

Series – Joy in Christ, a study of Philippians

Joy in Sacrificial Service

Philippians 2:12-18

Intro

Review

Bruce Wilkinson - Philippians is the epistle of joy and encouragement amid adverse circumstances. In it, Paul freely expresses his fond affection for the Philippians in view of their consistent testimony and support, and lovingly urges them to center their actions and thoughts on the person, pursuit, and power of Jesus Christ. Paul also seeks to correct a problem with disunity and rivalry, urging his readers to imitate Christ in His humility and servanthood. In this way the work of the gospel will go forward as believers seek to stand fast, be of the same mind, rejoice always, and pray about everything. (Talk Thru the Bible)

I. Recognize the process of our Salvation

12-13

Addressed them as “beloved” based on what Christ has done

A. Call for integrity – alone as if I were there.

The true test of a man's character is what he does when no one is watching. John Wooden

B. Challenge to work out salvation

The verse does not say, ‘work for your salvation’ or ‘work toward your salvation’ or ‘work at your salvation’

1. Salvation is complete – Jesus has done a complete work
2. Salvation is incomplete – we must allow it to show

To flesh out the work so all can see

3. With fear and trembling
– not fear of hell or damnation but awe filled reverence for God
- not trembling of guilty sinner but joyful trembling of a bride waiting

C. Cause for our encouragement

God is working in us “Grace all-sufficient swells in you”

God's work in us increases our responsibility; it doesn't lessen it

1. To will – transformation of our will first – desire to serve
2. To do – empowerment of action to walk in His paths
3. For His good pleasure – it pleases God to empower us

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. Ephesians 2:10

II. Realize the purpose of our Salvation

14-16

A. Resist grumbling and complaining

1. Discontent is direct affront to faith (Old Testament Israel)
2. It is the first step toward rebellion
3. It destroys the unity of the body of Christ

B. Radiate the light of Christ in a dark world

1. Be blameless and harmless (literally hornless)
2. Note: this is not a command but a fact

You are the light of the world—like a city on a hilltop that cannot be hidden. Matthew 5:14

- Lights are used to make things evident, to guide.

- Lights are used as a warning.

- Lights are used to bring cheer.

- Lights are used to make things safe.

3. We shine brightest in the dark (crooked and perverse world)
4. Our source of light is the Word of God

Hold firmly could also be hold forth

As we hold firmly we radiate the true light

Jesus spoke to the people once more and said, “I am the light of the world. If you follow me, you won't have to walk in darkness, because you will have the light that leads to life. John 8:12

5. Such behavior bring joy and especially to spiritual leaders

III. Rejoice in the sacrifices of our Salvation

17-18

Sacrifices of service not death

Two things promised in salvation suffering and joy

A. Sacrifice of living or dying for Christ

Picture is Old Testament offering -drink offering poured out

Like Christ in **2:7 – emptied Himself**

As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near 2 Timothy 4:6 read 2 Corinthians 4:8-15

B. Service to the faith of others

To be like Christ we must serve others

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many. Matthew 20:28

C. Share the joy of the Lord

1. Share the joy of the saints who have gone before us
2. Share the joy of those who are rejoicing in salvation

In the same way, there is more joy in heaven over one lost sinner who repents and returns to God than over ninety-nine others who are righteous and haven't strayed away! Luke 15:7 over lost coin, sheep – son

3. Share joy with those who are spiritual leaders

For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ If you serve Christ with this attitude, you will please God, and others will approve of you, too Romans 14:17-18

4. Share joy with the word around you
In you sacrificial service

I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit. Romans 15:13

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

Do your inner attitudes match your outward actions and vice-versa?

Do you live and act differently when you are with different people?

Is your faith in Jesus the driving force in your life?

What is God's ultimate purpose for you – what kind of sacrifice are you.

Is your light shining?

Why did the Early Church succeed where we are failing? How did they transform the Western world in such a relatively short time? They did it because they did things that baffled the Romans. The Early Church didn't picket, they didn't boycott, and they didn't gripe about what was going on in their culture. They just did things that astonished the Romans. They took in their abandoned babies. They helped their sick and wounded. They restored dignity to the slaves. They were willing to die for what they believed. After a while, their actions so softened the hearts of the Romans that they wanted to know more about who these Christians were and who was the God they represented.

The gospel changes lives, and gospel conduct produces joy in leaders and believers.

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