

Rejoice in the Lord Always

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[0:00] It says, Philippians chapter 4, if you'd like to turn to Philippians, I want to talk tonight about joy. It says, rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice.

The Bible is full of joy. It's got a message of joy. It's a joyful message. It says that it's joyful news. It's glad tidings of great joy, the gospel.

But the Lord Jesus Christ came to die on the cross for our sins, to die, to be buried, to rise again and ascend into heaven. And when he died on the cross, it says he paid the price, the penalty, the punishment for our sins.

Isn't that good news? Shouldn't that make you glad? Doesn't that make you glad tonight? Are you glad that Jesus died for your sins? Yes. It's good news, isn't it? It's glad news. It's great news. And the gospel is glad tidings of great joy. It's glad tidings of great joy.

Yes, that's right. And we have reason for joy. The Bible tells you that you have the joy of salvation. The joy of salvation, of sins forgiven, of a home in heaven.

[1:15] If you're a Christian tonight, you've got a home in heaven. Caitlin's listening. And he wants you to know the joy of heaven. Now it says in the Bible, in Luke chapter 5, the Lord Jesus told some stories about some lost things.

Told a story about a lost sheep, a lost coin, and a lost son. And he says that when one sinner repents, there is joy in heaven. Heaven. The angels of God have joy in heaven.

Alright. Now we can experience the joy of heaven in our heart, in our soul. When you repent, it means that you still keep carrying on doing the wrong thing.

No. No. You want to do what? Stop. You stop doing the wrong thing. That's right. Repent means you stop doing the wrong thing and you start doing the right thing. You start going God's way. You turn from your sin and you turn to follow God.

That's right. That's what it means. Okay. The cure for care, the cure for worry, is the joy of the Lord. Now, I think some people often in life, they're very depressed.

[2:23] They're unhappy. They're very sad. They've got troubles. Or they've got anxieties and concerns in their lives. And this is the answer for that problem.

Alright. If you're taking antidepressants or if you're feeling like you're depressed all the time, this is the answer for you. Rejoice in the Lord always. And again, I say rejoice.

Now, do you think Paul was saying here, rejoice when you feel like it? He was saying how often should you do it? Always. Always. Always. And is this an optional thing? Is this something optional? Or is it a command? It's a command. That's right. You're listening. Well done. It's a command for you. God commands you to rejoice. Rejoice in the Lord.

And again, I say rejoice. And joy, His joy fills us with His sweetness. It takes away our selfishness. Instead of doing things that are going to hurt other people, we want to bring joy.

[3:23] We want to bring joy to others and joy to the Saviour. And it replaces our thinking on troubles. In the Bible it says, A merry heart doeth good like a medicine. A cheerful heart, a joyful spirit, a merry heart, does good like a medicine.

It's going to do you good. Joy brings great benefit. And we have joy. We can be happy in the Lord. We can know the happiness deep within our heart that Jesus brings to us.

And we can be joyful in the Lord. And we can delight in Him. We can delight in Him. Speak out His praises and His mercy. We can sing forth His greatness. Alright? We want to give God the joy.

We want to give God our gladness. And we want to delight in Him. And be thankful. And be joyful in the Lord. So number one, think about it. We've got a duty of joy. We've got a duty of joy.

It's not something optional. But rejoicing, the joy that we have in Christ, is something that we're commanded to have. You're commanded to be joyful, to rejoice.

[4:23] It's not an option. It's an obligation. It's a command. And if you are in the Lord, rejoice. If you're a Christian, rejoice. Give God your praise. Give God your rejoicing.

It's our duty. We're commanded to do it. And it means, rejoice means to be cheerful. Someone put it like this. They said, rejoice means joy over again. Because it's re-joyce.

It means joy and joy again. We answer joy and then we answer re-joy. To re-joy. So when you become a Christian, you've got a joy that is beyond this world's kind of joy.

