

SERMON NOTES AND SCRIPTURE

Philippians 1:18–30

18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. 20 I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

22 If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! 23 I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; 24 but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.

27 Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel 28 without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. 29 For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, 30 since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.

2 Corinthians 4:17–18

17 For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. 18 So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, since what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.

1. Our circumstances don't get to decide whether or not we're joyful.

2. You are only as mature as your most immature fruit.

GROUP DISCUSSION

Please read the passages of Scripture together as a group.

How would you define joy? How is it different than happiness?

What part did suffering have in Paul's life? How did he balance both joy and suffering and sorrow?

We see that Paul was torn between the ministry he had and the eternal life that awaited him. Have you ever wrestled with that?

Have you seen God use the suffering in your life for a ministry? 2 Corinthians 4:17-18

Do you trust God enough to be able to be joyful in all circumstances, even when you don't know what the future holds?

What are the things in your life that you allow to steal your joy, if any?