

Rejoice!

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 24 July 2011

[0:00] Music Philippians 4 verse 4! Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

! Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice. This is really a very simple message today. Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say rejoice.

First point of this sermon is rejoice. Rejoice. Rejoice. It's commanded. We're commanded to. We're commanded to praise Him.

Rejoice. Here it's in the imperative sense, I'm told. It means a command. It means you're commanded to praise. You're commanded to rejoice.

It's not a suggestion. It's not something optional. It's a command for you. Believer, rejoice. Rejoice. Rejoicing in the Lord is commanded.

[1:14] Psalm 33.1. It's a light to what was read in the Bible reading this morning. Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright.

Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous, for praise is comely for the upright. It's beautiful. It's beautiful. It's beautiful. Praise is beautiful. It's something beautiful unto God.

It's comely. And rejoicing. Joy is right through the Word, right through the Scriptures. We read that joy comes from the Holy Spirit.

Joy comes from the Holy Spirit. It produces this fruit of joy. One of the fruit of the Spirit is joy. His fruit is joy. It's rejoicing.

And you have reason to rejoice today. You have reason for joy, believer, this morning. You have reason to joy in God. Why?

[2:13] Because God's people have been redeemed, justified, set apart, and you will be glorified. You've got reason to rejoice.

Amen? I think I'd like to encourage some rejoicing this morning. I'm going to try something a little bit novel today. When I go like this, you say, Amen. Alright? Let's practice that.

Amen! That's a good start. Okay. And when I got this, you say, Hallelujah. Alright? Ready?

Hallelujah! Oh, we're going well this morning.

Rejoice in the Lord always. And again, I say rejoice. Amen! Amen! Amen! Okay. We'll see how we go. See how? So it's a good way of keeping you all... Oh! You're on the ball there, Richard.

Okay. We'll see how attentive you are to the message today. And so the Bible says rejoice. Rejoice! Hallelujah!

[3:11] Amen! Amen! I've got to get confused now. Okay. Now, rejoicing is right through the book of Philippians. Right through the book of Philippians. There's numbers of occasions where it occurs.

And the word rejoice is in the continual sense. It's in the present tense. So rejoicing should be continual. Hallelujah!

That's right. And so joy is a fundamental part of the Christian. It's a fundamental part of the Christian life. And somebody once said about Christians, If one-tenth of what you say you believe is true, you ought to be ten times as excited as you are.

You know, people, we need to be excited. We need to be rejoicing. We need to be joying in God, our Saviour. And Isaiah 61.10. Yeah, you can say hallelujah without me putting my hand on it. Isaiah 61.10. It says, I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My soul shall be joyful in my God. For he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation.

[4:17] He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. As a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments. And as a bride adorneth herself with jewels.

We've got reason to praise. We've got reason to rejoice. I will greatly rejoice in the Lord. My soul shall be joyful in my God.

So firstly, rejoice. Amen. Secondly, rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice in the Lord.

Psalm 40 verse 16. It says, Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee. Let such as love thy salvation say continually, The Lord be magnified.

Rejoice in the Lord. Amen. Oh, you're getting mixed up now. It's hallelujah. Okay. But rejoice in the Lord. That's the vital truth here, people.

[5:13] Is that our rejoicing is not in the circumstance of life. Our rejoicing is in the Lord. The joy for a believer is that whatever happens, based on not what is going on, but who holds our hand.

Our rejoicing is in the Lord. It's in the Lord. You may lose your money. You may lose your health. You may lose your family. But you are in the Lord.

Amen. Amen. You are in the Lord. So you have reason to rejoice. Reason to rejoice. Rejoice in the Lord. Delight in Him.

Someone put it like this. Joy is not the absence of trouble, but the presence of Christ. Can you say amen to that? Amen. Joy is not in the absolute absence of trouble, but in the presence of Christ. Think of that. When Paul wrote these words, when Paul penned this passage, he was in a prison, a Roman jail, and he had been there for some time.

