

SUNDAY SCHOOL NOTES: 31 July 2016

JUNIORS: The Fruit of the Spirit (1) Joy

Today you learnt about being full of Joy. (Galatians 5: 22) Learn this little rhyme to help you remember how we can stay joyful, even when things don't go so well:

J means putting Jesus first;

O means putting Others next;

Y for Yourself and You come last!

SENIORS: New clothes (Col 3:8-17)

No-one knows what God looks like. Perhaps the best description we have is in Isaiah 6: 1-2 which explains that when we see God we are just aware of beauty and glory.

That's why, when the disciples asked Jesus to show them the Father (God), Jesus replied, "Whoever has seen me has seen the Father."

OK. So God looks like Jesus. But what does Jesus look like?

Although we know for sure that Jesus lived and although there have been more books written about him than about anyone else in the world, we don't have any idea of what he looked like. Artists draw pictures but these are just guesses.

But, even though we can't describe what he looks like, we know a lot about what kind of person Jesus was. You can probably think of a lot of words, like kind, loving, gentle, forgiving, stern, healing, a good story teller, pure, etc. That's why Matthew, Mark, Luke and John tell us so many stories in the Gospels.

If we want other people who don't know the Bible stories to get to know Jesus, we must become more and more like him. But we flop over and over again, don't we? We plan to be like him and we fail. We can't do this on our own. Jesus has to live in us and help us to change. So it is a two-part action: God works in us and we work with God.

Remember last week Paul told the Colossians to put down roots in Jesus. Well, Paul then goes on to tell them to be fruitful plants. But this time he doesn't talk about plants, he talks about 'stripping' or taking off and putting on new clothes. It is like putting on clean clothes after doing something which makes you sweaty or dirty - working in the garden, horse-riding, playing sport.

These are some of the sinful things we have to take off.

Anger or resentment; **Rage** when we allow our anger to break out; **Malice** when we want to hurt someone; **Slander** when we say bad things about others; **Filthy language**; **Lying**

Then we are to put on/clothe ourselves with beautiful new robes. We won't be used to them, but God provides them for us and as we wear them they will become more comfortable..

We must be **sensitive** to others' needs; **kind; humble; gentle** - not rude or arrogant; **patient** – not resentful or angry. We shall only be able to live like this if we obey Jesus' command that we love one another. '**Love**' is like the belt or buckle which holds all these clothes on.

Elsewhere Paul calls these behaviours as the Fruit of being rooted in Jesus. If we behave like this, we become like a selfie of Jesus! It won't be a perfect picture, but with God's help, it will show others that we have a great and wonderful God who is changing us so that we become more like Him.