The joy that Jesus gives to you doesn't depend on the circumstances that are around you. It doesn't depend on the happenings. You know, I've heard it said, like happiness is based on happenings. But the joy is not based on the circumstances. The joy comes from God. The joy comes from the Lord. And true joy doesn't hold back. It can't hold its tongue.

[5:24] It must praise the name of the Lord. And that's why we encourage, hope, to join in. Join in the singing. Alright? God commands you to sing. God commands you to have rejoicing.

God commands you. And I know the psalmist says, I will rejoice in the Lord. My soul will rejoice. He commands himself to rejoice, to sing, to praise the Lord.

Praise the Lord, O my soul. Praise ye the Lord. All ye his people. There's so many commands, so many instructions that urge us to praise him.

And it's really what sets Christianity apart. Christianity is a singing religion. It's a singing faith. It's a faith that wants us to, you want to sing.

You want to rejoice. You want to give God the glory. And you can't hold it back. Ask the Lord to give you a joyful spirit. A joyful spirit. It's not based on the circumstances, on the happenings.

[6:23] And it's a joy that comes from the Lord Jesus. A joy that will gladden others and influence others too. God's holy joy. God's holy joy. It will help you through the day by day.

Through the challenges ahead. Through the day by day frustrations at times. And it will help you to influence others for the Lord too. I know, so often you can see, and I know faith myself, that you just see the joy of Jesus in their lives.

All right? It's not a fake kind of plastic smile or a put-on kind of pretense, like a pretend kind of thing. But it's a joy that you can see is from the inside.

It's a joy that comes out in their lives as they live for the Lord. Joy is the by-product of obedience.

When we obey the Lord, when we obey Jesus as our Lord and Saviour and live according to His will and purpose, then He will give us His joy.

As a natural step of our obeying Him, we will find that fulfilment and that satisfaction that He gives to us. So, perhaps if you're ever feeling like you're sad and you're feeling down, you can think about Isaiah 61 verse 10, where the prophet says, I will greatly rejoice in the Lord.

[7:44] My soul shall be joyful in my God, for He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, He hath covered me with a robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh herself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with jewels.

He put on the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And that's what we do. You know, even when we may face sad times, as I know some folk are of late, even though it may feel like mourning, He gives us the garment of praise.

God helps you, even when you're sad, when you're grieving, when you're mourning, He'll give you the garment of praise to replace that sadness. And so we see the duty of joy.

It's commanded. It's commanded that you must rejoice. You should rejoice. We've got every reason to rejoice, especially of salvation. And secondly, the direction of this joy.

The direction of this joy, it says rejoice in the Lord. Rejoice in the Lord. He is the one to whom we rejoice. He is the one in whom we rejoice. And the one who gives us a joy that is beyond what this world can give.

[8:52] People are looking for joy. They're looking for happiness. They're looking for fulfilment and blessing and a comfortable life. And think about these folk that I'll read out to you now.

These folk didn't find the joy. They didn't find the joy of knowing the Lord Jesus. They missed out. And we can find where joy is found by seeing where it's not found.

So, for example, it's not found in unbelief. It's not found in unbelief. There was a man called Voltaire. He was an infidel, a Christ rejecter.

And he wrote, I wish I had never been born. I wish I had never been born. He didn't find it. You don't find joy in unbelief. Okay? You don't find joy in pleasure.

Lord Byron lived a life of pleasure. He wrote, The worm, the canker, and grief are mine alone. Alright? Pleasure will not bring you joy. Now, the Bible talks about how some, they enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, but then it's a passing pleasure.

[10:06] It's gone. And you face eternity. Don't choose sinful pleasure. Choose a life that's pleasing to God, that's serving Him. It's not found in pleasure. Joy is not found there.

Joy is not found in money. Now, of course, people, everyone likes to have money, but money doesn't buy you happiness, as the saying goes. There's an American millionaire.

Imagine being a millionaire. This man, Jay Gould, he had plenty of money. And he said when dying, I suppose I am the most miserable man on earth.

