

**Lesson Title:** Paul and Silas in Philippi**Scripture Focus:** Acts 16:25; Philippians 4:4**The Lesson in Context**

Throughout his letter, Paul repeatedly wrote about rejoicing. He personally found present and future joy in the Philippians' participation with him in the gospel, in preaching Jesus Christ, in the church's unity, in Jesus' return, and in the church itself. (See Philippians 1:4–5, 18; 2:2, 16; 4:1.) Paul commanded them time and time again to rejoice in the Lord—in their covenantal relationship with Jesus and because of His saving work on Calvary.

We often need repeated reminders to rejoice. Joy is often thought of as a mental and emotional state, but rejoicing is an active choice. No matter how we feel, we can choose joy by expressing our gratitude to the Lord and focusing on praiseworthy things. As we make the choice to rejoice, the Holy Spirit transforms our hearts, producing the sweet fruit of joy. Biblical joy is not a shallow optimism that comes from our understanding or pleasant situations. We rejoice not in ourselves but in the Lord. As people of God, we celebrate the story of salvation and communion with our Savior. Like Paul and the church at Philippi, we can also rejoice in the body of Christ. Appreciating the church community, working toward unity, and celebrating those who serve and sacrifice give us bountiful reasons to rejoice.

Group Discussion

1. If God has given you a dream or vision of something to come to pass, has it already happened? If not, what Bible passages encourage you as you look for God to perform what He promised?
2. How has God provided direction or redirection in your life through your spiritual disciplines?
3. How do we deal with resistance to the gospel in today's culture?
4. What are the benefits of having joy in negative situations?
5. What intentional reminders to rejoice can you incorporate into your life?

My Prayer for the Upcoming Week

How do you want to be different because of what you have experienced today?
