

For All the Joy

Paul's matured and Spirit-directed Desire / Joy:
to personally help others live out a true faith in God

1) Desire for a true faith in others – v. 1-9

v. 7 – he is greatly comforted

v. 8 – he *'really lives'* if they are standing firm in Lord

v. 9 – he thanks God for all the joy he has on their account.

2) Desire to help them further grow – v. 10-11

Phil 2:5

Heb 12:2

Jn 15:11

Jn 17:13

3) Growing Love for others – v. 12

- It is caused by God, not self-generated
- It is to be both increasing and abounding
- For one another, and all people
- Following the pattern of Jesus and Apostles

4) Personal Holiness – v. 13.

- Established by God, not self-generated
- Sanctification in view, not Justification
- “Blameless” ≠ sinless
- Love-induced Holiness

So, how do we grow in love?

1 John 3:2-3

Seeing Jesus...

- Full of Joy, especially as others put their faith in action (Centurion in Luke 7, the Hemorrhaging Woman in Luke 8)
- Delighted to personally come to help – Heb 12:2 He Came, He Taught, He Healed, He Suffered, He Died in our Place, He Sent the Spirit, He Personally intercedes for us
- He Super-Abounded in Love – Mark 6:30-34 (53-55), John 13:1
- Blameless in Holiness – John 8:29
- Moved by Love – Rom 5:8, John 15:13, 13:34-35

Praxis

1. Why do you think children seem to have more joy than adults?
2. Ponder the sources of Joy in John 15:11, 16:20-24, 17:13...
3. How might Paul's prayers in 1 Thess 3:9-13 affect the way you pray?
4. What are the common enemies of the kind of selfless desire for others that Paul shows here?
5. What are things often "lacking" in people's faith that we might help "supply?"
6. Personal Reflection: Do you have more or less joy than you did 5 years ago? Why do you think that is?