

BOOK OF 1 THESSALONIANS
EXHORTATION TO REJOICE EVERMORE!
1 THESSALONIANS 5:16

Introduction

Some might think it strange that Paul gives this command, this exhortation, to “*rejoice evermore*” to a group of people who have been **suffering** and are **even in the midst of suffering** for their faith!

Also, when the average believer stops to think about all the troubles and trials that the Apostle Paul went through personally, they are usually amazed to see how the Apostle seems to be so **joyful** and how he exhorts others going through difficult times **to be joyful!**

It may have struck those in this Thessalonian Church as strange and it may even strike some of us as strange, but the Apostle Paul had learned the secret of **true abiding joy in His life!**

I. THE BELIEVER’S JOY SHOULD NOT DEPEND ON HIS CIRCUMSTANCES IN THIS LIFE!

Paul’s Joy Did Not Depend On His Circumstances!

John 16:33 ...In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.

A. We Know There Can Be Great Joy That Comes From Certain Circumstances Or Happenings Of Life In General! God freely gives both those that are lost and those that are saved certain things that we can joy in! Ain’t it great!

Examples–

- The joy of giving or receiving a special gift!
- The joy of graduating from school!
- The joy of getting married!
- The joy of the birth of a child or grandchild!
- The joy of winning! (The thrill of victory!)
- The joy of gaining a promotion at work or landing a new job!
- The joy of some other happening in your life!

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B. We Also Know There Can Be Great Joy That Comes From Certain Circumstances Or Happenings In Our Lives As Christians!

It both CAN BE and SHOULD BE a part of our lives as Christians!

Examples–

- The joy of personally winning a soul to Christ!
- The joy of seeing others come to Christ!
- The joy of answered prayer!
- The joy of corporate worship!

C. A Joy Based Entirely On Circumstances Can Be Lost! What can cause us to lose our circumstantial joy?:

1. Shift!

A shift in circumstances! If we are dependent on our circumstances for our joy, we are going to be in a constant state of flux because our circumstances will be in a constant state of flux!

2. Sin!

We all know how sin can cause us to lose the joy of our salvation!

Psalm 51:12–“...restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.”

James 1:15–“...sin when it is finished bringeth forth death.”

3. Sinners!

Psalm 119:158–“I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; because they kept not thy word.”

Hebrews 12:3–“For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds.”

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What else can cause us to lose our circumstantial joy?:

4. Sons And Daughters!

Proverbs 17:25—"A foolish son is a grief to his father, and bitterness to her that bare him."

Genesis 26:35—"When Esau married two Hittite women the scripture says they "were a grief of mind to Isaac and to Rebekah."

5. Suffering!

a. A Wrong Attitude Toward Suffering For The Name Of Christ.

b. A Wrong Attitude Toward Suffering In Our Physical Bodies. (e.g. Job)

6. Saints!

(2 Timothy 4:10) Demas

(2 Timothy 4:14-18) Alexander the coppersmith.

Paul disputed with Peter face to face over doctrinal issues. (Galatians 2:11)

Paul and Barnabas disagreed over taking John Mark on a missionary trip. (Acts 15:36-40)

7. Satan! 1 Peter 5:8-10

He is the main one behind all of the joy stealing!

*A Joy Based Entirely On Circumstances Can Be Lost!
So, THE BELIEVER'S JOY SHOULD NOT DEPEND ON HIS
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II. THE BELIEVER'S JOY SHOULD EXTEND BEYOND JUST THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL JOY IN THIS LIFE!

There is reason for the Believer to joy that is **NOT** connected to happenings or circumstances, but rather it flows out of our **RELATIONSHIP TO CHRIST!**

There is **great happiness** in the Christian life, but to think that this is solely what the Bible means by **our joy and rejoicing** is to be in error!

**A. A Joy Based On The Lord Is Where We Find True Joy!
(2 Corinthians 6:4-5, 10; 7:4; 1 Peter 1:3-9)**

Think of our Lord Jesus Christ, who was both anointed "*with the oil of gladness*" (Hebrews 1:9) and also was "*a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief*" (Isaiah 53:3).

