Clowning Around!

By Deborah Wassenberg

Story 1: Love and Joy

Fruit of the Spirit: Galatians 5:22-23
But the fruit of the Spirit is **love, joy,** peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law that says these things are wrong.

Introduction:

The Durand Brothers Circus was owned by twins Gabrielle and Pierre. Following a long family tradition, their circus travelled across Europe by caravan, entertaining audiences. Children of all ages would gasp at the bravery and skill of the trapeze artists, tight rope walkers and bareback riders. But the laughter? That was for the clowns.

There were three. A tall, curly haired clown named Fizz. A girl clown named Jingles because she had golden bells stitched all over her dress and they jingled when she moved, and a boss clown named Ko-ko. He hatched the ideas for their clown act. The clowns were very popular. Which made some circus performers jealous.

Maximillian the circus strongman was one. He called out to Ko-ko.

'Hey, red nose, do you have the time?'

'Yes, I do,' said Ko-ko consulting his pocket watch. 'It's almost three o'clock.'

'That's a very fine watch,' said Max. 'May I see it?'

'Of course,' said Ko-ko, joining him. 'It was a gift.'

'Is that so?' Maximillian deliberately dropped the watch on the ground.

'Oops,' he said. 'How clumsy I am.'

Ko-ko bent to pick it up but Maximillian stopped him.

'Do not worry I will pick it up.' Instead, he stepped on Ko-ko's watch with his heavy black boot and smashed it.

'You've broken my watch!' said Ko-ko. 'And you did it on purpose!'

'What a shame,' laughed Maximillian. 'Now, you'd better get going little clown. You don't want to be late. What's the matter with you? Lose track of time?'

Ko-ko stormed into the Big Top with Maximillian's laughter ringing in his ears. He was determined to get revenge. But his thoughts were interrupted by the sound of crying. It was Jingles and she was soaking wet.

'Boohoo. I'm a mess,' she sobbed. 'That awful Maximillian picked up a barrel of water and tipped it over my head.'

Ko-ko was about to show Jingles what had happened to his watch when he heard a terrible wailing sound.

'Waa.'

'Oh, no, Fizz. Not you, too? What happened?'

'I had a big, big bag of hot buttered popcorn. Maximillian asked if he could share and of course I said yes. But he snatched the whole bag and emptied all the popcorn into his mouth. And now my tummy is grumbling! Waa.'

There was nothing the poor clowns could do. Rehearsals were about to begin so they had to forget their troubles and concentrate on their performance. After the show, circus owners Pierre and Gabriel Durand, applauded the clowns.

'Magnifique!' said Pierre. 'It will be a great performance tonight. But now we have a favour to ask of you all. Maximillian the Strongman has dropped a barbell on his foot. His big toe is very sore and swollen.'

'He must keep his weight off it,' said Gabriel. 'We would like you clowns to look after him. Check on him and see if he needs anything. And take his dinner to him on a tray.'

The clowns looked at one another is dismay then began to protest loudly and all at once.

'I hear what you are saying,' said Gabriel. 'Maximillian has been, how you say, a big cow.'

'Bully,' said Pierre.

'Thank you. Maximillian has been a big bully. He is jealous of our famous clowns. But here is an opportunity to show him love is.'

'You will show him you are Christians by your love,' said Pierre. 'You will be showing fruit.'

‘Fruit?’ asked Fizz. His stomach was still grumbling. ‘I’ve got fruit?’

‘You have the fruit of the Spirit,’ said Pierre. ‘Alas, you cannot eat it, Fizz. But others can see it.’

‘I don’t understand,’ said Ko-ko scratching his clown hat.

‘The fruit of the Spirit, it grows,’ said Gabriel. ‘Just like the fruit on trees. God has fruit that grows in us. It’s the fruit that shows others we belong to Him.’

‘So, let me get this straight,’ said Jingles. ‘If we look after Maximillian we will be showing him God’s love. So love is a fruit of the Spirit?’

‘Indeed it is,’ nodded Pierre.

‘I suppose we could help Maximillian,’ said Ko-ko. ‘But I won’t be happy about it!’

‘Ah, but another fruit of the Spirit is joy,’ said Gabriel. ‘The Bible says, ‘The joy of the Lord is our strength.’

‘I wonder who is the strongest,’ asked Pierre. ‘The big, mean Maximillian who hurts others or the little clowns who learn to grow fruit.’

Pierre and Gabriel left.

‘What do we do?’ asked Fizz. ‘Most of me doesn’t want to help Maximillian because he is so mean. But a little bit of me knows I should.’

‘I guess that’s the Holy Spirit,’ said Jingles. ‘He wants our fruit to grow.’

‘Clowns, we have a choice to make,’ said Ko-ko.

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Imagine the surprise on Maximillian’s face when Ko-ko, Jingles and Fizz entered his caravan with magazines and a nourishing meal.

‘I did not think anyone would come to visit me,’ said Maximillian. ‘Thank you.’

Fizz produced a basket of fruit from behind his back and offered it to the Strongman. ‘We brought you fruit, too. With love and joy!’

He handed the basket to Maximillian. Then he got the giggles. Holding his tummy he twirled around and nearly fell out of the caravan!