow up balloon.)* Or getting the brand new XBOX! *(Blow up balloon.)* Or having my birthday party with a ton of friends at Chuck E Cheese!!!! *(Finish blowing up the balloon all excited and out of breath! Don't tie it.)*

But... what happens after the party, (let out some of the air letting the balloon make a squeaky sound) or when that game system breaks, when your friend stops being your friend or you're back from the trip and your s-o-oo bored? Happiness leaks. *(Depending on your time and class size you could let the balloon fly around the room and refill for each suggestion.)*

Even if you get really full and happy things are happening all the time *(blow balloon up all the way and tie it up)* But then something big and sad comes along and *(pop balloon with pin)* take all take all your happiness.

But joy is different. Joy is a force of the Spirit and we can have joy deep within us. Even when something unhappy or horrible happens...*(pop outer yellow balloon with pin near the top of the balloon away from the white balloon edge.)* Our joy is still there. You see, sometimes bad things can bring unhappiness, but no matter what, we don't have to let the enemy steal our joy!

***This is a powerful illustration that needs to be done with appropriate emotion and a bit of practice.***



## Joy Instead of Sorrow

### Activity: Interview

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#### Scripture:

John 16:22 You have sorrow now, but I will see you again; then you will rejoice, and no one can rob you of that joy.

#### Main Point:

Joy will keep you from grief and depression, even over death, if you let it.

#### Materials:

Microphone  
Cell phone, if not a live interview.

#### Preparation:

Ask a Christian you know who has lost a loved one or experienced a severe trial where God sustained them with joy if they would be willing to share their experience with the class. This will help children understand that this works for real people in their time. Pass the person to be interviewed the questions you plan to ask ahead of time. If by phone, prepare pictures of the person to be shown on the screen or TV if possible. **[The write up on this page is an example only. Customize for your guest.]**

Joy is a pretty strong force. But just how strong is it? Can it hold up under life's worst pressures? Today, I want you to hear from a very special person who can tell us more about that. *(Add details to match your particular interviewee.)*

My friend Rose was married to a wonderful Christian man. At the age of 33, just a few years into their marriage, Jim fought a brave battle against cancer, but was not healed and went home to be with Jesus.

Rose was left all alone. They had just completed building a six bedroom house together when Jim became sick.

I would like you to hear from Rose what happened to her after Jim's death.

*(Introduce guest to the class. Call friend, if not live and show picture on screen if possible. Interview your guest using the following questions.)*

Can you tell us just briefly about the trial you were experiencing?

How did the Lord help you during that time?

What did the joy of the Lord feel like to you?

Can you tell us from your experience what someone can do to benefit from the joy of the Lord more?

As you can see, God had a plan for us to pass through even the most difficult pains. That plan was to give us the fruit of the Spirit called joy. It is God's strength to keep us and build us up, even when things of this world...heavy things...even death...are trying to weight us down.



## Joy like a Fountain

Illustrated Sermon

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**Scripture:**

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice always, and again I say, rejoice.

**Main Point:**

Rejoicing causes the joy that is in us to bubble up.

**Materials:**

One water bottle, Dawn liquid dish soap, bucket or clear plastic container to catch bubble soap.

**Preparation:**

Lay down plastic in area where illustrated sermon will be to minimize clean up. Empty about 1/3 of the water out of the water bottle and add a squeeze of Dawn or other dishwashing soap. Add cap tightly. DO NOT shake up until during teaching time. BE sure to reattach cap tightly each time before shaking the bottle. ;)

I don't know about you boys and girls, but even though I have the joy of the Lord in me, I don't always feel like it. Do you? (*Let children respond.*) But then I learned that having joy is kind of like having a bottle of soapy water.

When I have joy in my life it's just like when I shake this bottle of soapy water. (Remove cap and squeeze bottle until some of it overflows into container.) Joy bubbles up and begins to overflow from my heart.

The Bible says in Phil 4:4 Rejoice, and again I say rejoice. As often as we need joy, we need to stir up the joy that is in us by REjoicing (Shake the bottle again and again repeating several times and each time squeezing out some of the bubbles.) until the joy bubbles over again.

What happens if I stop rejoicing? That's right...things get kinda flat. Well, how am I going to keep it flowing? I'm going to have to RE-joyce. And Again...and again...and...again..I say...rejoice. (*Teacher rejoices and hose flows again.*)

Remember kids, you have to "MAKE A CHOICE – TO RE-JOICE."



## Paul & Silas Rejoice at Midnight

### Bible Story

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**Scripture:**

Acts 16: 16-34

**Main Point:**

Power is released when we rejoice and praise God even in tough times.

**Materials:**

Chains or rope, fake blood

**Preparation:**

If you decide to use an assistant to act out the parts, be sure the assistant knows the story so they can hear their cues and that they have props that can help act it out.

The Bible Story we have to tell you about today is about a time when Paul and his friend Silas were in worse trouble than anything we've already talked about.

They were on God's business in the region of Philippi. While ministering there, some men stirred up a great mob against them. Paul and Silas were arrested and thrown into a horrible prison where they were beaten and put in chains. *(Dramatize this effect by tying or chaining a drama assistant to the legs of a chair as if in stocks. If you have a rope or whip you could pretend to beat the drama player. Be sensitive to children's ages and emotions, but be sure they understand the seriousness of the situation for Paul and Silas but that you are not hurting the assistant.)*

The jail was usually a part of the sewer system in the city. It was usually nothing more than stone or brick walls with filth and waste running through it. Paul and Silas were left beaten and bloody. There was no medical help for them. There were no cafeteria meals. This prison was a dungeon.

What would you do if you were in this situation? Maybe cry? Or try to escape or hurt the jailer? *(Allow responses. Some kids will talk about how they would punch those people, etc.)* What do you think Paul and Silas did?

They praised God! Can you imagine? Stripped and beaten and chained up, they began to lift their voices and sing and rejoice about what they had because of Jesus. *(Have assistant start singing a song the children know.)* And they didn't sing softly either. They were having a big praise and worship time. All of the other prisoners and the jailers heard them singing and giving glory to God. And then...without much warning, a great earthquake rocked that prison. *(Have drama helpers shake and quake and lose their chains or ropes.)*

The chains were broken off of Paul and Silas and the other prisoners as well. The walls shook and all of the locked gates fell off their hinges. Praise God. God delivered Paul and Silas when they made a choice to rejoice even in the middle of their trouble.