

Joy in the Midst of Trouble

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Phil 1:12-26

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Synopsis:

How many of us want to be joyful?

Joy in our lives is dependent upon the focus we take. For Paul, joy is the result of proclaiming Jesus Christ as. Maybe we need to adjust our focus in order to find joy.

I.

Joy: How you get it

Phil 1:18 and in that I will rejoice . . . and I will continue to rejoice

Don't Worry, Be Happy Remember Bobby McFerrin?
(whistle a few bars)

Paul says "I rejoice. Yes I will continue to rejoice"

*What would it take for us to say this?

Circumstances that might make us joyful:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----|------------------------------|
| 1. No pain | but | no gain! |
| 2. Life of ease | but | no progress! |
| 3. Plenty of \$\$ | but | no appreciation! |
| 4. Family peace | but | no character growth! |
| 5. No church change | but | no maturity! |
| 6. Success | but | no retooling/soul searching! |

Joy is dependent upon our focus

Joy? The answer depends upon,

how we judge our circumstances from a focus

THESIS: In order to be joyful, we need the proper focus

What is it?

II.

Joy: The proper focus

Phil 1:21 For me, living is Christ, dying is gain

Why can Paul say, “I rejoice . . . I will continue to rejoice?” (1:18)

READ 1:12-18a = Paul’s past

Past: what has happened

1. In prison (Rome or Caesarea) *imperial guard = praetoria*
 2. Rivals
 3. Proclaim out of selfish ambition
 4. Trying to make Paul suffer
- = rejoice 1:18??

READ 1:18b-26 = Paul’s Future

Future: this will turn out for my deliverance

1. Put to shame in trial
 2. life/death, probably to be executed
- = will continue to rejoice 1:18??
- How can Paul say rejoice in these circumstances?
Depends upon his focus (our focus)

*What is Paul’s focus?

READ

- 1:12 Spread the *gospel = prokopte* = going forward
1:18 Christ is *proclaimed*
1:21 To *live* is Christ
1:25 Progress = *prokopte* = going forward *inclusio

Paul has a distinct focus that *defines* his joy
FOCUS = To proclaim Jesus Christ

Everything fits this focus

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Prison | = no problem, I’ll preach to the praetorium |
| 2. Rivals | = no problem, let them preach |
| 3. Selfish preaching | = no problem, some will convert |
| 4. Paul suffer | = no problem, Jesus gets preached |
| 5. Shame at trial | = no problem, get to defend gospel |
| 6. Executed? | = no problem, become a witness |

*Paul’s joy in prison is due to his focus

*What would our life look like with this focus?

III.

Joy: Changing our focus

Phil 1:12 What has happened to me has actually helped

The gospel = good news about Jesus Christ isn't about our desires
The gospel is about God's will and his glory

Our Desires: Shaped by consumer, psychological conditioning

1. Is life designed to fulfill my needs?
2. Is life designed so that I might self-actualize?
3. Is life designed for us to be trouble-free?
E.g. Paul Ford comment regarding growing us up

If we want to find joy, we need to change our focus

1. Our glory to God's glory
2. Begin to *practice* God's glory

HOW? Make a list of what and where you spend your time/money

1. Is this about God's glory? Be kind, it may be about God's glory
2. Begin to practice fulfilling God's glory
3. We need to train to be joyful:
Greeks (Aristotle) train virtues, E.g. courage, self-control
Christians take on character of Christ
E.g. Faith, hope, love (1Cor 13); love, joy, peace (Gal 5)