

Rejoice in the Lord Always  
(Philippians 4:4)

Introduction:

1. This verse touches on an important subject that receives a great amount of attention this time of year -- "joy."
2. This subject also receives a great amount of attention in the Bible.
3. In our lesson we are studying a number of passages that teach us what we need to know about joy.
4. Let us begin our study by showing that . . .

Discussion:

I. WE DEVELOP "JOY" WHEN WE BECOME CHRISTIANS

- A. In Acts we read about many people who were filled with joy when they became Christians, including:
1. people in Jerusalem on Pentecost (Acts 2:37-38, 41, 46-47)
  2. people in Samaria (Acts 8:5, 8, 12)
  3. the eunuch of Ethiopia (Acts 8:35-39).
- B. The Bible shows in 2 Corinthians 5:17 why joy is associated with becoming a Christian.

II. THE BIBLE TEACHES US TO MAINTAIN OUR "JOY" AFTER WE BECOME CHRISTIANS

- A. This principle is taught in:
1. Galatians 5:22-23 -- Joy is one of the nine characteristics that make up *"the fruit of the Spirit."*
  2. Philippians 3:1 -- *"Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord."*
  3. 1 Thessalonians 5:16 -- *"Rejoice evermore."*
- B. Not only does the Bible teach us to be filled with joy, but it also teaches when we are to be filled with joy -- *"always"* and *"evermore."*
1. To be more specific, the Bible teaches us to be filled with joy when we undergo trials (James 1:1-2).
  2. Thankfully, we have some positive examples in this area, including:
    - a. the apostles (Acts 5:40-41)
    - b. Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25)
    - c. Jesus (Hebrews 12:1-2).
- C. Since joy is used in different senses, we must understand what the Lord requires of us.
1. Joy often refers to a feeling of happiness that is based on some pleasant experience.
  2. The joy we are considering is the gladness of heart that a Christian possesses because he has a right relationship with the Lord.
    - a. This type of joy is not based on how well things are going for us.
    - b. This type of joy can be experienced when things are not going well for us.
- D. In addition to teaching us to maintain our joy, . . .

III. THE BIBLE TEACHES US HOW TO AVOID LOSING OUR "JOY"

- A. We must put away *"the works of the flesh"* (Galatians 5:19-21) because they will rob us of joy (Psalm 32:1-5, 11).
- B. We must practice the Lord's teachings (John 15:10-11).
- C. We must avoid anxiety (Philippians 4:6-7).
- D. We must think properly (Philippians 4:8-9).

Conclusion:

1. "Joy" is certainly an important part of Christianity.
2. We have reason to rejoice when we become Christians.
3. We are to continue rejoicing after we become Christians.
4. By following the guidelines that the Lord has given in His Word we will not lose our joy.