



Grace Life Church
of Dallas

The doctrines of grace, the life of the Spirit, to the glory of God

Philippians 1:25

Progress and Joy in the Faith

All Bible Verses are in the ESV Version

© 2001–2013 Crossway.

All rights reserved.

All emphasis added/insertions are mine

Philippians 1:19-26

Yes, and I will rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, 20 as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again

Philippians 1:19-26 Review

- Paul is again rejoicing “v18b *Yes and I will rejoice*”-nothing can steal Paul’s joy
- Paul knows (not wishful thinking) that through the prayers of the church & help (grace) of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this will work out for his deliverance (God has means to accomplish His will)
- Paul’s chief aim, eager expectation is that Christ be honored/magnified/exalted in his body (by life or by death)
- “For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain”
- To the extent that for you “living is Christ and dying is gain”, Christ will be exalted in your body (Life)
- Is living for you Christ and dying gain?
- Remember, the equation can’t be “Christ + _____ =Living”

To live is Christ and to die is gain

Philippians 1:25

Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress & joy in the faith

Progress-Advancement (Not standing still or regressing)

- **2 Peter 3:18** *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*
- **1 Peter 2:2** *Like new born infants, long for the pure spiritual milk, that by it you may grow up to salvation, if indeed you have tasted that the Lord is good*
- **1 Thess 4:3** *For this is the will of God, your sanctification*
- There is no standing still in the faith

Philippians 1:25

Joy in the faith-Cheerfulness, delight, gladness

Is joy in faith (Jesus/Gospel) optional/secondary or essential/foundational to Christianity?

- In the false Christianity of today (pray a prayer & get out of hell, put on moralism, decisionism), joy in Jesus/God is NOT foundational or essential
- In biblical Christianity, joy in Jesus is essential
 - Joy in the faith is not optional to Paul (Bible)
 - Many struggle saying “God is worthy of glory, honor, obedience and worship/praise whether we have joy in it or not”
 - Here the problem with that thought-God made us to experience joy in His glory, honor, obedience and worship/praise of God
 - Worship/praise is the overflow of joy/delight
 - “Now what is glorifying God, but a rejoicing at that glory he has displayed?” J. Edwards
 - Everyone in the world is a worshiper/praiser. The problem is they are blind to God and the joy in Him, so they worship/praise things created rather than the Creator
 - “All enjoyment spontaneously overflows into praise. We delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment; it is its appointed consummation.”

Joy in Jesus

Westminster Catechism says “Man's chief end is to glorify God, **and** to enjoy him for ever.”

- We were made to glorify God & find our greatest joy in Him being glorified

We do not affirm this because the Westminster says so, but because scripture does:

- 2 Corinthians 1:23-24 *But I call God to witness against me—it was to spare you that I refrained from coming again to Corinth. 24 Not that we lord it over your faith, **but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.***
- Romans 15:13 *May the God of hope **fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.***
- Paul is working with them for joy and praying for God to fill them with all joy. If joy/delight was not expected why work with others for it, and why pray to God to be filled with it?

Joy in Jesus

One reason we can struggle with the idea of us experiencing joy/delight in God is we see the abuse of this in the prosperity gospel:

- There is a big difference:
 - The prosperity gospel says “Come to Jesus so He can give you joy in health, wealth & prosperity” (Means)
 - The Bible says “Come to Jesus so He can give you joy in Himself” (End)

Psalm 34:8 *Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good! Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him!*

Psalm 16:11 *You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.*

Scripture actually commands us to find out joy/delight in the Lord

Psalm 37:4 *Delight yourself in the LORD, and He will give you the desires of your heart.*

Matthew 13:44 *The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and covered up. Then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.*

The call of Christianity is not “Come serve & love this God you find boring, while you are loving your sinful ways” but by God’s grace in the opening of your eyes, “Behold the God of scripture & delight yourself in Him where there is fullness of joy & pleasure forevermore”

Joy in Jesus

As true Christians we can struggle with joy in Jesus because:

- We believe joy must mean everything feels good and is comfortable:
 - **2 Cor 8:1-2** *We want you to know, brothers, about the grace of God that has been given among the churches of Macedonia, 2for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.*
 - **2 Cor 6:10** *We are....as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing;*
 - **1 Thess 1:6** *And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit*
- We are deceived into thinking joy is found in the world/temporal things:
 - **James 4:1-4** *What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you? 2You desire and do not have, so you murder. You covet and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have, because you do not ask. 3You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly, to spend it on your passions. 4You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.*

Joy in Jesus

The battle in our joy is seeing and believing that true joy and delight is found in Jesus Christ.

- We must renew our minds **Romans 12:2** *Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect*
- Pray in accordance to **Psalm 119:18** *Open my eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of your law.* **V36** *Incline my heart to your testimonies, and not to selfish gain!*

When we are seeing properly, we will share the Psalmist expressions (Ps 119)

- **V14** *In the way of your testimonies I delight as much as in all riches.*
- **V97** *Oh how I love your law! It is my meditation all the day*
- **V103** *How sweet are your words to my taste, sweeter than honey to my mouth!*

To the extent you are fighting to renew your mind and praying to see Jesus for the treasure and portion He is, you will find your joy in Jesus. When Jesus is your joy/delight, it will be true that “To live is Christ and to die is gain.” When that is true in our lives, God is glorified in our body by life or by death. In this we find our greatest joy!