

A Joyful Greeting

Introduction:

- A. Joy – What comes to mind?
 - B. [Bro. Thomas’s Truck]
 - C. ABC News report – Happiness.
 - D. “*The first requisite for happiness of the people is the abolition of religion.*” – Karl Marx
 - E. But I beg to differ!
 - F. Philippians is a book about joy.
 - a. “Joy” – 19 times.
 - b. Love letter from Paul.
 - G. Philippians 1:1&2
 - H. “From Paul’s greeting we find reasons for joy in the Christian life.”
 - I. Introducing Philippians:
 - a. Philippi
 - i. A Roman colony in Macedonia – Egnatian Way [major highway running east-west & gold mines]
 - ii. This was where Paul went to after receiving the Macedonian Call. (Acts 16)
 - iii. This is where Paul saw Lydia (the seller of purple) come to know Christ.
 - iv. This was where Paul & Silas were thrown in jail.
 - v. This is where the jailer and his family came to know Jesus.
 - vi. This was the first church that Paul established in Europe.
 - b. During the time this letter was wrote:
 - i. Paul is in Rome.
 - ii. He is in house arrest – Acts 27
 - iii. But from this letter we find that he is happy!
 - iv. {Back to our passage}
 - J. How do we find joy in these 2 small verses?
 - K. Paul gives us 2 reasons in the beginning of his letter why to have great joy as Christians. – [Patterns of 2’s]
- I. The joy of Christian positions. (vs. 1)
- a. The joy of the slave.
 - i. This is the label taken on by Paul and Timothy.
 - 1. No one questions the authenticity of Philippians.
 - 2. Timothy
 - a. Assisted in the founding of the church.
 - b. Went there at least 2 times
 - c. May have been Paul’s stenographer.
 - ii. But way be labeled a “bondservant”?
 - 1. [Slavery was common in the day]
 - 2. They are slaves to Jesus Christ.
 - 3. Christ bought them out of the curse of their sin with His blood.
 - 4. It means that Christ has placed them under His service and authority.
 - iii. Does it bring you joy Christian to be labeled a slave to Jesus?

1. It should!
 2. [CBC Slave auction]
 3. It is far better to be bound to Christ, then to be free in sin!
 4. Victory In Jesus – *“O victory in Jesus, my savior, forever, He sought me and bought me with His redeeming blood, He loved me ere I knew him, and all my love is due him, He plunged me to victory beneath the cleansing flood”*
 5. It should bring you great joy, to know that Jesus sought you out and bought you, when He didn’t have to.
- b. The joy of the saint.
- i. Paul refers to all the Christians in Philippi as saints.
 1. Paul transitions from the lowliness of slavery to the loftiness of sainthood.
 2. But does this mean that Philippi was filled with a bunch of supernatural Christians?
 - a. Are saints what we see today?
 - b. Statues, buildings, car mirrors...
 - c. Half the towns in Missouri???
 - d. NO
 3. All Christians are saints in the eyes of God.
 - a. “Saint” – holy or separated ones.
 - b. In the eyes of God we have be sanctified (set apart) as His people.
 - c. While we are not perfect saints yet one day we will be.
 - ii. Does it bring you joy Christian to be labeled a saint?
 1. It should!
 2. [Test it out – put before you name]
 3. It should bring you great joy that God has saw it fitting to separate you out from the course of this world.
 - a. That he would claim you as one of His people.
 - b. But also that He is making you holy, no sin!
 4. So be careful the next time you say “I’m no saint!”
- c. The joy of the servant.
- i. Paul recognizes the bishops and deacons in their church.
 1. Notice how Paul places these offices second to the saints.
 - a. Bishops and deacons are offices of humility.
 - b. Most importantly they are offices of service.
 - i. “Deacon” – servant
 - ii. Both of these roles are services to the Lord and His church.
 2. Let’s break down the differences in the two.
 - a. Bishops
 - i. “Overseer”
 - ii. This is the ordained role of the pastor.
 - iii. Other denominations have different roles for bishops, but the Bible refers to it as the office of the pastor.
 - iv. Bishop, Elder, & Pastor are the same.
 - v. 1 Peter 5:1-3
 1. “Elder” – term of respect.

