

Always Rejoice

Philippians 4:1-7

August 20, 2023

Last week - making sure we are in the faith, and if so, how our citizenship is in heaven.

Today - Always Rejoice.

Next week - Think on what is True.

September 3rd - Be Content.

This morning I want to take these seven verses and break them up, if you will, so we can understand and be encouraged by what Paul is saying.

Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. (v.1)

Therefore (looking back), since the Lord will transform our bodies with our citizenship being in heaven, Paul now encourages the Church, that He loves at Philippi, to continue to “stand fast in the Lord.” He refers to this several times in his writings including Galatians 5:1 and 1 Corinthians 16:13. He is reminding and telling them (and looking back to the last chapter) to continue following the Lord. That is though some have turned away, some are following half heartedly, etc. you keep going.

1) So you and I need to keep going!

I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³ And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the Book of Life. (vs.2-3)

Since Christ ascended and sent His Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2), the Church itself has grown. It has grown no matter the struggles or push back from the world, in fact it often helped it. Paul, up to this point, had told the Church at Philippi that God would continue the work in them, no matter the circumstances, in fact to expect suffering while being humble and shining the light. The Church had much push back from the outside (non-believers up to this point) but now in this case there is a disagreement in the Church and it's big enough to write to the whole Church about it.

2) When the Lord is at work in His Church, the enemy loves nothing more than to have the Church at odds with each other!

Paul makes it clear at the end of verse 3 that these women are believers but they have a disagreement (we can speculate, but we don't know). He tells them to have the same mind, that is to get together and not be at odds.

Why do we have folks in Church at odds with each other?

Sin (selfishness, my way, I'm right – refer back to Chapter 2- humility).

Miscommunication

Forget our mission – To Love God and Love others.

A hurt

Not really a believer.

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! (v. 4)

3) We are to rejoice, always.

Paul was in jail and there is clearly division and grumbling going on outside the Church. He wasn't sure if he would die in jail and now he is writing to encourage the church to get along, to be of the same mind.

Happiness and joy are two different things. Happiness depends upon what happens, and that's why we call it happiness. If your hap is good, you're happy. If your hap is bad, you're unhappy. And happiness depends upon happenstance. It depends upon what happens. That's why we call it happiness. But he doesn't say, “Be happy always.” He says, “*Rejoice in the Lord always.*” It is to be continuous joy. Now, let me tell you, my dear friend, that joy is like a thermostat. Happiness is like a thermometer. Joy controls conditions. Happiness registers conditions. You see, the thermometer of

your happiness can go up and down by what happens, but you regulate your life with joy. Joy is not a thermometer; it is a thermostat that you can set in your life regardless of what happens, no matter how bad your happiness or happenstance may be. By the way, happiness is not wrong; it's good to be happy.¹

Habakkuk 3:17-18

Where is your joy coming from?

Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord is at hand. (v. 5)

4) Be a light to all.

The English translation uses gentleness, but in the original language it's "moderation."

Exercising an even temper of mind, in governing all appetites (physical, spiritual, etc.), modest, patient and gentle. That this be thru you because the Lord is with you.

Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. (v. 6)

5) Don't be pulled in different directions.

The Greek word for anxious literally means to not be pulled in different directions. Hope pulling us in one, fear another, uncertainty another, circumstance another, etc.

The root word that we get our word "worry" from literally means "to strangle." Worry can paralyze us with fear and even cause physical struggles.

The opposite of worry is a secure mind, for worry is the greatest thief of joy.

How then? Thru praying, right praying:

Prayer – adoration – at first sight of worry, or even before so, get alone and pray to God, focus on who He is.

Supplication – earnest sharing of our problems and needs.

Thanksgiving – Give thanks to God for answered prayer (remember, only 1 of 10 lepers gave thanks in Luke 17).

And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. (v, 7)

6) Conditional promise.

As a Christ follower as I seek to obey God in this (not perfectly, but to obey) then I will have peace that only comes from the Lord.

Prayer Focus:

- Am I continuing on?
- Am I at odds with someone?
- What am I rejoicing in?
- Am I being pulled in different directions?
- Do I have the peace of the Lord?

¹ Rogers, A. (2017). [How to Control Your Thought Life, Part 2](#). In *Adrian Rogers Sermon Archive* (Php 4:4–11). Signal Hill, CA: Rogers Family Trust.