

Introduction

1. Joy is the keynote of this Epistle.
2. In our text Paul twice urges us to rejoice.
3. It is good to be a happy Christian.

1. LET US FIRST STUDY WHAT MADE PAUL HAPPY

- 1) There were things he might have been unhappy with at the time:
 - (i) his imprisonment (1:13) - but no – it was all for the best
 - (ii) the bad motive of some preachers (1:15) – but it was for good (1:18)
 - (iii) the illness of Epaphroditus (2:25) – but it was overruled
 - (iv) the "dogs" (3:2) – but he looks above to God's grace to himself.

APPLICATION: Yet he rejoices + so should we.

- 2) Paul gives us an idea why he rejoices:
 - (i) for the congregation's health: (1:4-5)
 - (ii) the growing faith of God's people: (2:2)
 - (iii) the wondrous work of Christ (2:5-11)
 - (iv) to believe his ministry fruitful (2:16-17)
 - (v) to have a divine righteousness (3:8)
 - (vi) for the brotherly love of the Philippians (4:18)

APPLICATION: What a lot Paul finds to rejoice in!

2. THE CHRISTIAN MUST STRIVE TO "REJOICE ALWAYS"

*Note this text: "Rejoice...again, Rejoice".

I look at THREE aspects of it:

- 1) We are to rejoice in good things
 This is natural – even the wicked do this.
APPLICATION: When God makes you happy, thank Him.
ILLUSTRATION: David at Ziklag – what a low point. But he

was almost at the end of his difficulties. See 1 Samuel 30:6.

- 2) We are to rejoice in evil (hard) things.
 God sends hard experiences into our life from time to time.
ILLUSTRATION: Queen Elizabeth.
APPLICATION: Learn to bless God and to look up.
- 3) We are to look to God in all things:
APPLICATION: Stop just now and look at your life. Then, in your heart thank God.
ILLUSTRATION: The Highland lady who fell ill.

3. THINGS TO GUARD AGAINST BECAUSE THEY HAVE A TENDENCY TO QUENCH OUR JOY

- 1) Murmuring against God
 Remember Israel in the wilderness
- 2) Doubting God's Love to us in Christ
 This is Satan's voice: "Yea, hath God said?" "If thou be the Son of God"
APPLICATION: Be ready with: "It is written..."
- 3) The Fear of Man
 Remember Christ's words "Fear not him who can kill the body..."
- 4) Allowing yourself to do what your conscience does not allow.
Explain. A bad conscience eats up joy like a worm.

CONCLUSION

The best Christians are those who rejoice.
 Let us be among them. It is the spirit of heaven.

PSALM

34:1 – 9

97: 1 – 8

150: 1 – 6