One can be joyful even when emotionally sorrowful, even when the spirit is heavy, and even when one is acquainted with grief!

Christian joy and rejoicing comes from a steadfast confidence in God regardless of one's circumstances. It is something we **CHOOSE TO HAVE** and **DO** based on faith!

Look at **Romans 5:1-5, 11**

In the New Testament, the words *joy*, *glory*, and *rejoice* are all translated from the same word that means *to boast or brag*.

To *boast* or *glory* in Christ and the promises of God is **rejoicing!**

1. True Joy Should Extend From Our Relationship With God! (Psalm 5:11-12)

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- a. Because Our Trust Is In God We Should Rejoice!
- b. Because God Defends Us We Should Rejoice!
- c. Because We Love God's Name We Should Be Joyful In Him!
- d. Because We Are Blessed We Should Rejoice!
- e. Because We Enjoy The Favor Of God We Should Rejoice!

Romans 5:11—"And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement."

2. True Joy Will Extend From The Fulness Of The Holy Spirit!

- a. **Joy Is A Fruit Of The Spirit!**(Galatians 5:22)
- b. **Expression Of Joy Is Related To Being Spirit Filled!**
Ephesians 5:18-20—"And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; 19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; 20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

In fact you can't be full of the Spirit without having joy! His fruit comes shining through!

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- c. **If We Are Not Joyful, We Need God To Revive Us!**
Psalm 85:6—"Wilt thou not revive us again: that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

3. True Joy Can Flow Out Of Difficult Circumstances If We Believe God Is In Control. (Romans 8:28)

- a. **Joy Can Come While Suffering For The Name Of Christ! (1 Peter 4:12-19)**
 - 1) **If We Get The Right Attitude!**
 - a) Thinking It Not Strange.(vs 12)
 - b) Not Being Ashamed. (vs 16)
 - c) Being Patient. (1 Peter 2:19-20)
 - 2) **It Will Result In Right Action!**
Acts 5:40-42 40 And to him they agreed: and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they commanded that they should not speak in the name of Jesus, and let them go. 41 And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. 42 And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.

Acts 16:23ff – Paul & Silas; stripes/jail Prayed and sang praises to God!

Matthew 5:10-12 – Jesus.

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- b. Joy Can Come While Suffering In Our Physical Bodies.** (2 Corinthians 12:7-10)
Exp. Paul's thorn in the flesh—he gloried in his infirmities! Because when he was weak physically, he was strong in the power of Christ!

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**III. THE BELIEVER'S JOY SHOULD BE A LASTING JOY THAT
FLOWS FROM OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST!**

Vs 16 – “Rejoice evermore.”

Philippians 4:4 Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

A. Believers Should Rejoice Today!

Because of all we have from being in Christ!

God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ! (Ephesians 1:3ff)

Some of those things are mercy, grace, acceptance, redemption, forgiveness of sins, wisdom, and prudence!

B. Believers Should Rejoice Tomorrow!

If we're still here tomorrow, the LORD still has something for us to do! We should rejoice in the LORD still working in us and through us!

Romans 12:12 – “Rejoicing in hope...”

“hope” = “to anticipate, usually with pleasure; expectation or confidence”

C. Believers Should Rejoice Evermore!

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CONCLUSION

So, where is YOUR joy? Do you only have a circumstantial joy? Are you one who is only joyful and rejoicing as long as things are going great?

Maybe you've never experienced the joy of the Lord in your life because you are lost! Christ has joy abundant waiting for you!

Maybe you're saved but you've allowed your joy to be lost due to situations in your life—Sin, Sinners, Sons And Daughters, Suffering, Saints, Satan!

Why not get your joy back! Because...

Nehemiah 8:10—...the joy of the Lord is your strength.

Isn't it time we all learn to "Rejoice In The Lord" and "Rejoice Evermore" as the Apostle Paul did?