

Elevated to Joy: Philippians 2:1,2 & 4:6

Everyone is looking for the same thing: people want to find meaning and happiness in life. People want a sense of delight and joy. We gravitate toward those things that offer promise of an enjoyable life.

- We seek _____ as a source of joy. In fact, we endeavor to please others in order to feel accepted and loved. We seek the a predictable visceral affirmation when others like us.
- Others look to _____-the journey of the curious, the educator, if you would-as a source of personal fulfillment and joy.
- _____ is a motivator for others seeking highways to joy. "If I can just get the right job..." "If the right opportunity opens up..."
- *Love, friendship, and meaningful relationships are _____ to joy.* These are truly pathways worth investigating! After all, we were created for relationships. Right? Before Adam and Eve had anything-they had God as Creator and one another as man and wife and a safe place to live. And by all accounts they seemed happy in the Garden.

Perhaps it helps to understand joy as a composite of many things. There are many synonyms that we use for joy in our lives:

- a sense of _____, usually for others;
- *feelings of _____* about circumstances or life events;
- we speak of *happiness as a deep sense of _____* and satisfaction.

Joy is expressed by terms like *exultation, mirth, good cheer*, or a welcomed and blessed surprise-a *sense of the celebratory*. Gladness, delight, happiness, exultation, mirth, well-being, and satisfaction...*joy is a composite of many things that culminates with a heightened sense of celebratory exultation and happiness. This is joy!*

Joy is expressed as a _____ (joy as a state of being) and a _____ (this is rejoice, an act of intentionality over some important and positive fact, event, or person).

There are many roads to travel if an elevation to joy is our destination. Let's talk about the highways—the lofty pathways-we should travel to arrive at an inner-state of supreme delight and well-being. Paul the apostle will help us with our quest. *Paul looks at joy as a state of being and an intentional act. (noun and verb!)*

1. We create a sense of joy by "rejoicing" when truth triumphs in the face of opposition.

1:18

- People sought to hinder Paul's _____, but he succeeded in advancing the cause of Christ in the world. God made Paul's enemies His _____ for spreading the truth of Christ!
- Christians see through the façade of secular events and attitudes and recognize God is using it _____! This, according to Paul, should evoke a sense of expressive joy. This was something that Paul *chose to see* and then *express in positive affirmation* and joyful proclamation, that is, observation and then expression (note that feeling per say, is not mentioned!)
- Don't allow the _____ of the world, culture, politics, or personal circumstances take you down. Christ can be in it all! Christ is real! Christ is present! Christ is preached! Christ is revealed!

2. We experience the affirmation of joy when we pray and recognize the same as a source for God's interventional help. 1:18b,19

- Paul could see the brightest side of his circumstances when forced into the deepest and darkest hole of his life and _____made the difference. This recognition of prayer's interventional power led Paul to rejoice. Two things should be noticed:
 1. prayer would bring a sense of _____ into his life formula: "through your prayers and the help given by Jesus Christ";
 2. put all of life in a positive _____: "what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance..."
- That which is bad become _____-that which is dark become _____...that which is agonizing becomes a source of _____!
- Joy now emerges above the _____. Joy now becomes the pilot of the ship in the storm, the destination at the end of a perilous journey through life! Joy determines our response and fashions our destiny.

3. A personal life investment in others ensures joy in their lives. 1:23-26

- Paul sees his life investments bringing joy into the lives of others. He lives for their _____: "I will continue with you all for your progress and joy in faith...so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ will overflow on account of me..."
- Paul taps something important here! We spend far too much time asking what can make _____ happy and far too little time asking what we can do to make _____ happy! When we learn to reverse the human narcissism in human nature and culture and , here's what happens:4:1..We just found the high-way to joy! Working on behalf of others!

4. Joy must be sought through a lifestyle of rejoicing: 4:4

(Present tense)...continue to look, observe, and discover reasons to _____ and continuing rejoicing (imperative mood)...command...just do it!

Here are some starters:

- The goodness of God in your life
- Your lifelong mate
- Your children
- Your job
- Your church
- Missionaries and the mission of the church
- America
- The Saving Grace of Christ!
- _____
- _____
- _____