[6:23] Before he was at trial, he was awaiting a trial, a fearful sentence, and the time in prison would not have been easy for Paul. There would have been inconvenience and discomfort, and he had to endure hardship for the gospel.

And Paul had seen affliction. He'd seen imprisonment, flogging, shipwreck, exposure to death, danger, hunger, thirst, fatigue, and cold.

Yet he could rejoice in the Lord. And people today, Christ is the object of our praise. He's the source of our rejoicing.

Someone put it like this. You can complain because roses have thorns, or you can rejoice because thorns have roses. We could all find something to grumble about. And for some, they are very real things.

We're not discounting that. Some of you folk have been through the mill lately. You've had bereavement. You've had separation from loved ones. You've had trials and troubles, suffering, awful afflictions that you face, and difficult times you may face ahead.

[7:31] Yet you can rejoice in the Lord. Hallelujah. You can rejoice in the Lord. Praise you, the Lord. Hallelujah. Okay? Because Christ is the source of your joy.

Christ is the object of it. And God's own people, we can have peace and hope no matter what may face us, even while we face pain, trial, and loss. Habakkuk 3.18, it says, Yet I will rejoice in the Lord.

I will joy in the God of my salvation. I will, Habakkuk writes, I will rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice in the Lord. And also you can rejoice with the Lord.

I've got to make a point of putting a D on the end, because I've been told that sometimes I sound like rejoice in the Lord. But we don't rejoice in the Lord. It's a bit of a speech impediment I have. But we want to rejoice in the Lord. Amen? In the Lord. We rejoice in the Lord. My wife corrects me all the time, but I've got to switch on to that, to keep on top of that.

[8:34] So rejoice in the Lord and with the Lord. In Luke 15 we read of the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd, he writes, so our Lord says in Luke 15 from verse 4, What man of you, having a hundred sheep, if you lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness and go after that which is lost until he find it?

And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders rejoicing. Here's a picture of the Good Shepherd, our Lord Jesus. He goes and reaches out to that lost one, to that one in the wilderness, to that one perhaps caught in a thicket, away from the fold.

And when he finds it, he lays it on his shoulder rejoicing. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me! Rejoice with me!

For I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance. Joy shall be in heaven! Amen! Isn't that good? We want to see that, don't we? As a church, we want to see that there will be joy in heaven as souls that trust in Christ, as souls are one, as the Holy Spirit draws them to himself, there will be joy in heaven when they trust him.

[10:04] And friends, rejoice with God. The Good Shepherd, when he found the sheep and he laid it on his shoulder, he says, Rejoice with me! Rejoice with me! Jesus says, Rejoice with me!

Rejoice with me! Not only do we rejoice in the Lord, but we rejoice with the Lord. The weather may not give you reason to rejoice, your back balance may not give you reason to rejoice, but you can rejoice in the Lord.

Rejoice in him! Nothing in this world can take that joy away. The joy of being in Christ. In Christ. Proverbs 17, it says, A merry heart, doeth good like a medicine, but a broken spirit dryeth the bones.

It benefits us to be joyful. It benefits you to have a rejoicing heart. It's good for you. You may not feel like it. I know there's some here, as we all can, have dismal times.

This is not to discount that, or to condemn people who might be feeling like that today. It's natural and normal for us to have times when life's weight gets very heavy.

[11:18] But a merry heart does good like a medicine. It will do you good, people. Brother, sister, it will do you good to rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice not because of the problem or the circumstance, but rejoice in him.

Not at the circumstance of your own life, which at times can be not that pleasant. But look to Christ. Look to Christ. Hallelujah. Look to him. Look to him.

For what he has done for you, in you, to you, for you. A child of God can be joyful, whatever their circumstance, whether it be prosperity or poverty, whether it be health or sickness, life or death, rain or drought, sunshine or cloud.

Psalms 119, it says, Serve the Lord with fear and rejoice with trembling. Jeremiah writes in 15, 16 of Jeremiah, Thy words were found and I did eat them, and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of my heart.

