

Joy-Full Living: Choose Joy

Wylie Methodist Church

Pastor Jeff Hatcher – September 17, 2023

Philippians 1:1-7, 12-26

1 Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons: 2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. 7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart; for whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. 8-11... 12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly. 15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. 20 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

To "Choose Joy" ...

1. LOOK FOR OPPORTUNITIES TO LAUGH

Proverbs 31:22

[A wife of noble character] can laugh at the days to come.

Nehemiah 8:10 ... the joy of the Lord is your strength."

2. COUNT YOUR BLESSINGS

Philippians 1:3-5

3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5 **BECAUSE** of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.

Paul says it again in 1 Thes 5:

(v.16) Be joyful always. (v.18) Give thanks in all circumstances.

3. FOCUS ON GOD'S BIG PICTURE

Philippians 1:12-14

12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

2 Corinthians 10:5

... take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.

Philippians 4:8

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things.

4. TRUST YOUR FUTURE TO GOD

Philippians 1:6

... being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Jesus Christ.

Philippians 1:20

I eagerly expect and hope ... that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or death.

Philippians 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.