

Philippians 1:15–18

“Rejoicing Always in the Always-Good Lord”

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are welcome to listen to the audio recording, which you may find via tinysa.com/hopewellarp)

All right Philippians chapter 1 our portion this evening is verse 15 through 18, it's probably. Our father in heaven we ask that you would help us now. As we read your word that your spirit would attend us. That you would grant to us to be freed from other things that would distract us.

That you would make your word enter into our hearts and that by it you would conform our minds our lives to Christ where we asking his name amen. Chapter one beginning in verse 15 going through verse 18 some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife. And some also from Goodwill.

The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely. Supposing to add affliction to my chains. But the latter out of love knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the Gospel. What then only that in every way whether in pretense or in truth? Christ is preached and in this I rejoice.

Yes and will rejoice. So far the reading of God's inspired and inherent word.

It's a good warning for us how. Easily we can deceive ourselves that even those who are preaching Christ and the gospel truly. Were perhaps self-deceived or perhaps not deceived but not even caring that they were doing so from wrong motives. We know that Christ is being preached truly by them because if he wasn't Paul would not be rejoicing in it.

He grieves greatly over those who preach another Christ to the Corinthians and when he's talking to the Galatians about those who preach another Gospel, he said, let them be anathema, let them be a cursed before. God may help come upon them. And so this is the right gospel about the right price that they are preaching and yet he says by the inspiration of the Spirit and so with with absolute truthfulness that they are preaching the right gospel of the right Christ with hearts that are full of envy.

And strife and selfish ambition and insincerity wanting to rub his chains in the affliction the word for afflictionary to press upon and and rub in. And so these were preachers of the true gospel the true true Christ who were either missing or saw and didn't care that they had this in their hearts.

What a warning for us that we might have right doctrine. We might have right doctrine about the gospel. We might have right doctrine about Christ. And still fall into such grievous sin and this would have been a great grief for the apostle. They're full of envy and strife. Not out of love to him of the latter we're out of love but not out of love to him but hoping to add affliction to his chains.

Why is this such a great grief? Why can we know that this is such a great brief to Paul because Paul is praying the exact opposite for? And he tells us just a couple of verses earlier when he's talking about how he prays for the Philippians and surely he prayed similar things for the Christians in the church at Rome this I pray verse 9 that your love may abound still more and more and knowledge and discernment that you may approve the things that are excellent that you may be sincere.

And without offense and now he says these preach from envy and strife verse 15, not sincerely verse 16 and then the next chapter he's gonna say. He's gonna say let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit, but in loneliness of mind let each his team others better than himself let eat let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus verse 5 and so the apostle who is just about to plead with him by the Holy Spirit let nothing be done out of selfish ambition has to truthfully grievously say of some.

That the former verse 16 preach Christ from selfish ambition, so how is it that the apostle who has this great grief to report to them? Can say by the time we're done with this short passage. In this I rejoice yes and I will rejoice well we can also look to another part of the letter to explain the reason he's able to rejoice in this and at any other time he doesn't just say rejoice always in chapter 4 he says rejoice in the Lord always you see in everything that someone says and everything that someone does there are two persons acting.

There is the person who may be a wicked person acting purely wicked leader, they may be a converted person unknowingly and unintentionally acting wickedly. But whoever is doing whatever else we always know that God the good God is acting rightly the good God is doing good it's like the rejoicing of the apostles when they are when they are praying to God after after having come out from before the Sanhedrin and their praising him because all of those enemies of his were gathered in one place to do to his servant his Messiah the Lord Jesus Christ.

Whatever God had ordained for them to do. And so they talked about something which is the greatest grief any of us has. Considering what our Lord was enduring. For our sakes farson six. And yet they do it with the greatest joy possible rejoicing over what God had done and that's what Paul is doing here what's that's what the apostle is modeling for us here is a way to rejoice always in any situation by focusing on what the Lord is doing it's true that he's reported to them.

