**How to Rejoice in the Lord Always**

*Philippians 4:4*

**Introduction**

1. The apostle Paul commanded that the Philippians rejoice, not simply, but with a continual duration (**cf. Philippians 4:4).**
2. It is obvious in reading scripture that rejoicing is an important matter Christians are called to. It is characteristic of the child of God to rejoice:
	1. **Philippians 2:18; 3:1; 4:4 (16 times the word is used in Philippians – or derivations of it)**
	2. **1 Thessalonians 5:16**
3. How can we be those who fulfill the command of the apostle to rejoice always?
4. Some Presuppositions
5. Rejoicing is a Necessity
	1. Rejoice always is not merely an exhortation, but a command – **Philippians 4:4.**
	2. The Lord does not give us commands without purpose and importance. His commands are provisions for our good – **1 John 5:3** (not burdensome); **Matthew 11:29-30** (yoke easy and light).
	3. If we are to be those who glorify God daily, and reach the goal of heaven we must be those who rejoice.
		1. **Cf. 2 Corinthians 2:7** – swallowed up with too much sorrow.
		2. Sorrow is a device of Satan. He wants us to lose heart, but we must not be those who lose heart.
		3. Must be able to speak as Paul did – **2 Corinthians 6:10** (not swallowed up)
6. Rejoicing Takes Effort
	1. It takes effort else Paul would not have to give so much time to it.
	2. Easy to just give up – **2 Corinthians 4:16** – we do not lose heart.
		1. Why was Paul able to say such in spite of his suffering?
		2. He made joy a constant goal, and took effort to combat the circumstances which threatened it.
	3. **Cf. Galatians 5:22-25** – exhortation to walk in the Spirit.
		1. Contrast to the works of the flesh **(vv. 19-21).**
		2. Context of struggle – **Galatians 5:16-17** (DON’T LET ANYTHING ROB YOU OF THE JOY OFFERED AND COMMANDED IN JESUS.)
		3. JOY MUST BE CULTIVATED.
7. Rejoicing is Always Possible
	1. **Philippians 4:4** – Paul says it twice. YES! I SAID IT AND I’LL SAY IT AGAIN!
	2. Satan wants us to lose heart, and give up. GOD WANTS US TO FIND JOY, AND WE CAN!
	3. This joy is independent of outward circumstances and is always possible to possess.
8. How to Rejoice Always
9. “in the Lord”
	1. In order for rejoicing to ***“always”*** be an option, there must ***“always”*** be something to rejoice about – a constant.
	2. **This must be something which is independent of all outward circumstances. Something which cannot be changed, and does not rise and fall with the occurrences of life.**
	3. ***“in the Lord”*** – The Lord is the cause, and object of our rejoicing.
		1. ***“in the Lord***” – the area of rejoicing.
		2. If we know the Lord – who He is, what He has done – there is cause to rejoice.
		3. If we are ***“in the Lord,”*** i.e. in the relationship with Him which He offers, there is always cause to rejoice.
	4. **Acts 16:20-25** – Paul and Silas put into prison in Philippi after casting a ***“spirit of divination”*** out of a girl.
		1. Used by her masters to make a profit.
		2. They were mad, and had them thrown into prison.
		3. **(v. 22-23)** – the were beaten.
		4. **(v. 24)** – thrown into prison.
		5. **(v. 25)** – Yet, they were singing and praying. Why?
			1. The One to whom their songs were addressed can answer the question – ***“to God.”***
			2. They were ***“making melody in [their] heart to the Lord” (Ephesians 5:19*** – They had a constant to be thankful for, and to rejoice in.).
	5. **Cf. Hebrews 13:8** – He remains the same.
		1. **Cf. 1 John 2:15-17** – the things of the world are fleeting, but the things of God are eternal.
		2. **2 Corinthians 4:18** – set eyes on things eternal.
	6. “in the Lord” – i.e. in your relationship to Him and with Him, and the blessings received in such.
10. Meditations “in the Lord”
	1. Salvation from Sin
		1. Remember where you were – **Ephesians 2:1-3**
			1. **Cf. Romans 7:21-24** – under dominion of sin and death.
			2. **Romans 6:20-21** – the fruit of those things is death.
			3. Remembrance of where we were allows us to be more thankful of our current blessedness in Christ. **(cf. 1 Timothy 1:12-15** – Paul remembered, and rejoiced in Christ)
		2. Dwell on your blessed state of forgiveness in the Lord:
			1. **Ephesians 2:4-10** – saved by grace through faith and made to sit with Christ in heavenly places.
			2. **Ephesians 4:19-22** – now you are citizens and members of God’s household. (a dwelling place with God)
	2. Peace with God
		1. **Isaiah 59:1-2** – separated from God in sin.
		2. **Cf. James 4:4** – an enemy of God.
		3. Reconciled to God through Christ – **Romans 5:6-11** – Christ gave Himself while we were enemies, but now we are at peace.
		4. The security found in such is a great cause for rejoicing – **cf. Luke 14:31-32** – we sent to ask conditions of peace, and received such.
			1. Now we are no longer in the path of destruction.
			2. Now we are on the side of that unstoppable king – **cf. 2 Corinthians 2:14** – triumph in Christ.
			3. **Cf. 1 Corinthians 15:57** – victory in Jesus.
		5. No longer fearful expectation of judgment – **cf. Hebrews 10:26-27, 31**
		6. But a confident and joyful anticipation of that day **– cf. Revelation 22:20** – even so, come!
	3. A Path to Walk
		1. **Cf. Jeremiah 10:23** – cannot direct our own steps.
		2. **Cf. Proverbs 14:12** – death is at the end of man’s steps.
		3. Jesus offers a sure foundation which is guaranteed success – **Matthew 7:24-27** – spiritual success. (**cf. Psalm 119:105** – God’s word lights the way for the Christian who has accepted the direction of the Lord.)
		4. A Christian can rejoice in the fact that their life has purpose, and such is the God ordained purpose – **cf. Ecclesiastes 12:13**
	4. Hope of Heaven
		1. Paul’s call for the Philippians to rejoice came in the context of his standing with God in Christ, and the hope of heaven afforded him:
			1. **Philippians 3:1** – rejoice in the Lord.
				1. **(vv. 2-11)** – Contrast between Judaizing teachers and Philippians using the example of Paul. (WE ARE THE CIRCUMCISION – not them – **cf. Colossians 2:11-12** – baptism)
				2. **(vv. 12-16**) – pressing on toward the goal of heaven.
				3. **(vv. 20-21**) – anticipation of the transformation/resurrection to get to heaven. (**cf. Philippians 3:11** – attaining to the resurrection).
			2. **Philippians 4:4** – rejoice always.
		2. **1 Peter 1:3-6 –** the living hope of the inheritance is something we can “greatly rejoice” in. REGARDLESS OF TRIALS.
			1. **(vv. 6-9**) – enduring those trials leads to the end of faith – salvation.
			2. Remembering the prospect of heaven will continually allow us to rejoice.
		3. We can rejoice always as we constantly dwell upon the things above – **cf. Colossians 3:1-4** – the matters on the earth will take our joy away.

**Conclusion**

1. We have been commanded by God to rejoice always.
2. The way in which this is accomplished is being “in the Lord,” and dwelling upon the blessedness of such a state.
3. Thank God for our relationship with Him and Jesus, and the joy it constantly brings in our lives.