Joy was not found in money for him, was it? We see, often, you often read and hear about the folk that the world looks to, the film stars and the rock stars, and their lives are such a mess, aren't they?

Their relationships, they've married one or shack up with one, and before they know it, it goes on to the next one. And they're living a life full of misery, really, despite the fame and glory that they get.

[11:13] And so, it's not found in money. It's not found in position and fame. Lord Beaconsfield had a lot of position and fame, very important and very famous.

And he wrote, youth is a mistake, manhood a struggle, old age a regret. So, joy is not found in position or fame. And joy is not found in military glory.

Alexander the Great, he conquered the whole world that was known at his time. Having done so, he wept in his tent and he said, there are no more worlds to conquer.

He just couldn't get the satisfaction. He just couldn't get the enjoyment, the fulfilment that he sought. It's not found in military glory. So, where then is real joy found?

The answer is in Christ alone. Christ gives that joy. Christ gives that joy to us. And the direction of this joy is found in the Lord.

[12:13] Rejoice in the Lord. The source of our joy, the direction of our joy, the object, the source of our joy is the Lord Jesus. Now, it says in the word of God, children, obey your parents in the Lord.

Men and women are to marry only in the Lord. So, we need to be, as Christians, we want to live in the sphere of the Lord. We want to live in the bounds of his will for us.

In what the Lord wants for us. We want to walk and live and serve in the Lord. And it says we are to rejoice in the Lord. So, our rejoicing is not in those things we talked about, money or fame or pleasure.

Our rejoicing is not in those things or in the circumstances of life which often times might not be very pleasant or pleasurable sometimes. But we are to rejoice in who?

In Jesus. We are to rejoice in the Lord. Here is where we find our joy, our real happiness, our heart's gladness and our heavenly hope. It's in the Lord.

[13:18] And not to seek the joy in the things of the world, not to rejoice in that which is sinful or the things of the flesh. The Lord, He is the great object of our joy.

It says in Psalms, delight thyself also in the Lord and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart. And He will give you the right desires when you're delighting, when you're rejoicing in Him.

Delight in the Lord Jesus and rejoice in Him. Think about what the Lord Jesus has done for you. The Lord Jesus dying on the cross, ascending into glory and now the Bible says He's actually praying for you.

It says He's interceding for us. He's praying for us before the Father's throne. He's our great intercessor. And so you've got reason to rejoice.

You've got reason for joy knowing that. Knowing that He is reigning over all. He is at the right hand of the Father and that you are going to be with Him forever.

[14:23] You've got reason for joy. So rejoice in Him. He changes not. He stands by you and He comforts you. So we've seen the duty of this joy it's commanded rejoice.

It's not an option. We've seen the direction of this joy is a rejoicing in the Lord. It's in Him that we find that great satisfaction. And the duration of this joy is forever.

It's always. Rejoice in the Lord always. The duration, the length of this joy, the breadth of it is always. It's now and it's forever. It's not some short-lived kind of excitement or passion or some fleeting fancy of pleasure and passion.

It's a lifelong commitment. It's a lifelong relationship that you enjoy with Christ. When you become a Christian the Bible says that Christ becomes your saviour.

Now, I know there's been some stories of late that were in the news again of some of these miners. These couple of miners they were in the ground for what was it? Two weeks.

[15:30] Imagine being trapped in a mine shaft with rocks all around you with hardly any light or just maybe a flickering bit of light as your battery might continue living in a prison like that really or being caught trapped in a mine shaft and imagine how these chaps would have felt as they were kept their ear open just hoping and praying just longing that someone would come and rescue them and save them and imagine how they would have felt when they started to hear some noises oh there's someone up there they were nearly a kilometre down in the earth 900 metres nearly a kilometre down under the ground now I've been in a mine shaft I've been underground in Mount Isha we went to a mine tour and we went and saw how dark it gets they turned the lights off and wow you've never seen it so dark and that was what it was like for these guys I'm sure when they didn't have their lights on they would have been really feeling trapped and helpless and hopeless alright imagine how they felt when someone saved them wouldn't they have had joy wouldn't you have been oh you'd have been ecstatic wouldn't you you'd have been jumping up and down you'd have been leaping out your skin just in the excitement for you to be saved from your sin for you to be saved from that prison cell of your sin people who don't know the Lord

