

Joy In The Adventure October 8, 2006 “Spiritual **Boldness**”

I. What has happened to Paul

“Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. ¹⁴Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.” Philippians 1:12

- a. What we believe about our circumstances controls our feelings; not the circumstances!
- b. Choose to live PROactively, not Reactively!
- c. It can inspire others!

II. How Paul Responds

“It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. ¹⁶The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. ¹⁸But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.” Philippians 1:15-18

- Some preach gospel out of good motives; others out of selfish motives...but what does it matter? The gospel is being preached! I will continue to rejoice!

III. A little theology

“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body.” Philippians 1:21-24

- For me to live is _____
- To ‘be with Christ’

IV. Conclusion: How to be spiritually **Bold**

“Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel ²⁸without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you”. Philippians 1:27-28

- *Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Faithful*
- *I will know that you stand firm in one spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel Forceful*
- *without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. Fearless*

Philippians 1:12 begins with the words, “I want you to know, friends...” Because I want you to know more about the biblical understanding of joy, our study guide this week comes from Holman’s Bible Dictionary. Enjoy as you learn!

Monday – Read all of *Philippians 1: 12-30* today. As we learned yesterday, the biblical concept of joy is “The happy state that results from knowing and serving God.” A number of Greek and Hebrew words are used in the Bible to convey the ideas of joy and rejoicing. We have the same situation in English with such nearly synonymous words as joy, happiness, pleasure, delight, gladness, merriment, felicity, and enjoyment. The words *joy* and *rejoice* are the words used most often to translate the Hebrew and Greek words into English. *Joy* is found over 150 times in the Bible. If such words as “joyous” and “joyful” are included, the number comes to over 200. The verb *rejoice* appears well over 200 times. So you can see that being a person of ‘joy’ is very important to God!

Tuesday -- Joy is the fruit of a right relation with God. It is not something people can create by their own efforts. The Bible distinguishes joy from pleasure. The Greek word for pleasure is the word from which we get our word *hedonism*, the philosophy of self-centered pleasure-seeking. Paul referred to false teachers as “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” (*2 Tim. 3:4*). The Bible warns that self-indulgent pleasure-seeking does not lead to happiness and fulfillment. *Ecclesiastes 2:1-11* records the sad testimony of one who sought to build his life on pleasure-seeking. The search left him empty and disillusioned. Proverbs 14:13 offers insight into this way of life, “Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful.” Cares, riches, and pleasures rob people of the possibility of fruitful living (*Luke 8:14*). Pleasure seeking often enslaves people in a vicious cycle of addiction (*Titus. 3:3*). The self-indulgent person, according to *1 Timothy 5:6*, is dead while seeming still to be live.

Wednesday -- Many people think that God is the great Kill-Joy. Nothing could be a bigger lie. God Himself knows joy, and He wants His people to know joy. *Psalms 104:31* speaks of God Himself rejoicing in His creative works. *Isaiah 65:18* speaks of God rejoicing over His redeemed people who will be to Him “a joy.”

Thursday -- The joy of God came to focus in human history in Jesus Christ. The note of joy and exultation runs through the entire biblical account of the coming of Christ (*Luke 1:14, 44; Matt. 2:10*). The most familiar passage is the angel’s announcement of “good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people” (*Luke 2:10*). Jesus spoke of His own joy and of the full joy He had come to bring to others (*John 15:11; 17:13*).

Friday —Get ready for a joyous weekend by carefully reading all of *Luke 15*, which is the most famous biblical reference to God’s joy. The Pharisees and scribes had criticized Jesus for receiving sinners and eating with them. Then Jesus told three parables—the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the loving father. The explicit theme of each parable is JOY over one sinner who repents!