2. “Sheppard or feed” – draw the team pastor.
3. “Overseers or oversight” – the same Greek root for Bishop.
- vi. Clearly the pastor is to be a servant.
- b. Deacons
 - i. This is an ordained office of service as well.
 - ii. They are responsible of ministering to the physical and material needs of the congregation.
 - iii. They are to be men who are humble before God and man.
3. But all members in a church are servants to one degree or another.
- ii. Does it bring you joy Christian to be labeled a servant?
 1. It should!
 2. The fact that you have a place among godly men in women should bring you joy.
 3. The fact that you can share in real fellowship should bring you joy.
 4. That fact that you have a purpose when you come to this place to serve should bring you real joy.

“Now we see that joy of position, now lets turn...”

II. The joy of Christian privileges. (vs. 2)

a. The privilege of grace.

- i. Paul changed that standard greeting of the day and made it more profoundly deep.
 1. “Greetings to you” = “Grace to you”
 2. He is reminding of the great grace God has shown them and continues to do so.
- ii. Why should grace make us joyous?
 1. We must fully understand what it is.
 - a. It is God’s favor and love.
 - b. It is God imparting happiness, pleasure, brightness, & beauty to life.
 - c. It is God’s riches imparted to us.
 - i. G.R.A.C.E.
 - ii. *“For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.”* – 2 Cor. 8:9
 2. It should bring us great joy that God did not pass us by, but gave the life of His only Son for us.
 - a. I am Glad salvation is not up to me.
 - b. [1988 Lillie Baltrip – nominated for safe bus driver award of the year. – Flipped bus on the way – her & 16 hurt – no reward!]
 3. It easy to lose joy in the Christian life when we begin to forget the awesome grace given to us.

b. The privilege of peace.

- i. Notice Paul’s placement of peace here.
 1. It comes after grace, because real peace in live does come after grace.
 2. As he did with grace Paul is wishing peace to be with them as well.
- ii. Why should peace make us joyous?
 1. We need to understand what real peace is.

- a. Real peace is more than the absence of turmoil and strife [The would seeks this]
 - b. Real peace is the wholesomeness that comes only from having the right relationship with Christ. [Many never find true peace because they are empty]
 2. It should bring us great joy that we have peace with God!
 - a. *“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ”* – Rom. 5:1
 - b. It comes from God – (vs. 2)
 - c. Friends by happy, you have peace!
- c. The privilege of God as Father.
 - i. Paul gives a distinction as not just the Creator, but their Father.
 - ii. Why is this significant?
 1. This pictures God not as a Being Who is all powerful and distant....
 2. But our Almighty God is an intimate God.
 - iii. Why should God as Father make us joyous?
 1. Because if God is our Father then we are His children!
 2. *“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together.”* – Rom. 8:16&17
 3. God has adopted us to be brothers and sisters to Christ.
 4. What great news!
 5. It’s the joy of knowing in any hard time I can turn to my Heavenly Father.
 6. [Off the bus]
- d. The privilege of Jesus.
 - i. Paul knew that the Christian life is all about Jesus.
 1. Jesus is mentioned 18 times in Ch. 1.
 2. Paul attributes grace and peace coming from our Lord Jesus Christ as well.
 - ii. Why should Jesus make us joyous?
 1. Who Jesus is should be enough to make us happy.
 2. But we must first understand who He is.
 3. The 3 titles Paul give the Son of God here are so profound, but over looked.
 - a. “Lord”
 - i. This point’s to His authority.
 - ii. He is Master and King over all.
 - b. “Jesus”
 - i. This was His heavenly given name.
 - ii. Jesus is Greek for Joshua, meaning Savior.
 - iii. Jesus is the Savior of the world!
 - c. “Christ”
 - i. It is the Greed rendering of the Hebrew “Messiah.”
 - ii. He is the Anointed One.
 - iii. He is God’s Chosen Deliver and fulfillment of promise.
 4. This should make us happy, because...
 - a. We know Who is control.

- b. We know the source of our salvation.
- c. We know the fulfillment of God's covenant...
- d. JESUS

Conclusion:

- A. Have you lost your joy in life?
- B. Have you found the real source of joy?