



A LIFE

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS

OF JOY

Paul's Letter to the Church of Philippi: A Message of Love & Encouragement.

- **Acts 16:** Paul and the Philippian Christians share mutual hardships that have forged within them a deep love for one another and Joy in Jesus.
 - He is *not* writing to correct, instruct or rebuke them ... he's writing because he deeply loves them ... and they love him!
- The purpose of Paul's letter: *"Thank you for your love & concern!!"*

¹⁰ I praise the Lord that you are concerned about me again ... ¹⁸ At the moment I have all I need and more, because I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus! (Chapter 4)

Review: Joy – some key ingredients. (Chapters 1-2)

1. Joy is relational. (1:3)

³ Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God ...

Truth: Joy is *not* a response to circumstances, but to healthy relationships with God, others and self.

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2. Christian Joy is fueled by partnering with others in Christ. (1:4-5)

- *⁴In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy,*
- *⁵because of your partnership (**koinonia**) with me in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now.*

Truth: “*partnership*” is not hard to measure.

- Prayer ... we pray consistently for others.
- Serving ... we delight in fussing over others.
- Generosity ... we bring what we have without reservation.

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2. Christian Joy is fueled by partnering with others in Christ. (1:4-5)
3. Christian Joy lives in the present ... but anticipates the future. (v.v. 6)

⁶And I am confident of this: that God,

- *who began the good work within you,*
- *will continue his work*
- *until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns.*

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4. Christian Joy is expressed in unity together in Christ. (2:1-4)

Principle: Spiritual power within any congregation is directly connected to it's level unity.

... unity determines whether a church moves forward in glory and victory.

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3. Christian Joy lives in the present ... but anticipates the future. (1:6)
4. Christian Joy is expressed in unity together in Christ. (2:1-11)
 - ✓ a common Foundation. (v.1)
 - in Jesus and in the Holy Spirit.
 - ✓ a common Perspective. (v. 2)
 - in attitude, inclination & intent.
 - ✓ a common Serving. (v. 3-4)
 - a Servant's posture, position & priority.
 - ✓ a common Example. (v. 5-11)
 - Jesus Christ, our Lord.

This morning: Christian joy is in Jesus ... period. (3:1-11)

3 *Finally, my dear brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord. I never get tired of telling you these things, and I do it to safeguard your faith.*

Truth: God is greatly concerned that people experience His saving grace through Jesus Christ, and equally concerned that they are not deceived about what 'saving grace' really means.

Fact: God's 'saving grace' is in Jesus ... and only in Jesus.

- It is a gift, not a paycheque. (Eph. 2:8-10)
- It is by God's initiative, not yours, not mine, not anyone's.
- When we receive it, we are free in our new life in Jesus.

²² Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?'

²³ Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Jesus – Matthew 7

Safeguarding our faith:

- ² *Watch out for those dogs, those people who do evil, those mutilators who say you must be circumcised to be saved.*
- ³ *For we who worship by the Spirit of God are the ones who are truly circumcised.*
 - *We rely on what Christ Jesus has done for us.*
 - *We put no confidence in human effort,*
...⁴ though I could have confidence in my own effort if anyone could. Indeed, if others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more!

What Paul learned about God's saving grace:

1. It was **NOT** about where he came from.
 - *⁵ I was circumcised when I was eight days old.*
 - *I am a pure-blooded citizen of Israel and a member of the tribe of Benjamin—a real Hebrew if there ever was one!*
2. It was **NOT** about how much he knew.
 - *I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law.*
3. It was **NOT** about policing the world.
 - *⁶ I was so zealous that I harshly persecuted the church.*
4. It was **NOT** about how 'religious' he tried to be.
 - *And as for righteousness, I obeyed the law without fault.*

The Point: Religious credits don't impress God.

... but they can seriously deceive you.

16 Just then a man came up to Jesus and asked, "Teacher, what good thing must I do to get eternal life?"

17 ...Jesus replied ... "If you want to enter life, keep the commandments."

18 "Which ones?" he inquired.

Jesus replied, "You shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not give false testimony, ¹⁹ honor your father and mother,' and 'love your neighbor as yourself.'"

20 "All these I have kept," the young man said. "What do I still lack?"

21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

22 When the young man heard this, he went away sad, because he had great wealth.

Jesus - Matthew 19

⁷I once thought these things were valuable, but now

- *I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done.*
- *⁸ Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the infinite value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*
- *For his sake I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I could acquire Christ ⁹ and become one with him.*
- *I no longer count on my own righteousness through obeying the law;*

Now I understand that I become righteous through faith in Christ.

- *For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith.*

Principle: When you meet Jesus, you have a choice:

- you drop all the things you've been counting on for your salvation – your things – and acquire Jesus or:
- you hold them tightly, hoping that somehow they will be enough.

44 “The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. When a man found it, he hid it again, and then in his joy went and sold all he had and bought that field.

45 “Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls.

46 When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

Jesus - Matthew 13



There is a path before each person that seems right, but it ends in death.

Proverbs 16:25





²⁰ I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Paul –Galatians 2:20