

# Philippians

## Rejoice, and again I will say Rejoice

Phil 1: 3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, 4 always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, 5 for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, 6 being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete *it* until the day of Jesus Christ;

In James we are being tried, enduring these trials requires patience and actually works patience in us, and you cannot have a perfect work without patience. Therefore, we need to count these trials joy. Here we see Paul counting their fellowship in gospel with joy. Paul says God has begun a good work in us and will complete it. In this view these trials we are going through are in fact God doing a good work in us, and they are evidence that God will complete this work in us. James talks about a perfect work, Paul talks about the good work that God will complete in us, Paul also lets us know that this work we are doing is “fellowship in the gospel”. James talks about the work “wanting something” meaning it is incomplete, Paul tells us that these trials are dealing with those things that are wanting and that God will do a complete work so that nothing is wanting. I do not preach the gospel at my school where I teach, but my work is still fellowship in this gospel. The gospel is that Jesus Christ is Lord and that we are ambassadors of the Kingdom of heavens bringing healing to the nations. My job is fellowship, participation in that gospel of bringing healing to the nations under the headship of Jesus Christ.

9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, 10 that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, 11 being filled with the fruits of righteousness which *are* by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

What does it mean to “count it all joy”. It means that our love would abound (versus growing cold which is a common response to trials). It means approving things that are excellent rather than allowing our ego to get involved. It means being sincere and without offense rather than becoming political and vengeful. It means being filled with the fruits of righteousness rather than the petty grievances and tit for tats that are common.

12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things *which happened* to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, 13 so that it has become evident to

the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; 14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Again, this helps me to count it all joy. Often we are confused, why did this happen? I was preaching the gospel, doing what the Lord said, why am I now in prison? A root of bitterness is a very real concern when going through these trials, like being falsely accused of a crime and being imprisoned by a corrupt government. On the other hand there are many others, like Jonah, who ran from speaking the word. But what happened to Jonah also turned out to the furtherance of the gospel. At the end of the age things will happen, they also will be for the furtherance of the gospel, it will become evident to all that this is the hand of God and as a result the brethren will be more bold to speak the word without fear.

**15** Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: **16** The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; **17** but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. **18** 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.

This is really great. You can see that some are making valid arguments about why Paul shouldn't rejoice. Just like Jonah complaining to God about why he didn't want to preach to Nineveh. He knew God would relent and have mercy even though they were so sinful. Some of the preaching is out of envy and strife. There is selfish ambition and a desire for vengeance. But Paul tells us that as long as Christ is preached he will rejoice. It makes perfect sense. God is working on us, these trials are revealing selfish ambition, envy and strife. This is how God purifies us and does a complete and perfect work. You should not be surprised that He is doing this in others and that you can see these imperfections being revealed in others.

**19** For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, **20** according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. **21** For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

Paul continues to show us how to count it all joy. His deliverance will be through their prayer, he is cheering them on. We are in this together, we are a team. Yes, he is being attacked, slandered, and ridiculed but his expectation and hope is that he will not be ashamed but that Christ will be magnified in his body. He is showing us the complete picture, he is rejoicing, not because they are slandering him, but because he

will be made a conqueror with Christ being magnified in Him. Whether by life or death! Even if they put him to death he can still count it all joy because to die is gain. What is the point of life? Paul says for to him to live is Christ. When Christ is magnified in his body that is the true joy, that is why he lives. Since that is the case he knows that if the Lord chooses to take him then that is gain, he will be with Christ. "When my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, Lord, and my prayer rose to you, to your holy temple. 8 "Those who cling to worthless idols turn away from God's love for them. 9 But I, with shouts of grateful praise, will sacrifice to you. What I have vowed I will make good. I will say, 'Salvation comes from the Lord.'" (Jonah 2:7-9) At the end of this age we all need to imitate Paul.

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. 29 For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear *is* in me.

When we count it all joy it doesn't mean we won't have adversaries, it doesn't mean we won't have conflict. We saw this conflict and these adversaries in the life of Paul, so to count it all joy we need to imitate him. Conduct yourself worthy of the gospel. Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind, striving for the faith of the gospel. There is lots of conflict to a teacher, it comes from every direction. Kids fight you, parents fight you, administrators fight you. You need to stand firm with one mind (this is in contrast to James's use of a "double minded man"). The waves are crashing over the boat but like James said "you are firmly fixed on the goal". We are striving together for the faith of the gospel. My faith is that I will speak to a mountain of unbelief to be cast into the sea and it will be done. My faith is that the stone which the builders rejected will become the head of the corner. We cannot be terrified by the things that will come on the whole earth, it is proof of perdition but to us of salvation.

2 Therefore if *there is* any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and mercy, 2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, *being* of one accord, of one mind. 3 Let nothing *be done* through selfish ambition or conceit, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem others better than himself. 4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

This is how you count it all joy. In these trials is there an opportunity to comfort someone in love? Is there an opportunity for affection and mercy? The narrow way that leads to life avoids selfish ambition, it avoids conceit. This path where we can count it all joy is in lowliness of mind where we esteem others better than ourselves. At no time is this more necessary, to look out for the interests of others, than at the end of the age.