Jesus are like people trapped in that kind of mine some of you are still in a prison you don't know it maybe you don't realise it but if you don't know the Lord Jesus you're trapped in a dark place that you're not going to escape from and it's called sin kids people tonight when you disobey God you're trapped just like those miners down in the bottom of the earth okay and you can't escape you need someone to come and help you alright those men could have tried you know they could have tried I'm sure they probably did try to move some of those stones and try to find a way out but there was no way they were going to get out it was hopeless wasn't it it was hopeless there was no way they could get out alright someone had to come and rescue them that's what Jesus did for you the Lord Jesus came and rescued you it's like

I suppose you could think of it that some don't want to be rescued it's crazy isn't it why wouldn't you want to be rescued some people they're like as if these just picture this now but these two miners down in this mine shaft with rubble all around them they can't escape they can't help themselves and they start hearing some noises and imagine if they had said oh it's cool I'm okay Jack she'll be right mate I'll stay here I'm quite happy in my living here in this mine shaft wouldn't that be stupid wouldn't that be the dumbest thing you could do the sun is coming to rescue you and you'd rather stay in the mine shaft you wouldn't you be stupid wouldn't you to do that that's what some people are like about sin they say oh

I'd like to stay in my sin I don't want Jesus to save me I'll just do my own thing and they don't realise what they're missing out on they're missing out on salvation they're missing out on rescue on his redemption on his salvation they're missing out on the saviour who wants to take them out the miserable state of sin the hopeless helpless state that they're in and give them eternal life and a home in heaven and take away all their guilt and pay for it but some people they won't use the R word that we talked about before okay now if you're listening you'll think about when the angels

rejoice in heaven over one sinner who repents repents what does repent mean again stop doing your sin and start following God okay I guess you could elaborate but in simple terms it's turning away from sin and saying yes to the

Lord Jesus to his salvation to his saving hell all right and yet some are silly as I pictured it they'd rather stay in their sin in that horrible hole in the ground and just stay there that's what the choice is really isn't it if you're a believer if you're a Christian you have joy joy that goes beyond the present into the forever and it's always there was a third century man this was in the third century there was a third century man and he was anticipating death he was about to die and he wrote these words it's a bad world an incredibly bad world but I have discovered in the midst of it a quiet and holy people who have learned a great secret they have found a joy which is a thousand times better than any pleasure of our sinful life they are despised and persecuted but they cannot they are masters of their souls they have overcome the world these people are the

[21:31] Christians! I am one of them he realised that all the pleasures all the things of life count for nothing without Christ he is the one who gives joy even in the bad world and people tonight I know some of you young people and well really all of us at times we have troubles!

there is troubled lives there is fighting in our streets there is people throwing rocks on our roofs there is people doing burnouts in our roads there is people putting graffiti on our property this is a world that is full of sin and bad things there is people bashing people up cursing and swearing doing drugs this world is not a very pleasant place it is like that horrible black hole in the ground where those miners were trapped there is not a lot of good that you can think about of this world but yet you can have joy even in the midst of that you as a Christian young person even if your parents are not Christians even if your friends aren't Christians at school if you love the Lord Jesus then he will help you and he will give you that joy that isn't related to the things that are going on around you and he'll help you to battle through maybe some of you will face some real troubles in your life you know when you become a

Christian God doesn't say everything's going to be cool and dandy and everything's going to be a free and easy carefree ride for you and that you're never going to have any trouble in your life alright that's what God doesn't say that he says that he will help you to go through he'll help you through the fire through the storms through the floods he'll help you to have the strength to trust him no matter what you know it says of Job though he slay me in other words though he kill me yet will I trust him and he says Job says the Lord gives and the Lord takes away blessed be the name of the Lord it's not related to the things that we get or give the things we take or lose blessed be the name of the Lord the circumstances of life sure the Lord will help you but the Lord will not always give you the blessings The Lord will not always give you good help!

