

## A Light Still Shines “Let Joy and Peace Shine Forth”

Scripture Text: Luke 2:1-14; Isaiah 9:1-7; Philippians 4:4-7

### Introduction:

Joy and Peace are in high demand today. Many people try to find joy. Books are written to tell others how to have joy...

peace is a treasure that is elusive many seek after it awards are given in its name.

Biblically, joy and peace are related to the pursuit of the right goal, one that is to become the all-consuming goal of a Christian's life.

### I. Rejoice in the Lord always. V.4

#### A. God commands you to be joyful. Phil. 3:1; 4:4

1. How can Paul tell you to be joyful?
2. You are responsible for how you feel.

#### B. True and lasting joy and peace is only found in the Lord.

1. Any other source of joy will let you down.
2. Joy and peace are fruits of the Spirit.
3. The Lord is sufficient cause for continual joy.
4. Paul lived this out in his life. (Acts 16 singing hymns in jail)

#### C. You are to rejoice always.

Romans 8:38-39.

<sup>38</sup> For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, <sup>[a]</sup> neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, <sup>39</sup> neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1. You can experience godly joy and peace in the midst of trouble. (Habakkuk chpt.3 prayed a prayer of rejoicing even though the crops had failed.) <sup>17</sup> *Though the fig tree does not bud and there are no grapes on the vines, though the olive crop fails and the fields produce no food, though there are no sheep in the pen and no cattle in the stalls, <sup>18</sup> yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will be joyful in God my Savior.*

2. If you lack joy and peace you dishonour the Lord.
3. Why do Christians lose their joy? *Matt 6:24 you cannot serve two masters... you will devote to one and despise the other.*

#### D. How, in practical terms, can you rejoice in the Lord?

1. Pursue joyous fellowship with God thru word and prayer. (how much time do you spend in the word and prayer? There is a relationship to this and joy and peace)
2. Rejoice in particular things about God.
3. Rejoice in particular things God does.
4. Rejoice as you praise and worship him.
5. Rejoice even in your trials.

## II. Be yielding and gentle towards all people. V.5a

**A. How does joy and peace show itself? Through a gentle spirit!**

**B. Gentleness is a character quality that Paul is speaking of.**

1. Don't be the kind of person who is always frantically looking out for himself.
2. Don't be ridged about secondary matters. Some things are not important and are not worth fighting for.
3. Instead of pursuing your own happiness, focus on the needs of others. (I like busy times... I have less time to be self-focused and this brings a peace that cannot be bought with money).
4. Treat everyone with consideration.
5. This involves a conscious effort.
6. Our Lord exemplifies gentle forbearance. *Mark 10:45 for even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

**C. Your motivation is that the Lord is near. V.5b**

1. He is with us now.
2. He is coming soon.

## III. Instead of being anxious, pray. V.6-7

**A. Worry is a sign of faithlessness or unbelief.** (Jesus calms the sea and says to his disciples... you of little faith!)

1. What kinds of things make you anxious?
2. You are not enslaved to fear and anxiety... this will remove your joy and peace.
3. Paul is not encouraging making light of your troubles...(Don't Worry be Happy is not a biblical concept) But Paul is saying that if you focus upon the changing circumstances of life rather than the unchangeable Lord of the circumstances then you will not find peace and joy.

**B. Why is worry sin?**

1. Anxiety, like joylessness, dishonours God.
2. Worry exposes our belief in the sovereignty of God.
3. Anxiety is self-destructive.

**C. Turn to God with all your concerns.**

1. By Prayer
2. By Supplication
3. By Thanksgiving
4. Present your request to God

#### **D. God's own peace shall guard your hearts and your minds.**

1. Notice Paul does not say you will have understanding of all things.
2. God's own peace is of surpassing value.

### **Luke 2**

#### **The Birth of Jesus**

<sup>1</sup> In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree that a census should be taken of the entire Roman world. <sup>2</sup> (This was the first census that took place while<sup>[a]</sup> Quirinius was governor of Syria.) <sup>3</sup> And everyone went to their own town to register.

<sup>4</sup> So Joseph also went up from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to Bethlehem the town of David, because he belonged to the house and line of David. <sup>5</sup> He went there to register with Mary, who was pledged to be married to him and was expecting a child. <sup>6</sup> While they were there, the time came for the baby to be born, <sup>7</sup> and she gave birth to her firstborn, a son. She wrapped him in cloths and placed him in a manger, because there was no guest room available for them.

<sup>8</sup> And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. <sup>9</sup> An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. <sup>10</sup> But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause **great joy** for all the people. <sup>11</sup> Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. <sup>12</sup> This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger."

<sup>13</sup> Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

<sup>14</sup> "Glory to God in the highest heaven,  
and on earth **peace to those on whom his favor rests.**"

### **Isaiah 9**

<sup>1</sup> <sup>[a]</sup> Nevertheless, there will be no more gloom for those who were in distress. In the past he humbled the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the future he will honor Galilee of the nations, by the Way of the Sea, beyond the Jordan—

<sup>2</sup> The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned.

<sup>3</sup> You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest, as warriors rejoice when dividing the plunder.

<sup>4</sup> For as in the day of Midian's defeat, you have shattered the yoke that burdens them, the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor.

<sup>5</sup> Every warrior's boot used in battle and every garment rolled in blood will be destined for burning, will be fuel for the fire.

<sup>6</sup> For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

<sup>7</sup> Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end.

## **Philippians 4**

<sup>4</sup> Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!

<sup>5</sup> Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.

<sup>6</sup> Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God.

<sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.