

Rejoice!

To Live Is Christ

1st - 3rd Grade
Lesson 12

Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice.

—Philippians 4:4

The book of Philippians is a letter Paul wrote to the church at Philippi. Paul tells us in this verse that we should always be glad. Are you always glad and happy? It's easy to be happy when things are going the way we want them to go. But what about when things don't go our way?

Paul wrote this letter when he was prisoner in Rome. The Emperor Nero hated Christians. He had many of them killed. Each day, Paul did not know if it would be his last day alive. Things were not going his way. So, how could Paul "rejoice in the Lord always"?

It wasn't because he was rich. He didn't have any money. He depended on the offerings that the churches sent to him. He told this church that he knew what it was like to have what he needed. But he also knew what it was like not to have what he needed.

Paul didn't "rejoice always" because he had a family. He did not have a wife or children. He knew many Christians, and he called them brothers and sisters in Christ. But they were his only family.

He didn't rejoice because he was healthy. The Bible says that he had a health problem. He begged God to heal him. But that was not God's plan. God told Paul just to trust in Him.

So, we see that Paul was in prison, he did not have money, and he did not have a family. How could he rejoice all the time then? We'll find the answer as we study this lesson.

He Walked with God

What does it mean to walk with God? First of all, it means we talk with God in prayer. Do you have a good friend? How did you become friends? Did you spend time together? Did you talk to each other a lot? That is the way to get to know someone. We must spend time with God in order to know Him. Paul spent much time talking with God while he was in prison.

Paul also spent time praising God. When you spend time with God, you can't help but praise Him. He is wonderful. He has done many good things for us. He loves us more than anyone else could ever love us. He even sent His Son, Jesus, to die for us. One good way to praise God is to sing songs to Him. Do you remember what Paul and Silas did when they were in jail in this city of Philippi? They were beaten and put in prison. But at midnight, they sang praises to God.

Paul also tells us that in order to "rejoice always," we must think about the right things. Paul tells us what to think about:

Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest. Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever

things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.

—Philippians 4:8

He Won Souls

Before He went to heaven, Jesus commanded us to tell the whole world about Him. Paul knew he must obey even when he was in prison. Philippians 1:13 says that people in Caesar’s palace were saved because Paul told them about Jesus. In the book of Philemon, Paul tells us about a runaway slave named Onesimus that was saved when Paul witnessed to him. Being in prison was not an excuse for Paul to disobey Jesus’ command. There is no excuse for you or me either. We must tell everyone we can about God’s love for them.

He Looked Forward to Heaven

Paul didn’t know when Nero might take him from prison and have him killed. But he said in Philippians 1:21, “For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” He loved serving God on earth, and he knew it would be wonderful when he went to heaven. Either way, Paul was happy. If we follow Paul’s example, we can “rejoice alway” too.

Teacher’s Notes
