

# Finding Joy

A study of Paul's Letter to the Philippians

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## 6- Finding Joy in Those Who Go With the Gospel.....Philippians 2:12-30

*Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. 14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; 16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. 17 Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. 18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me. 19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. 23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. 24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly. 25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. 26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. 27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. 29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: 30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.*

There should be little doubt in the mind of believers that have a basic understanding of the Word of God that God has given us marching orders to go into the world with the good news of Christ. We often hear about the Great Commission of *Matthew 28:19-20 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

We see there are a number of other places that going is spoken of.

*Mar 16:15 ...Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

*Luke 24:47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

*Acts 1:8 But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and*

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**in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.**

Perhaps the billboard said it best with, "What Part of Go Did You Not Understand."

I realize that we have a lot of verses to cover during our time this session. I want us to focus on the joy that came to Paul's life by those who went with the purpose of the gospel.

## **I- Live to Not Hinder Gospel:**

Beloved we often fail to see each other as fellow pilgrims and strangers passing through this world. Most Christians are all working of living their lives as best they can for Christ.

***Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.***

I do not want to get into the negative here because we are talking about finding joy. However, we must see that Paul points out that we should live our lives in a way that the gospel is not hindered.

***Php 2:14 Do all things without murmurings and disputings: 15 That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke...*** Remember Christ said it this way in ***John 13:35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.***

Now notice who is watching us ***2:15... in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation...*** The reason we should strive for this unity and love is that the gospel will not be hindered.

Paul went on to say as the world watches we are to be the lighthouse. ... ***among whom ye shine as lights in the world.***

***Mat 5:14 Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.***

This is not implying in anyway that the light we need to be comes from our goodness nor from within our being. Notice the following verse that makes it plain our reflective light is the light of the Lord.

***Eph 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:***

## **II- Going with Gospel:**

We have a term that you may be familiar with, lifestyle evangelism. This is simply living our lives as a testimony to others and looking for ways to include nonbelievers in our circle of life. Paul commends and encourages them to continue to live out the gospel.

***Php 2:16 Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain.*** The word in the original language for holding forth according to *Vincent Word Studies*, "The verb means literally to *hold upon* or *apply*. Hence to *fix attention upon*"

This joy of them sharing Christ, or going with the gospel, with others is going to extend into eternity.

Adam Clarke sees this as follows:

*An allusion, some think, to those towers which were built at the entrance of harbours, on which fires were kept during the night to direct ships into the port. Genuine Christians, by their holy lives and conversation, are the means of directing others, not only how to escape those dangers to which they are exposed on the*

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*tempestuous ocean of human life, but also of leading them into the haven of eternal safety and rest.*

***Php 2:17*** *Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all. 18 For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.*

### III- Two Examples:

In the remaining of chapter two we have two examples of men who went with the gospel and committed their time and energy to helping spread the Good News of Christ.

First there is Timothy in verses 10-24. Paul hoped to send Timothy to them to help them with their walk in Christ and to find out how Paul could be of greater service to them.

***Php 2:19*** *But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20 For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21 For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22 But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. 23 Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. 24 But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly.*

Paul simply reminded them of the things that they had observed in the faithfulness of Timothy. Did you notice the commendation that Paul gave him? What an example for us to be concerned for the spiritual state of others. By contrast Paul said others sought their own welfare.

Beloved we should rejoice as well as be challenged by the thousands of missionaries that give up careers and leave behind families to go into the world to serve Christ.

The next example was Epaphroditus, one that had originally come from their city to help Paul. Paul called him my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier.

***Php 2:25*** *Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. 26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. 27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. 29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: 30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.*

He had come to Rome with a gift from the Philippians to Paul. While there he had experienced sickness. The home church had heard about it and worried. As Paul sends him back home he tells them to receive him back with joy and give him honor for the work he had done on their behalf.

One of the great treasures for a church is when someone from their midst is called by God and sent forth into the harvest field. I have always been proud to represent my home church. There is great joy in our hearts when men and women go forth with the gospel both locally and beyond. Remember witnesses in *Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth. Acts 1:8*