The Lord will not always give you pleasant times sometimes he'll allow you to go through the storms because he's with you through the storms he says he's going to walk with you through the valley of the shadow of death he says he's going to walk with you through the troubles that face you in life and you can hang on to him some people hear a gospel that says if you trust Jesus and become a Christian you're going to make lots of money you're going to drive fast cars you're going to live in fancy houses and you're going to have everything laid on for you and you're never going to have another worry in your life because you become a Christian now that's wrong God doesn't say that that's going to happen but he does say that you're going to have joy he says that he's going to give you his joy and he doesn't give you and he's going to give you his peace his peace not like the world gives but his peace is everlasting his joy is everlasting and he'll help you to soldier on through the trials of life at times that you face

Habakkuk was an old time prophet in the word of! and he he's a farmer and he's saying everything's going to go kaput all my crops are going to fail even though I'm not going have food hardly scarcely on the table he says yet will I rejoice in the Lord I will joy in the God of my salvation that's what God can do for you it's not based on circumstances it's based on him and rejoice in the Lord always and again I say rejoice even at the stake itself the martyrs of old people who die for their faith now I don't know what Australia is going to be like in 10 years time the way it's going 10 years from now who knows back in these old days people used to get killed for being a

[26:07] Christian now we're! kind of! fortunate in Australia that nobody gets killed for being a Christian not yet nobody gets killed for standing on a street corner and telling people about Jesus not yet alright no one

gets killed for saying I'm a Christian in their workplace alright no one gets killed for saying they're a Christian down at the schoolyard alright but in some countries of our world kids today listen now young people if you were a Christian in some countries and you said you were a Christian you could get locked up and killed alright that's the reality do you love Jesus that much do you love Jesus enough that you are willing to pay the price of your own debt alright that's where the rubber hits the road I know some of you older people included are just playing games with church alright some of the folks that come and sit in this building are not really serious about

God alright it's a take it or leave it thing they scarcely turn up on a regular basis in this place alright and when the chips are down when it's against the law to be a Christian then they're not going to be around alright because really if you're a real Christian it won't matter what the world does to you what the government does to you what the law does to you if you're a real Christian you're going to stand and be counted no matter what right you're not going to be coming here because your mates are here or because it's just something to do an activity for you to take part in you're going to come here and hear God's word because you love Jesus more than you love the world and the things of the world and rejoice in the Lord always don't follow the world and its toys follow Christ and follow him seriously and honestly rejoice in the Lord always keep at it keep on plugging keep on pressing on rejoice in the

Lord always one day this is based on what Spurgeon said some time ago he says even though things are going to go wrong sometimes in life he says but a little while and we shall be transferred from these seats below to the thrones above we shall go from the place of aching brows to the place where they all wear crowns to a place where they are without fault before the throne of God for they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb Paul says to you from the dungeon rejoice when Paul wrote this he wasn't having a fancy time of it he wasn't having it easy he wasn't some kind of prosperity preacher living in some mansion and you know abusing the gospel Paul was living in a dungeon his hands his feet wearing chains and fetters and shackles and he says to you he writes to you and he says to you rejoice he says to you rejoice and he says to us brethren rejoice in the

Lord always and again I say rejoice his letter to the Philippians is full of joy it's full of joy he wrote this when he was in a prison cell he was locked up because he loved Jesus and he was telling others about Jesus that was his only crime and Philippians is full of light it's full of joy it's full of light and he says in Philippians he says be anxious about nothing don't worry about things he says be thankful about everything and he says prayerful about everything and he says towards the end he says finally sometimes you won't feel like rejoicing but he says to rejoice even then amen