

Study Questions:
“Reasons to Rejoice in the Lord”
Philippians 4:4 et al

KEY POINTS

- Believers should accept their rejoicing is rooted in Jesus
- A believer’s ability to “rejoice” or to have “joy” is not wrapped up in their emotions or feelings they get when all of their needs are met.
- Our ability to “rejoice” is sourced in Jesus Christ who gives us an expectation and a hope for our future.
- Rejoice because of a life well-lived in Christ.
- Rejoice that prayer and the Spirit’s working results in answers.
- Rejoice that the gospel moves forward without hindrances.
- Rejoice that other believers are truly concerned about you.

- 1) **READ** Philippians 4:4. The Philippians are commanded to “rejoice in the Lord.” Where was Paul when he wrote this epistle to the Philippians? Does it seem ironic that he is encouraging believers to “rejoice” when his situation was not the rosiest? Have you ever had to encourage people when your situation was not the best? How are you able to move beyond yourself and demonstrate that strength to others?
- 2) In the message it was mentioned that Scripture never commanded us to be happy. **READ** the concordance in *Appendix A* of this study guide. This provides a snapshot of the context of the word “happy” when it appears in Scripture. Do you notice “happy” being commanded in those verses? What seems to be the context of “happiness” in those verses? Are we able to experience happiness on any level and is it acceptable if we do?
- 3) Scripture commands us to “rejoice” instead of being “happy.” Having read Philippians 4:4, where is the believer’s rejoicing sourced? Do you believe a person can experience joy because they now understand Jesus Christ erases their sin through His sacrificial atonement? What is the sacrificial atonement and why is it considered so crucial in rejoicing? Is forgiveness of sin the only reason to rejoice in the Lord?

- 4) **READ** Philippians 2:14-18. What is the connection between verses 14 and 15? Is it difficult to stop “grumbling or disputing?” If you were a person known to grumble and dispute all the time what would those that know you well think of you if you became less “taxing?” Some of the reasons why the ancient church councils were formed was due to the irreligious mindset of those who attacked the Christian faith and those who held those beliefs. One of the ways to distinguish between those who followed Christ and those who didn’t was to look at their character. **READ** 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 1 Timothy 4:1-12; and 1 Timothy 3:1-7. Does character seem to matter for the Christian? What is the difference between the good character of a person who follows Christ and the good character of the person who rejects Christ?
- 5) We also heard that the believer should “REJOICE THAT THE GOSPEL MOVES FORWARD REGARDLESS OF OBSTACLES” placed in its way. **READ** Philippians 1:15-18a. How could Paul celebrate that the gospel was being proclaimed even though the one doing it meant it for Paul’s harm? Does Paul seem to respond to them from a spiritually mature perspective? Would it be acceptable to bring correction that the person that was doing this? What was the problem with this situation?
- 6) **READ** Philippians 4:10-13. Paul mentions we should also “REJOICE WHEN OTHER BELIEVERS ARE TRULY CONCERNED ABOUT US.” Do we need the concern and care for others and is this important for those who find their identity in Christ? Will some believers need more constant attention than others? Why does this happen and what can be done about it? What does Paul say about needing this type of attention in the passage?

APPENDIX A (ESV Concordance on “happy”)

- Gen. 30:13 “And Leah said, “**Happy** am I! For women have called me **happy**.” So she called his name Asher.”
- Deut. 24:5 “When a man is newly married, he shall not go out with the army or be liable for any other public duty. He shall be free at home one year to be **happy** with his wife whom he has taken.”
- Deut. 33:29 “**Happy** are you, O Israel! Who is like you, a people saved by the LORD, the shield of your help, and the sword of your triumph! Your enemies shall come fawning to you, and you shall tread upon their backs.”
- 1 Ki. 4:20 “Judah and Israel were as many as the sand by the sea. They ate and drank and were **happy**.”
- 1 Ki. 10:8 “**Happy** are your men! Happy are your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!”
- 2 Chr. 9:7 “**Happy** are your wives! Happy are these your servants, who continually stand before you and hear your wisdom!”
- Eccl. 10:17 “**Happy** are you, O land, when your king is the son of the nobility, and your princes feast at the proper time, for strength, and not for drunkenness!”
- Isa. 32:20 “**Happy** are you who sow beside all waters, who let the feet of the ox and the donkey range free.”

Other translations (NIV, CSB) include 1 Cor 7:30; 2 Cor 7:9; 2 Co 7:13; and James 5:13 as well as a few other verses.