

Joy In Jail

Message Notes

Intro:

- We are going to take a few weeks and dive into the book of Philippians and discuss JOY

Joy

- Joy is one of the best words in the world!
 - Do you love to laugh?
 - Laughter is a good medicine
- Joy is a part of the Christian faith
 - It is given to us by the Holy Spirit
 - It is ours no matter the circumstance
 - Sometimes it's a verb that we must do, we must REJOICE
- Joy is different from happiness in a few ways:

About the letter:

- Paul started the church in Philippi around A.D. 52
- You can read about it in Acts 16
 - A woman named Lydia from Thyatira
 - A fortune teller that Paul set free in the marketplace
 - A jailer who gave his heart to Christ
- Paul had a rough time here
 - He was beaten
 - He was put in stocks and chains
 - He was thrown in the dungeon
- Paul was now in a Roman prison
 - The year was now A.D. 62
 - They had sent Epaphroditus to bring Paul a gift
 - This letter was his thank you
- The theme of this letter is JOY
 - He mentions it 16 times in this book.
 - Ironically, this was one of the worst times of his life.
 - He's tired and worn out, he's chained to a guard, he's in the dark, he's forgotten about

We learn a few things right off the bat:

- Happiness is EXTERNAL
- Joy is INTERNAL
- Happiness is based on CIRCUMSTANCES
- Joy is based on CHRIST
- Happiness happens by CHANCE
- Joy happens by CHOICE

Three reasons Paul chooses Joy from Philippians 1

1. Take joy in the FELLOWSHIP of the gospel

1. Philippians 1:3-9 (NLT) 3 Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. 4 Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, 5 for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. 6 And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. 7 So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. 8 God knows how much I love you and long for you with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus. 9 I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding.
2. Paul had a way of reflecting on the family of God, the fellowship of believers. He went through his mental rolodex and thought about the individuals that God had joined him with.
 1. Philippians 4:1 (NLT) Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stay true to the Lord. I love you and long to see you, dear friends, for you are my joy and the crown I receive for my work.
 2. Those he ministered WITH
 3. Those he ministered TO
 4. Those he built into spiritual CHILDREN
3. You are in my mind! - "every time I think of you"
4. You are in my heart! - "for you have a special place in my heart"
5. You are in my prayers! - "I pray that your love will overflow more and more"
6. If you are in a dark, lonely, hard place, find joy in the fellowship of the gospel
 1. Remember all those God has joined to you through the years
 2. Lean into the family of believers. Pursue relationships in the body of Christ.
 3. 2 Timothy 2:22 (NLT) .. Enjoy the companionship of those who call on the Lord with pure hearts.

2. Take joy in the FURTHERANCE of the gospel

1. Philippians 1:12-18 (NLT) 12 And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News. 13 For everyone here, including the whole palace guard, knows that I am in chains because of Christ. 14 And because of my imprisonment, most of the believers here have gained confidence and boldly

15 speak God's message without fear. 15 It's true that some are preaching out of jealousy and rivalry. But others preach about Christ with pure motives. 16 They preach because they love me, for they know I have been appointed to defend the Good News. 17 Those others do not have pure motives as they preach about Christ. They preach with selfish ambition, not sincerely, intending to make my chains more painful to me. 18 But that doesn't matter. Whether their motives are false or genuine, the message about Christ is being preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice.

2. I guess you could say that Paul was the eternal optimist.
 1. He recognized God's sovereignty and He trusted it.
 2. He was looking for every possible way to advance the gospel
3. Paul's perspective
 1. This prison thing has helped to spread the good news
 2. All of my captors are watching and know why I'm here
 3. The believers have gained confidence in preaching
 4. THE MESSAGE OF CHRIST IS PREACHED EITHER WAY, SO I REJOICE!
4. Rejoice when the gospel goes forth in SMALL ways
5. Rejoice when the gospel goes forth in unforeseen ways
6. Rejoice when the gospel goes forth in personal ways.
7. If you feel stuck in a scenario, ask yourself
 1. How can God use this to advance the gospel

3. Take joy in the FAITH of the gospel

1. Philippians 1:20-26 (NLT) 20 For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die. 21 For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. 22 But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So I really don't know which is better. 23 I'm torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me. 24 But for your sakes, it is better that I continue to live. 25 Knowing this, I am convinced that I will remain alive so I can continue to help all of you grow and experience the joy of your faith.
2. Paul's faith was so strong that he realized he was in a WIN-WIN scenario
 1. I BELIEVE I will continue to be strong
 2. I BELIEVE that my life will bring honor to Christ
 3. I BELIEVE that in living or in dying, I win.
 4. I BELIEVE I will stay alive and continue helping you.
3. What is the joy of our faith?
 1. Even in death, we win!
 2. Even in hardship, He gets the glory!

The big picture of joy is, if you know Christ, you are in a WIN-WIN scenario

2 Timothy 4:18 (NLT) Yes, and the Lord will deliver me from every evil attack and will bring me safely into his heavenly Kingdom. All glory to God forever and ever! Amen.