

Joy and Peace in the Lord

Introduction and Review

- The Holy Spirit enables understanding the word of God which leads to godly sorrow (Neh. 8:9; 2Co. 7:10-11).
- The Holy Spirit enables understanding the word of God which also leads to godly rejoicing (Neh. 8:10-12) = reasons for joy – the day is holy, joy strengthens, rewards, names in heaven...
- Paul wrote the Philippian letter from prison & he understood the gospel benefits of his imprisonment (Phil. 1:12-14).
- The letter overflows with the theme of joy, thankfulness & faithfulness to the Lord.

I. Joy (4:4)

A. The Command

*Rejoice (χαίρω) means to have a godly attitude of gladness & well-being. It is not fickle happiness & silly laughter; but can be expressed in many ways – shouts of praise, tears, singing, prayer, etc. Joy in the Lord is available to all believers & should be obeyed by all (duty & privilege). “in the Lord” – relationship, His character, authority, etc.*

B. The Conditions

*Joy is described in various circumstances (1:18; 2:17-18; 2:29; 4:10). But this command is independent of any & all circumstances – “always”. This attitude reveals that the Lord is greater than our failures, problems, successes, etc. This is a distinguishing sign for a believer (Rom. 5:3-4).*

II. Gentleness (4:5)

A. The Command

*Reasonableness (ἐπιεικής) means not insisting on one’s rights; gracious or gentle. It is available to all believers & should be obeyed by all. It is the opposite of being violent, quarrelsome or unjust (1Tim. 3:3; Tit. 3:2; 1Pe. 2:18).*

B. The Conditions

*Gentleness is not limited to dealings with other believers, but should be evident “to everyone”. Jesus will return to deliver & reward those who are gentle – “The Lord is at hand”.*

III. Peace (4:6-9)

A. The Command

*“do not be anxious” (μεριμνάω) means do not have unreasonable concern or care. This concern dominates a believer’s thinking & distracts from the will of God.*

B. The Conditions

*The believer should not have unreasonable concern about any circumstance or issue in life – “anything” (v. 6a). The remedy is prayer (v. 6b) & the result of prayer is “the peace of God” (v. 7). Peace is maintained by godly thinking & lifestyle (v. 8-9). Maintaining this peace requires time given to meditation & calculation (mathematical term - λογίζομαι); see how these things add up & fit together. We must determine what’s really important in life, circumstances & dilemmas. Then you must do what pleases God & leave the consequences with Him – He’s able to keep you in perfect peace when you mind is stayed on Him (Is. 26:3).*

**ILL:** WW & AW at Lamaze classes. The objective was to help pregnant women cope with the discomfort & pain of labor & childbirth. The techniques include focused breathing, massage, meditation of something pleasant, etc. The idea was to relieve the mind & body from stress, worry & undue pain. It did not work too well though.

**APPL:** God has a plan for Christians to cope with the pain, misery & difficulty in life. But God’s plan always works if we only believe & obey.

## CONCLUSION

They experienced injustice, serious illness (near death), financial problems, doctrinal issues & quarreling in the church. Yet they are commanded not to worry, but to rejoice, be gentle & at peace. They were not super saints with super faith – ordinary like you & me. Jesus expects this of His church – them & us. Christ does not intend for us to be worried, depressed, pessimistic, stubborn, opinionated, argumentative or quarrelsome. For you **not to be anxious** about anything, then you must **pray** about everything. For you to **rejoice** in the Lord always, you must also **pray** always or “pray without ceasing”. For you to be **reasonable or gentle** to everyone, you must **pray** about everyone & every situation. Every believer can be free from worry, have a consistent attitude of gladness & be gracious or gentle in dealing with everyone. Our Father has promised it in His word, Jesus has guaranteed it with His life & the Holy Spirit is here to make it a reality. The only question is will you believe & obey; trust & obey...

And if you are not a Christian, the question is will you believe & obey Christ too. You can only have this joy & peace when you come to know Jesus as your Savior... Will you trust Him & believe today...?

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