

Rejoice In The Lord

"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say rejoice. Let your forbearance be known unto all men. The Lord is at hand" (Phil. 4:4). The command, *"Rejoice in the Lord,"* is the second of three instances these identical words appear. The word *"rejoice"* appears nine times in the letter, lending testimony of the apostle's spirit as he wrote this letter. The one in whom we are to rejoice is *"the Lord"*: a certain reference to the Lord Jesus. Christians have good reason to *"rejoice in the Lord"*!

We are to rejoice in the Lord because the removal of sin's guilt and the restoration of peace of mind can be found in Him. The gospel that Christ *"died for our sins"* should occasion joy in the heart of every forgiven one, which comments from various cases of conversion show such did occur. *"They that gladly receive his word were baptized;" "there was much joy in that city;" "he went on his way rejoicing" "rejoicing greatly, having believed in God"* (Acts 2:41; 8:8; 8:39; 16:34).

We can *"rejoice in the Lord"* because He is the daily supplier of all our physical needs. The psalm's words: *"I was once young, but now am old, yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed beg bread" are words to ponder*" (Psa. 37:25). The psalmist said he hadn't. Have you? He supplied Hagar with her needs and His care for her moved her to say, *"Thou God, seest me"* (Gen. 16:13). Israel was daily provided *"bread from heaven"* as well as water when the need was there (Psa. 80:5). God commanded that ravens feed Elijah (1 Kings 17:4). He sees and provides the needs of the birds of the heavens, and because he provides for these lessor ones, we may pray with good confidence, *"Give us this day our daily bread"* (Mt. 6:11).

We can *"rejoice in the Lord"* because He stands ready to hear our prayers. Jesus once asked His disciples, *"Or what man is there among you, who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him"* (Mt. 7:9-11). We are told to *"ask and ye shall receive"* (Mt. 7:7). We are reminded that we are to pray without ceasing and the reason is clear: we have a Lord who is ready to hear us and supply our needs. What greater reason that we should *"rejoice in the Lord"*?!

We should *"rejoice in the Lord"* because of the victory that He gives us in Him. Paul wrote, *"O death, where is thy sting? O death where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin and the power of sin is the law: but thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ"* (1 Cor.

15:54b-57). *"And the witness is this that God hath granted unto us eternal life, and this life is in his son"* (1 Jn. 5:11).

To Paul, who fervently declared earlier in the letter, nothing was more important than to (through Christ) attain unto the resurrection of the dead (3:11)! To believers, a confident conviction that in Christ *"shall all be made alive"* holds the highest expectation and joy (1 Cor. 15:22).

Life has its tears, trials, and failures. And, unless we are able to contrast these things with more enduring things; unless we are able to put these things in proper focus, we are not likely to *"rejoice in the Lord."* The Hebrew writer spoke of ancient ones who had *"trials of mockings and scourging, yea moreover of bonds and imprisonments: they were stoned; they were sawn asunder, they were tempted; they were slain with the sword"* which might have led to despair had their faith not upheld them, leading them to believe such things were small compared with the glory they expected to receive (Heb. 11:36-37). If we look not at things that are seen but rather at things not seen; if we account that although our outward man perishes, our inward man is renewed day by day; if we account that the things seen are but temporal that the unseen things are eternal, we will then equip ourselves to *"rejoice in the Lord"* (2 Cor. 4:16-18). Rejoicing in the Lord can bring a calm, placid, serene spirit which allows us to "roll with the punches" and "get up and wipe off the dust" all which demonstrates that we are letting our moderation be known unto all men.

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