The word of God is a joy and a rejoicing of our heart. Here's a quote from John Bunyan. John Bunyan wrote this. He said, The happy man was born in the city of regeneration, in the parish of repentance unto life.

[12:38] He was educated in the school of obedience. He works at the trade of diligence and does many jobs of self-denial. He owns a large estate in the country of Christian contentment and wears the plain garments of humility.

He breakfasts every morning on spiritual prayer and sups every evening on the same. He also knows that he has meat to eat that the world knows not of.

He has gospel submission in his conduct, due order in his affection, sound peace in his conscience, sanctifying love in his soul, real divinity in his breast, true humility in his heart, the Redeemer's yoke on his neck, the world under his feet, and a crown of glory over his head.

In order to obtain this, he prays fervently, believes firmly, wakes patiently, works abundantly, redeems his time, guards his sense, loves Christ, and longs for glory.

The happy man, the rejoicing man, the rejoicing woman. You've got reason to rejoice today. Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound. We will rejoice and be glad.

[13:54] This is the day which the Lord hath made. The psalmist says in Psalm 119, 162, I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great spoil.

Now there's treasures here. We can rejoice in the word as we dig deep and find new treasure. Our rejoicing is not dependent, man or woman of God today, your rejoicing is not dependent upon your circumstance, it's dependent not on your feelings, but your rejoicing is in the Lord.

Amen. Here's another quote. The New Testament is the happiest thing in literature with the sound of singing in it everywhere from the opening with the choir of angels at Bethlehem to the closing of the choir of hallelujah at the close.

The choir of the redeemed. Hallelujah. Maybe you don't feel like rejoicing. Maybe the storm is overpassed and you're feeling overwhelmed.

It could be that is the case for you. You can still rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice in Him. In Him. There was a test one day where a submarine was out doing some exercises.

[15:11] It was submerged for some time and then it surfaced and the commander was asked, how did the storm affect you last night? And the captain said, storm?

We knew nothing of a storm. The submarine was so deep that the storm did not affect its travel. And friends, God's children are hid with Christ in God. You are hid with Christ in God. The storm may be happening above you, but you are hid with Christ in God.

And the storms of life cannot stop that joy that you know. Thirdly, rejoice in the Lord always.

Our joy isn't always joy. It's a deep and abiding joy. It's the joy that Paul knew by practice. He wasn't preaching something that he hadn't practiced.

[16:18] He practiced this joy, for example, in Acts 16, 25, in the prison cell. He found joy at midnight in prison as he was rejoicing, as they were singing praises in the prison.

Rejoice in the Lord always. Our Lord says to us, in the world you're going to have tribulation, in John 16, 33, but he says, Be of good cheer.

I have overcome the world. You can be of good cheer because he has overcome the world. Rejoice always. Keep on rejoicing.

Keep on going, no matter what. Because the joy of the Lord is your strength. There was a man walking one day and met on a country lane and someone said to him, Good morning.

And the man replied, I've never had a bad morning. And the man said, Wow, that's unusual. I wish you may always be so fortunate.

[17:20] He replied, I was never unfortunate. Dear me, I wish you may always be happy. And then he says again, And I am never unhappy.

I wish, said the gentleman, that you would explain yourself a little. And here's what the man said.

He said, That I will certainly do. I never had a bad morning, for every morning I praise God.

If it rains or snows, whether it be bright or stormy, I'm still thankful to God. You wish that I might always be fortunate, but I cannot be unfortunate, for nothing befalls me, but according to the will of God.

And his will is always good. In whatever he does or permits to be done, you wish me always happy, but I cannot be unhappy, while I am resigned to the will of God.

And as long as his peace rules in my heart. So true, isn't it? If you're walking with him, if you're trusting that you're walking in his will, then whatever happens, always rejoice.

[18:27] Always rejoice. Spurgeon says of this text, You are commanded to rejoice, brethren, because this is for your profit. Holy joy will oil the wheels of your life's machinery.

