

THE ELEMENTS OF JOY

PHILIPPIANS 1:1-8

Text:

Introduction:

The Philippian church was the first church Paul founded in Europe. Paul came to Europe on his second missionary journey being directed there by the Holy Spirit.

Acts 16:9-10

⁹ And a vision appeared to Paul in the night; There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us. ¹⁰ And after he had seen the vision, immediately we endeavoured to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called us for to preach the gospel unto them.

The conversion of Lydia and the Jailor marked the beginning of this church.

Acts 16:13-15

¹³ And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the

women which resorted thither. ¹⁴ And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. ¹⁵ And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

Acts 16:25-34

²⁵ And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. ²⁶ And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. ²⁷ And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. ²⁸ But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. ²⁹ Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, ³⁰ And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? ³¹ And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. ³² And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. ³³ And he took

them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway. ³⁴ And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

The Philippians had a deep affection for Paul, as he did for them. Though they were poor, they alone supported Paul financially at one stage of his ministry.

Philippians 4:15

¹⁵ Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only.

Paul penned this letter to thank them for their support, inform them of his circumstances and warn them about the danger of false teachers.

His letter was written from prison but the theme is joy so much so that this book is called the “Epistle of Joy.” Paul had learned the secrets of joy and peace and contentment in every circumstance.

Most people base their happiness on their circumstances mostly beyond their control.

Spiritual joy on the other hand, is not based on chance or circumstances but rather the deep and abiding

confidence all is well between the believer and the Lord.

It important to remember these things about joy:

- Joy is a gift from God

Psalms 4:7-8

⁷ Thou hast put gladness in my heart, more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased. ⁸ I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

- Joy comes to those who believe the Gospel

Luke 2:10-11

10 And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. 11 For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.

John 15:11

11 These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

- Joy is experienced as believers receive and obey God's Word

Jeremiah 15:16

16 Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts.

1 John 1:4

4 And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.

- A believer's joy is deepened through trials

1 Thessalonians 1:6

⁶ And ye became followers of us, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost:

2 Corinthians 6:10

¹⁰ As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things.

James 1:2

² My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations;

1 Peter 1:3-6

³ *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,* ⁴ *To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,* ⁵ *Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.* ⁶ *Wherein ye greatly rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations:*

- A believer's joy is made complete when they set hope on the glory of Heaven

Romans 12:12

¹² *Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;*

1 Peter 1:8

⁸ *Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:*

1 Peter 4:13

¹³ *But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy.*

Jude 1:24-25

²⁴ Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, ²⁵ To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen.

Remember when Paul wrote this letter his circumstances were dire. He was imprisoned in Rome, possibly facing execution.

In these verses Paul gives five specific things that have brought him joy.

1. THE JOY OF RECOLLECTION

Philippians 1:3

³ I thank my God upon every remembrance of you,

A. Paul's remembrance of Lydia's salvation

Acts 16:13-15

¹³ And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. ¹⁴ And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us:

whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. ¹⁵ And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

B. Paul's remembrance of the young demon possessed slave girl.

Acts 16:16-18

¹⁶ And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: ¹⁷ The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which shew unto us the way of salvation. ¹⁸ And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour.

C. Paul must have remembered the time he spent in jail because of the slave girl's owners losing income and inciting the people against Paul and Silas.

Acts 16:19-23

¹⁹ And when her masters saw that the hope of

their gains was gone, they caught Paul and Silas, and drew them into the marketplace unto the rulers, ²⁰ And brought them to the magistrates, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city, ²¹ And teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being Romans. ²² And the multitude rose up together against them: and the magistrates rent off their clothes, and commanded to beat them. ²³ And when they had laid many stripes upon them, they cast them into prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely:

D. Paul no doubt remembered that even in a bad circumstance in prison, the jailor and his family's salvation.

Acts 16:26-34

²⁶ And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. ²⁷ And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. ²⁸ But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. ²⁹ Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came

*trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,
30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what
must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe
on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be
saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto
him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in
his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of
the night, and washed their stripes; and was
baptized, he and all his, straightway. 34 And
when he had brought them into his house, he
set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in
God with all his house.*

2. THE JOY OF INTERCESSION

Philippians 1:4

*4 Always in every prayer of mine for you all
making request with joy,*

Faithful and sincere prayer is much more than an obligation; it is a joy.

Those who are faithful in prayer are more preoccupied with the needs and well being of others than their own and ask God to pour out His blessings on them.

Paul's prayers for the Philippians were offered with great appreciation, thankfulness, and joy.

3. THE JOY OF PARTICIPATION

Philippians 1:5

5 For your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now;

The third thing of God-given joy is participation.

They were involved in contributing so that the Gospel could be shared.

4. THE JOY OF ANTICIPATION

Philippians 1:6

6 Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

Nothing can encourage a Christian more than knowing that despite life's uncertainties and difficulties there may be along the way, the Lord will bring us through.

It is the Lord who provides salvation and it is the Lord who will enable us to live the Christian life.

5. THE JOY OF AFFECTION

Philippians 1:7-8

7 Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart; inasmuch as

both in my bonds, and in the defence and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace. 8 For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.

Paul's presents a fifth element of joy – affection. There can be no greater joy than that produced by genuine affection for others.

Close:

What robs believers of biblical joy?

- False salvation

Matthew 13:24-30

24 Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: 25 But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. 26 But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. 27 So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? 28 He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? 29 But he said, Nay;

lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. 30 Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn.

Matthew 13:36-43

36 Then Jesus sent the multitude away, and went into the house: and his disciples came unto him, saying, Declare unto us the parable of the tares of the field. 37 He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; 38 The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; 39 The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. 40 As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. 41 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; 42 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43 Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

James 2:14-26

14 What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? 17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. 19 Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. 20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. 25 Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? 26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

Galatians 5:22

22 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,

Paul gives a grave warning to the Corinthians:

2 Corinthians 13:5

5 Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

- The influence of Satan

1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

Psalms 51:12

¹² Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit.

- A lack of understanding and faith in God

Romans 8:28

²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

John 10:28-29

²⁸ And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. ²⁹ My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Matthew 6:25-34

²⁵ Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment? ²⁶ Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they? ²⁷ Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature? ²⁸ And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: ²⁹ And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. ³⁰ Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith? ³¹ Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? ³² (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father

*knoweth that ye have need of all these things.³³
But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his
righteousness; and all these things shall be
added unto you.³⁴ Take therefore no thought
for the morrow: for the morrow shall take
thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto
the day is the evil thereof.*

Philippians 4:6

*⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by
prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let
your requests be made known unto God.*

Psalms 55:22

*²² Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall
sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous
to be moved.*

- Prayerlessness steals our joy

Those who fail to pray lose sight of God's purpose, and provisions for us and either give up hope, or else seek help from other sources.

- Focusing on our circumstances instead of the Saviour

John 14:27

*²⁷ Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto
you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you.*

Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

- Ingratitude robs us of joy

Philippians 4:6

⁶ Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.

1 Thessalonians 5:18

¹⁸ In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.

Romans 1:18-21

¹⁸ For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; ¹⁹ Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them. ²⁰ For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: ²¹ Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

- Forgetfulness also results in loss of joy

Psalms 103:2

² Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Revelation 2:4-5

⁴ Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. ⁵ Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.

- Failing to forgive results in lack of joy

Matthew 6:14-15

¹⁴ For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: ¹⁵ But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

In conclusion the fellowship of God's people and the Lord's desire is that we have fullness of joy.

John 15:11

¹¹ These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.