



## Rejoice In The Lord, Always!

One of the beautiful things about Scripture is that no matter where you are in life, or what circumstances you may be facing, you can find simple but powerful truths that, if taken in with a humble and teachable heart, can completely change your attitude.

Today's passage is one containing such truth. Simple, encouraging, worthy of meditating on, and one that can stand alone as a constant reminder to keep our eyes focused on the Lord.

***Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentle spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near.*** Philippians 4:4-5 NASB

I've said it many times before, but context matters, so let's not forget that the apostle Paul wrote this passage while he was imprisoned for being a Christian. Just for a moment, consider your present circumstances. Are things going well... or maybe not so much? If the road you're on is rocky, let me ask you this: are you locked in a dungeon for your faith? Has everything you owned been stripped from you because you claim Christ? Are you facing execution for preaching the gospel? If not, then you likely have it better than Paul did when he wrote these two verses.

Comparing to the original Greek text, this passage is rendered nicely in English. But always seeking to be good expositors of the Word, let's dissect this just a bit to see what else we can learn:

***Rejoice*** (chairō) means to be joyful and be glad.

***Always*** (pantote) means "at all times".

***Lord*** (kurios) means master, owner, or one with great authority. As a side note, we know Paul is specifically speaking of Christ here because Jesus is almost always referred to as the *Lord* (kurios) throughout the New Testament epistles, while the Father is generally called *God* (theos). This is a helpful way to differentiate between the Father and the Son.

***Gentle spirit*** is actually just a single Greek word, epieikēs, which is defined as equitable, yielding, or reasonable.

***Men*** (anthrōpos) describes humans or mankind itself, not just men by gender or a specific group of people, but quite literally everyone.



And “**the Lord is near**” (kurios engys) could be rendered as *Christ is at hand* or *Christ is ready*.

We can see that Paul is instructing the readers of this letter to be joyful at all times in Christ, and to be reasonable, fair, and humble with everyone we meet, because the Lord Jesus is very close by.

And again we are to do this in every circumstance; when things are going great and when things are not going great. *At all times!* If you’re uncertain that you can really find joy in difficult seasons, consider these passages:

***In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, so that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ;*** 1 Peter 1:6-7 NASB

***Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal among you, which comes upon you for your testing, as though some strange thing were happening to you; but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation.*** 1 Peter 4:12-13

***For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.*** 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

***Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance.*** James 1:2-3 NASB

Perhaps these truths are tugging at your heart to recenter your source of joy? They do in mine! Oh how easy it is to let our joy slip away when we are faced with situations we do not like. We fail to **rejoice always** because we are not rejoicing in the right things. If we only rejoice in our circumstances, our joy is fleeting and fragile and can be carried away by the wind. But Paul says we are to **rejoice in Christ**, not in anything or anyone else.

When we train our mind and heart to find joy in our Master, instead of what is going on around us or happening to us, we will always be able to truly rejoice because our joy is anchored in the unchanging and everlasting authority, grace, and love of the Lord Jesus.



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