

REJOICE IN THE LORD

TEXT: PHIL. 4:1-9

Introduction:

1. As we have noted, Paul's message to the Philippians is to rejoice in the Lord, no matter what the circumstances (Phil. 4:4). "And again I say, Rejoice" (4:4).
2. David wrote in Psalm 16:11, "Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."
3. Paul refers to the Christians at Philippi as his "joy and crown" (4:1). Paul expected to receive a crown for winning them to the Lord. And they were his joy (cf. I Thess. 2:19, 20).
4. J Allen Blair said, "Paul realized that no greater prize can be his in this life than that of seeing men and women come to Christ under his ministry. Indeed, soul-winning is an incomparable privilege God has committed to all Christians. Every convert added to the great host of believers is another prize that will remain for all eternity."
5. Proverbs 11:30 says, "he that winneth souls is wise."
6. The apostle Paul was a great soulwinner, and a great example for all Christians. The church at Philippi started when Paul led Lydia to the Lord. Acts 16:15 says, "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."
7. This indicates Paul led Lydia's entire household to the Lord, and that they started having services in her home.
8. Next, Paul led the Philippian jailer and his family to the Lord. This was the beginning of this great church at Philippi.
9. But like with all churches, trouble started. Unfortunately, Paul's friends at Philippi, Euodias and Syntyche, had a falling out and he was not there to help straighten things out (Phil. 4:1, 2).
10. Notice the reference to "those women which labored with me in the Gospel" (4:3). Women have always occupied a big part in ministry.
11. Now, the theme of tonight's text, and the theme of this epistle is that no matter what, those of us that are saved should always rejoice in the Lord.

I. THE BELIEVER'S MODERATION

II. THE BELIEVER'S SUPPLICATION

III. THE BELIEVER'S SANCTIFICATION

I. THE BELIEVER'S MODERATION (4:5).

1. Some people interpret this word “moderation” to mean “reasonableness” or “gentleness” (4:5).
2. Certainly we Christians should be reasonable and gentle. We don’t always have to have our own way. We will always have our disagreements but we must let our “moderation be known unto all men” (4:5).
3. One good reason for us to be reasonable is because, “The Lord is at hand” (4:5). How ridiculous to fuss and fight when the Lord is at hand.
4. James 5:9 says, “Grudge not one against another, brethren, lest ye be condemned: behold, the judge standeth before the door.”

II. THE BELIEVER’S SUPPLICATION (4:6, 7).

1. Show me a man or a woman who is always worrying and I’ll show you a person that is either not saved or very weak in the faith.
2. Mark it down, worrying starts in the mind with wrong thinking and then moves down to the heart, then to the knees and even affects the feet (cold feet).
3. People worry about circumstances, people, things, events, etc. Often they worry over things that never even come to pass. Paul says the remedy for anxiety is prayer (4:6). Here he uses three different words for prayer:
 - a. Prayer (4:6) – asking God for help; also would include adoration and worship.
 - b. Supplication – Hebrews 5:7 refers to our Lord offering up “prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears.”
 - c. Thanksgiving – Eph. 5:20 says, “Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (cf. Col. 3:15-17).
4. Paul is saying in 4:6, “Worry about nothing; pray about everything.”
5. A lady asked G. Campbell Morgan, “Dr. Morgan, do you think we should pray about the little things in our lives?” Dr. Morgan said, “Madam, can you mention anything in your life that is big to God?”
6. “Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer...” (4:6).
7. When we pray, we must believe, otherwise our prayer will be ineffective. James 5:16 says, “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”
8. Our Lord said in Matthew 21:22, “And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.”

9. If this attitude of prayer characterizes our lives, “the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep” our hearts and minds through Christ Jesus (4:7).

10. First, a person has to make peace *with* God, then he can experience the peace *of* God (cf. 4:7, 9).

Stayed upon Jehovah,

Hearts are fully blessed;

Finding, as He promised,

Perfect peace and rest – Frances Ridley Havergal.

When peace, like a river attendeth my way,

When sorrows like sea billows roll;

Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,

It is well, it is well with my soul – H.G. Spafford.

7. This peace “passeth all understanding” (4:7). Worldly people cannot understand it. They need their cocktails and their beer and their cigarettes and their pills and tranquilizers – but the Bible says to take it to the Lord in prayer.

8. I read an article one time about how all these Hollywood actors are getting into yoga and meditation and other pagan techniques, but they are still miserable! They still go through messy divorces, they still take drugs, and they still are as lost and confused as ever.

9. “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: because he trusteth in Thee” (Isa. 26:3).

III. THE BELIEVER’S SANCTIFICATION (4:8, 9).

1. How we behave is a reflection on how we think. And so God tells us how to think (4:8).

2. Right living comes from right thinking. We can control what we think. Luther used to say, “You cannot prevent a bird from landing on your head, but you can stop him from building a nest there.”

3. We should think on “whatsoever is true” (4:8). The truth is no longer considered very important nowadays. But it is important to God.

4. “Whatsoever things are honest...just” – we should focus our attention on things that are honest and just, not on things that are dishonorable to God.

5. “Whatsoever things are pure...lovely” – the world likes things ugly and dirty – disgusting horror movies, demonic rock music, weird fashions. I remember when that homosexual clothing designer Versaci was shot and killed in Miami, they said he was known for designing immodest dresses

- that made women look like prostitutes. In opposition to this, the Bible says to concentrate on things that are pure and lovely.
6. I read in the paper the other that Yves Saint Laurent, the clothes designer, died. The article said, “Ultimately, he was the man who put women in trousers — and made it not only sexy and chic, but acceptable.”
 7. The article also said Mr. Laurent was a drug user and a homosexual who suffered from depression.
 8. “Whatsoever things are of good report” – the world loves things that are of a bad report. We should ignore the worldly garbage that unregenerate sinners feed on and focus on “whatsoever things are of a good report.”
 9. We need more “virtue and...praise,” and less worldly nonsense. As Christians we cannot afford to waste precious time with things that are ungodly. We need to think about things that will build us up in our walk with the Lord, not bring us down to the gutter.
 10. I believe the reason so many Christians are weak in this area is because they do not spend enough time in the Word of God (cf. Psalm 19:7-14).
 11. In Paul’s ministry, he not only preached the Word of God, but he also lived it out before his listeners – “and seen in me” (Phil. 4:9).
 12. In 4:7, Paul refers to “the peace of God.” Here in 4:9, he refers to “the God of peace.” Having the peace of God is one way of knowing you are in the will of God. Are *you* enjoying the peace of God in your life? Are you sure you are in God’s will?

CONCLUSION:

Someone once asked Joseph Haydn, the great composer, why his sacred compositions had such a joyful ring. He answered, “I cannot compose anything without it. When I think of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, my heart is so full of joy that the notes fairly dance and leap from my pen.”