**5** Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, **6** who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, **7** but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to *the point of death*, even the death of the cross. **9** Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, **10** that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, **11** and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

To count it all joy is something you do with your mind. What kind of mind could count these trials joy? Only the mind of Christ. You will be slandered, your reputation will be lost, you will be humbled, you will have to choose to be a servant, and ultimately you will be put to death. Your ego, everything you count precious will be nailed to that cross. Can you really count it all joy? Only if you have the mind of Christ.

**12** Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; **13** for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for *His* good pleasure. **14** Do all things without complaining and disputing, **15** that you may become blameless and harmless, children of God without fault in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, **16** holding fast the word of life, so that I may rejoice in the day of Christ that I have not run in vain or labored in vain. **17** Yes, and if I am being poured out *as a drink offering* on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. **18** For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.

Counting it all joy is equivalent to “working out your own salvation”. If you are complaining and disputing it is evidence that you are not counting it all joy and therefore these things are not working out to your salvation. Why? Because if you are not blameless and harmless you will be judged for that at the judgement seat of Christ. If you are not shining as a light in the world, if you are not holding fast the word of life then you will be judged along with this crooked and perverse generation. On the other hand if you are doing that then guess what, when you are standing at the judgement seat of Christ Paul will be rejoicing because your life is proof that he didn’t run in vain and didn’t

labor in vain. So if he is put to death he can rejoice with us, because we all one day will be standing before the Lord, victorious.

**19** But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. **20** For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. **21** For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. **22** But you know his proven character, that as a son with *his* father he served with me in the gospel. **23** Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. **24** But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. **25** Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; **26** since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. **27** For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. **28** Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. **29** Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; **30** because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.

Counting it all joy doesn't mean we don't have sorrow, even sorrow upon sorrow. Instead Paul looks at these brothers, one "for the work of Christ came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me". The other sincerely cares for your state serving with Paul as a son with a father. These trials which cause sorrow offer an opportunity for the Christ in the saints to shine forth.

**3** Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you *is not tedious, but for you it is safe*. Paul is really awesome. James tells us to "count it all joy" and he can expand on that in so many ways, it is amazing.

**2** Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! **3** For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh, **4** though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: **5** circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, *of* the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; **6** concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. **7** But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. **8** Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; **10** that I may know Him and the

power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, **11** if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Beware of these guys, why? Because they are trying to get you to have your own righteousness, based on the law and not the righteousness from God based on faith in Christ. What is so bad about having your own righteousness based on the law? Isn't that good? It doesn't help you to know Christ, or the power of His resurrection, or the fellowship of His sufferings. It doesn't help you to be conformed to His death if by any means you could also attain to His resurrection. It is a scam. A phony rolex. When you stand before the judgement seat of Christ having your own righteousness will result in the Lord saying "depart from Me I never knew you". **12** Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. **13** Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing *I do*, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, **14** I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. **15** Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. **16** Nevertheless, to *the degree* that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind. Paul talks about "the same mind" and walking by the same mind. James talks about the perfect law of liberty and that whoever is carefully investigating that law in their ministry will be blessed in their deed. Paul says "to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind". This same "rule" is the law of liberty, the mind of Christ, to do unto others as you would have them do unto you.

**17** Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. **18** For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, *that they are* the enemies of the cross of Christ: **19** whose end *is* destruction, whose god *is their* belly, and *whose* glory *is* in their shame—who set their mind on earthly things.

They say to themselves "who can bring me down" (Obadiah 3). They eat with you yet secretly set a trap for you (Obadiah 7). They will be covered with shame (Obadiah 10), utterly despised (Obadiah 2). Why? They stood aloof when their brother suffered calamity, they gloated in his misfortune, boasting in themselves and rejoicing in their misfortune (Obadiah 12)

**20** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, **21** who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.

On Mount Zion will be deliverance, it will be holy, and Jacob will possess his inheritance, we'll be transformed to the prince of God. (Obadiah 17). The exiles of the good land will possess it (Obadiah 20). And the Kingdom will be the Lord's (Obadiah 21).

**4** Therefore, my beloved and longed-for brethren, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, beloved. **2** I implore Euodia and I implore Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. **3** And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life. **4** Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! This book is an exposition on "counting it all joy".

**5** Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand. **6** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; **7** and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. In order to "count it all joy" we need a guard who will protect our hearts and minds, the peace of God is that guard and we receive this protection from God when we make our prayers and supplications known to God. The Lord is at hand, that would be terrifying if it were not for the Peace of God guarding our hearts. **8** Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things *are* noble, whatever things *are* just, whatever things *are* pure, whatever things *are* lovely, whatever things *are* of good report, if *there is* any virtue and if *there is* anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things. **9** The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you. Once again, I love Paul. It is one thing to say that the mind of Christ is to "do unto others as you would have them do unto you" but practically speaking what does that mean? It means we actively meditate on things that are true, noble, just, pure, lovely, of good report, if there is any virtue, if any praise. Paul has given us a number of examples by showing what he was meditating on with Timothy and Epaphroditus.

**10** But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. **11** Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: **12** I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. **13** I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. This book tells us again and again to rejoice in the Lord, to count it all joy. But it also tells us how to make others rejoice. It is like a fire, if you cause others to rejoice it will cause you to rejoice. **14** Nevertheless you have done well that you shared in my distress. **15** Now you Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church shared with me

concerning giving and receiving but you only. **16** For even in Thessalonica you sent *aid* once and again for my necessities. **17** Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that abounds to your account. **18** Indeed I [g]have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things *sent* from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God. **19** And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. **20** Now to our God and Father *be* glory forever and ever. Amen.