

MAKE THE CHOICE TO REJOICE!

PHIL 4:4

“Joy & Peace”

Philippians 4:4-9

Sunday, February 24, 2019

1. Sunday Summary: This morning we continued our sermon series on the book of Philippians that we are calling *Make the Choice to Rejoice*, and today we examined some of the ways that our joy and peace are stolen from us and what we can do about it.

- 1) Joy and Peace are often stolen from us because we don't expect to be attacked. The first thing we ought to do is to expect it. Paul lives his life with the constant knowledge that our enemies (the World, the Flesh and the devil) will work hard to rob us of our joy and steal our peace in order to make us ineffective in God's Kingdom. Often the way they do this is to make us feel guilty, or sad that sometimes we're sad, or depressed. The Lord gives us three weapons to fight.
- 2) Rejoice in the Lord – that is, express the joy you have in the Lord. It's important that we see that the “in the Lord” part is key. We're not being told to rejoice in our circumstances, but in the Lord, and all that he's done. If we're going to express joy it's important to know what it is, it's opposite and it's counterfeit.
 - a. Definition – Joy is a spiritual buoyancy we get from considering what God has done in our lives, and the unchanging privileges we have in Christ.
 - b. Opposite – The opposite of joy is not sadness. Despair and hopelessness are joy's opposite. This means, having nothing to rest in, and the thought that things won't get better.
 - c. Counterfeit – Happiness is the counterfeit of joy. Happiness gets its energy and feeling from circumstances. It's situational. It's about resting in the blessings rather than the Bless-er.
- 3) Pray with Thanksgiving – If we're losing our peace, we can get it back by bringing our requests to the Lord in prayer with thanksgiving. Thanksgiving is key. When we come bringing these things with thanksgiving we do so acknowledging that the Lord will give us what we ask, or he'll give us what we would have asked if we knew everything he knows. It brings us peace to know that we'll get exactly what we need.
- 4) Think about such things – when we're losing our joy and peace we need to stop and think, to consider all God has given and done for us in Christ. We have to stop listening to our hearts and instead talk to our hearts and tell them to focus on the true, the noble, the right, the good, etc.

2. Connecting Questions: (Interactive, life sharing, thought & feeling type stuff)

- What do you think robs you of your joy and peace the most?
- How do you feel about the fact that “our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world, and against spiritual forces in the heavenly realms?” In other words how do you feel about the fact that our battle is spiritual? Have you ever felt that when you've lost your joy and peace?

- How does it help you to know that we don't have to rejoice in our circumstances, but in the Lord? If you've ever been down does it help to think about what the Lord has done? Talk about it.
- Talk about your prayer life. Do you pray with thanksgiving in advance? Do you really think that might restore your peace?
- What insights from today's message were most helpful for you?

3. Truth Questions: (What does the Bible say?)

- Think together about some other passages that deal with the topic Spiritual Warfare. Can you think of any? What might they add to the conversation?
- Read 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18. Is Paul saying something similar in this passage to what we talked about today? How is it the same? What's different? What might that add to the conversation?

4. Formation Questions: (Taking it further, How does the Truth change the way I live?)

- What concrete steps can you make to sink the gospel truth that we dealt with today deeper into your life throughout this week? What will you do about the message you heard today?
- What true, noble, pure, right, lovely, admirable, excellent, and praiseworthy things will you think about this week to combat our enemy's attacks? Arm yourself!
- How will you "Make the Choice to Rejoice," this week? What will you do? Make a list of things you will think, say, do that will help you to choose the joy that Jesus gives this week.

5. Resources for Further Study:

1. Mason, Mike. *Champagne for the Soul: Rediscovering God's Gift of Joy*. (Regent College Publishing, Vancouver, BC. 2003).
2. Keller, Timothy J. *The Prodigal God: Recovering the Heart of the Christian Faith*. (Riverhead Books, New York, NY. 2008).

