

Rejoice in the Lord Always!

Based on Paul's letter to the Philippians
Good Shepherd Bible Study 2020

Opening: What is the difference between happiness and joy?

Happiness –

Joy -

In this letter Paul helps us find joy in our walk with God, no matter what our outward circumstances.

Introduction to Philippians

A. a prison letter written from Paul's First Imprisonment in Rome, 61-63 AD.

Why was Paul a prisoner?

What were the conditions of Paul's imprisonment in Rome?

B. Paul established this congregation in Philippi during his Second missionary journey; see Acts 16;

Acts 16:9-10 – The Macedonia Call

Acts 16:11-15 – A Nucleus begins with Lydia

Acts 16:16-24 Arrested and Persecuted

Acts 16:25-34 – The Jailer of Philippi is converted

Acts 16:35-40 – Paul asserts his rights for the sake of the Gospel



C. Theme Rejoice in the Lord Always! Sharing Joy! Hope and joy even in the midst of discouragement and suffering. Joy in Christ is the secret of contentment.

D. Contents: a friendly letter prompted by the visit of Epaphroditus. Paul reports back how he is doing and offers encouragement to the Philippian congregation.

E. Our goal: As we study this epistle, we pray that the Holy Spirit will also fill our hearts with the joy the apostle knew and move us to express and to share that joy with others in what, without Christ, would be a joyless world!

F. **OUTLINE:** Sharing Joy!

1. A joyful report from prison 1:1-1:26
2. Encouragement to live our lives filled with Gospel joy 1:27-4:9
3. Thanks and greetings 4:10-23

Philippians 1:1-2 - The Address - 1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons : 2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

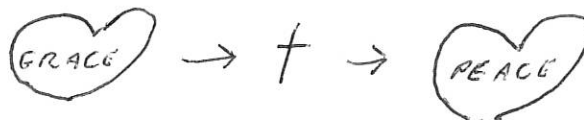
v.1 From - Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ

literally a "slave" which means -

To – God's holy people – how can we address sinful people as holy?

v.2 Grace and peace

What is the relationship of grace to peace?



Philippians 1:3-6 - I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

v.2 What attitude permeates Paul's prayer? Why is this amazing considering the circumstances?

How do you start your day?

Counting the bills or the blessings?

Focusing on your problems or the promises of God?

Worrying about your troubles or taking them to God in prayer?

How much time to you spend in prayer thanking God for the people he has placed into your life?

What was Paul especially thankful for here?

v.5 How can we express our partnership in the gospel? locally, synodically?

Acts 2:42-27 reminds us how the early Christians expressed their Gospel partnership.

What was Paul absolutely convinced of?

Who began a good work in us? How does he keep us in the faith?

v. 6 What's the Day of Christ Jesus?

Philippians 1:7-11 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. 8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.

v.7 How did Paul feel about his fellow Christians?

v.9 What did Paul want for his fellow Christians?

Philippians 1:12-14 Paul's report from prison - Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

How did God make good come from Paul's situation?

What are some blessings God can bring us in this present crisis?

Philippians 1:18-20 Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. 20 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

v. 19 How were the Philippians helping Paul while he was in prison?

Who can you add to your prayer list?

v.20 What was Paul's chief concern concerning his time in prison and his future?

How will a similar attitude help us honor Christ in difficult situations?

Read Philippians 1:21-26 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me. 27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ

V. 21-26 "To be or not to be, That is the Question!" – Hamlet's Dilemma

To Hamlet both options were _____

For Christians, both options are _____

What did living mean for Paul?

What did dying mean for Paul?

Which did Paul prefer?

Which was more necessary at the time? Why?

What is your purpose for living?

Christ was the secret, the source, the summary of the apostle's life. Christ filled his life with joy and enabled him to effectively communicate that joy to others.