

Lesson Three: Joy – Rejoicing in Any Situation

(read Philippians 1:12-18)

1. What are the reasons Paul says he will rejoice (v. 18)?
2. As Paul writes this letter to the Philippians, he is in prison (either in Rome or Ephesus). How has Paul's imprisonment "actually served to advance the gospel" (v. 12)?
3. Paul's imprisonment for Christ might have made others fearful that they would share his fate if they preached the gospel. Why do you think that, instead, they became more confident and fearless (v. 14)?
4. What contrasting motives for preaching the gospel are mentioned in verses 15-17?
5. Even though Paul is in prison and in chains, which would make most people miserable, he is full of joy (v. 18). What does this tell us about his most important values and goals in life?
6. When you face hardships or difficulties, how can your faith in Christ enable you to experience Paul's kind of joy?

(read Philippians 1:19-26)

7. Paul also rejoices because he believes that the Philippians' prayers and God's provisions will result in "his deliverance" or "salvation". In light of verses 20-26, do you think Paul expects to be released from prison or to enter the presence of Christ? Why?
8. Paul states that "to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain (v. 21). How can that outlook provide a far deeper joy than a life of self-centeredness can offer?
9. When most people face a life-threatening situation, they think it would be "better by far" (v. 23) if they lived rather than died. Why do you think Paul feels the opposite?

(Summary)

10. In John 15:11, Jesus tells His disciples: "I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete." What does Jesus tell them in versus 1-17 that would give them joy?