I want you to know brethren from last week's passage verses 12 through 14 things such have happened to me have turned out for the advance of the gospel and that part of what he's reporting to them is that many of the believers in Rome have become. Much more bold to speak the word without fear and yet in reporting the good thing that God had done in the boldness and the fearlessness was which they were speaking he's not ignoring that there's also sin and grief going on.

Rejoicing in what the Lord is doing does not mean ignoring that which is wicked and that which is grievous either in ourselves or in the world

around us but we are enabled to rejoice in the situation by giving more weight to what good the good Lord is doing than we do to the grievous sin that's sinful creatures are doing and so so here he is encouraging them he wants them to be bold to speak the word with.

Out fear he also wants them to be aware that boldness does not always does boldness might be a cover for sinfulness and so he wants them to be aware of their own capacity for self-deception and some of the pitfalls in this opportunity that he's giving them to rejoice over what's going on and to be emboldened and to be fearless and preaching the gospel but he also wants them to have this example of whatever the Lord is doing, however.

The Lord is advancing his gospel that they can rejoice at least in the Lord and so he tells them about the former and then he says but the latter verse 17 knowing that I out of love knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel what then only that in every way whether in pretense or in truth Christ is preached and in this I rejoice so what are they able to do they're able to rejoice that Christ has preached like Paul did.

And they're able to rejoice that there were many who were emboldened and made fearless and preaching the gospel and they're even able to rejoice that those who thought they could afflict. Paul have utterly failed haven't they? Because there were those who are trying to rub his chains in to use the language here and they thought this is our opportunity selfish ambition, right?

I must increase and Paul must decrease he's in prison. I'm gonna increase my standing in the church's this is my chance to to be much like what Wesley did with Whitfield when Whitfield came over to this side of the Atlantic and yet, As Paul afflicted more by what they have done.

Because Paul is focusing on the good that the Lord is doing even through that insincere and bad badly motivated preaching of the gospel haven't those who wanted to afflict them accomplished exactly the opposite they're bringing joy to the apostle that they that they thought they could hurt and if you are rejoicing in whatever good the Lord does through whatever ill others do to you they can never harm you they can only accomplish the opposite of what they're trying to do.

Because whatever they end up doing to you, you will be rejoicing over what the Lord is doing. How frustrating how miserable a thing it must be to be the devil. Who cannot but attack Job in his malice and end up being used as the instrument by which job is brought to a greater knowledge of God.

Who even in his greatest and most hostile attack ever upon Jesus as the cross at the cross ends up being the unwitting instrument through which the greatest triumph of Christ and the redemption of all of who all who are his is he becomes instrumental in the Lord Jesus accomplishing that and so you too can do with all of your enemies in the Lord.

If you are focused on the good that the Lord is doing everyone who seeks to harm you can only accomplish exactly the opposite as you rejoice over the good that the Lord has done you through them. And so the apostle is rejoicing and he hopes that those he has good hope that those who love him can rejoice with him and how that's turned out and he hopes to hear the same about them that whatever else occurs with them that they are giving more weight to the good that the Lord is doing and that they are rejoicing in the Lord always and so he can rejoice to in their rejoicing just like he hopes they will in his rejoicing when they get the letter.

So let us. Be aware of our own hearts focus more give more weight to the good that the good Lord is doing in every situation so that we may always rejoice and those who love us and know that we are doing that may also rejoice with us as praying our Father in heaven we thank you for the gladness that belongs to those who are yours and we pray that you would help us not to minimize the grievousness of believers acting out of selfish ambition and envy and strife.

So that we would be aware of the danger and be wary of very careful against the danger of these things in our own hearts, don't let us Lord fall into that self-deception. And yet oh god without minimizing how grievous that is grant that we would be able to maximize how you are always accomplishing your good and perfect holy will in every situation so that no one is ever able to rob us of our joy because you by your spirit would rent to us that our rejoicing would be in you our Lord and we asked us in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.