Holy joy will strengthen you, for your daily labour. Holy joy will beautify you, and give you an influence over the lives of others. Rejoice in the Lord, always.

Always. Now my wife was encouraged by some material we received of late, and thanks to the Shaw family, and it talks about the word always.

It talks about how God is faithful to us always. God is faithful to us always. I'm going to quote some of that here. God is always good. Always.

That means he'll always meet my genuine needs. Always. He'll always forgive my sin. Always. He'll always be up to something good in my life. Always.

[19:25] He'll always love me personally. Always. He'll always give me grace. That I need. Always. God is always good. Amen.

God is always great. Always. That means he's always in control. Always. Of all things. He's always present with me. He's always the same.

He's always trustworthy. He's always wise. Now there's lots of Bible references. For those that are interested, perhaps we can print this out. It was on the internet as a free quote.

God is always good. God is always great. God is always great. And he always has the best that he has for us. And so we can rejoice in the Lord always.

Always. Always. John McNeil said, Now since I've been converted, I'm happier when I am unhappy now than I was happy before I was converted.

[20:33] True joy is in Christ. And even when we're having one of those bad hair days, when we're having one of those days when everything seems to be going wrong, we've still got that joy in the Lord always.

Always. Every step. And so we've seen, number one, rejoice. Secondly, rejoice in the Lord. Thirdly, rejoice in the Lord always.

Always. And fourthly, rejoice in the Lord always. And again, I say, rejoice. We get forgetful. I don't know about you, but in my graying years, I'm getting a bit more and more forgetful.

More and more so. But, so we need to be reminded. And Paul says, Rejoice. Rejoice. Rejoice. Rejoice again.

Rejoice again. And again. And again. Rejoice. And be glad. Rejoice in the Lord always. And again. I say, rejoice.

[21:40] Friends, to close a quote, Christ makes the difference. You might be receiving this message and not yet receiving Christ.

You might be outside of Christ. And this might all sound like positive thinking and kind of a feel good, you know, put a smile on your dial, kind of positive thinking kind of message today.

It really doesn't make much sense for you if you're not in Christ. If your life is not hid with Christ in God. You don't know that joy, unspeakable and full of glory.

Friends, I urge you. Christ in you. Christ in you. Christ in you. The hope of glory. And if you're not saved, you'll never know that. You'll never know that. Friends, we need to be reminded to rejoice.

And it's Christ that makes the difference. It's Christ in you. Christ in you. The hope of glory. Here's a quote. Christ makes the difference. Heaven above is softer blue.

[22:43] Earth beneath is sweeter green. Something lives in every hue. Christless eyes have never seen. Birds with sweeter songs are afloat.

Flowers with newer beauty shine. Since I know as now I know. I am his and he is mine.

Reason to rejoice. Amen. Amen. Let us close. Lord, we thank you for this time of rejoicing as we love you, Lord, and see that Psalmist calling that praise is comely for the righteous.

It's beautiful. It's something precious and wonderful. Help us, Lord, to praise you, to command our soul to praise you, Lord, to praise you, and to keep on praising, to rejoice and keep on rejoicing.

And, Lord, if there's any here present they've never received Christ, they've not known the joy that the Holy Spirit can give the fruit of his presence within, that they might trust you even now by faith that your Holy Spirit might draw them unto yourself by your grace, that they might be won to your wonderful salvation, that no one here might lose that opportunity of trusting you.

[24:03] Lord, that we might know what it is to be in you and to be found in you, for our lives to be hid with you, Lord Jesus, in our Heavenly Father. And so when the storm comes, we know we can still keep praising.

And if there's any present, Lord, that are going through struggles right now, it could be temptations, it could be trials, suffering, bodily aches and pains or family concerns and strives and striving.

Lord, we ask you, Lord, to touch them. Touch them, Lord. Help us, Lord, to see that healing power of your touch on our lives, our situations.

Help us to put our hearts' trust in you alone and to rejoice in you day by day. Give us the grace to keep praising, no matter what, to rejoice always in you, our Lord and Saviour.

In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Amen.