

Acts 20:19-24 [I {Paul} was] *Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations [trials], which befell me by the lying in wait [the sudden attacks] of the Jews: <sup>20</sup>And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, <sup>21</sup>Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks [the gentiles], repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>22</sup>And now, behold, I go bound in [go controlled by] the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me [shall happen to me] there: <sup>24</sup>Save [But I know] that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide [that arrests and suffering will happen to] me. <sup>24</sup>But none of these things move [things influence] me, neither count I my life dear unto myself [I think this task is more important than my life], so that I might **finish my course with joy**, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.*

### 1. Introduction

- a. Consider the following question, "How is your joy?"
- b. Three keys for keeping joy in your life

### 2. Joy is the Fruit of the Holy Spirit

- a. God's joy in your life is on display when we are close to God
- b. We are commanded to have joy in our life, but it doesn't come from our own effort. Joy is a natural result of being close to our Heavenly Father.

Ephesians 5:17-19 *Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit<sup>1</sup>; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;*

- c. We have the divine resource of joy

Galatians 5:22-23 *But **the fruit of the Spirit** is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness [kindness], temperance [self-control]: against such there is no law.*

### 3. Life Not Controlled by Circumstances - Give Thanks

- a. Verse 24. "...none of these things move me...".

1 Thessalonians 5:18 *In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*

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<sup>1</sup> The contrast Paul is making is the difference between someone who is controlled by wine (drunk) and someone who is controlled by the Holy Spirit. God's will is to have joy because you know you're pleasing to your Heavenly Father. Someone who is drunk may appear happy for the moment, but the short period of happiness comes with longer-lasting, unpleasant consequences. Joy from the Holy Spirit is lasting; worldly happiness does not last.

- b. Paul experienced many difficult circumstances, but still he thought serving Christ was a joy

1 Corinthians 11:23 – 28 *Are they [false teachers who proclaimed a different gospel] servants of Christ? I [Paul] am a better one—I am talking like a madman—with far greater labors, far more imprisonments, with countless beatings, and often near death. Five times I received at the hands of the Jews the forty lashes less one. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I was adrift at sea; on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from robbers, danger from my own people [Jews], danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers; in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, in hunger and thirst, often without food, in cold and exposure. And, apart from other things, there is the daily [mental] pressure on me of my anxiety [concern] for all the churches.*

- c. Joy comes from the Holy Spirit in my life, the Holy Spirit of God living inside me. “Happiness comes from holiness.”

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 *What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of [have received from] God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.*

#### 4. Heart Willing to Serve Sacrificially

- a. Christian’s attitude to circumstances
  - i. The best way to deal with your own problems is to help someone else with their problems.
  - ii. Start serving for your Lord Jesus

- b. Jesus example of joyful living

Hebrews 12:2 [For our example we should be] *Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who **for the joy that was set before him** endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

Philippians 2:7 *But [Jesus] made himself of no reputation [came from a humble background], and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

- c. Paul’s example of serving others

2 Corinthians 12:15 *And I [Paul] will very gladly spend and be spent for you [work tirelessly until I die]; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I be loved [the more love I give, the less I receive].*

1 Corinthians 9:19 *For though I [Paul] be free from all men [I am not a slave], yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more [might introduce more people to Christ].*

- d. My life was given to me by God to minister and serve others

Matthew 20:26-27 *But it shall not be so among you [the greatest among you will not be the highest ranking]: but whosoever will be great among you [Jesus’ disciples], let*

*him be your minister [worker]; And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant:*

5. Give Testimony About Jesus – Witness to Others

a. In times of uncertainty (COVID, riots, demonstrations in the streets) people want to hear about Jesus and the hope He can offer

b. Jesus commands us to tell others

Mark 16:15 *And he [Jesus] said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature [person].*

c. Paul knew of Timothy's concern for his imprisonment, but also had joy in seeing him

2 Timothy 1:4 [Paul was] *Greatly desiring to see thee [Timothy], being mindful of thy tears [knowing your sorrow about my circumstances], that **I may be filled with joy;***

d. We cannot hide our joy when we live close to God.

Romans 14:17 *For the kingdom of God is not meat [food] and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and **joy in the Holy Ghost.***

6. Conclusion

a. Romans 15:13 *Now **the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.***

b. Romans 15:32 *That **I [Paul] may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.***