

REJOICING AS CHRISTIANS

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The Ethiopian went his way rejoicing Acts 8:26-39
- B. Christians "rejoiced" at their deliverance despite trial and persecution 1Pet 1:3-7
- C. "Joy" is listed as a fruit of the Spirit Gal 5:22
- D. Paul commands Christians to rejoice always then repeats the command! 1Thess 5:16; Phil 4:4
- E. Scripture makes it quite clear that joy and rejoicing are to be part of the life of a Christian
- F. Why rejoice? Why does God command rejoicing
- G. Look at our need to rejoice today

DISCUSSION:

I. WHY THE NEED TO REJOICE

- A. We rejoice out of gratitude for what God **HAS DONE**
 - 1. Attitude of Ethiopian in Acts 8:39
 - 2. Delivered from darkness Col 1:13
 - 3. Translated into Kingdom of God's Son, who was sacrificed for us Col 1:13; Jhn 3:16; Matt 26:28
 - 4. Creation supplies our needs Gen 1
- B. We rejoice out of gratitude for what God **IS DOING**
 - 1. Association with the Father and Son 1Jhn 1:3-7
 - 2. Benefits of the association of fellow Christians Heb 10:24-25; 1Jhn 1:5-7
 - 3. Mediator who sympathizes with us 1Tim 2:5; Heb 4:15-16
 - 4. Boldness to approach the Father in prayer Heb 10:19-22; 1Pet 3:12
 - 5. He who is for us is stronger than those who are against us 1Jhn 4:4
 - 6. We continue in hope Rom 12:12
- C. We rejoice out of gratitude for what God **WILL DO**
 - 1. Eternal life promised if we obey Him Jhn 3:16
 - 2. Salvation reserved for us in Heaven 1Pet 1:3-7
 - 3. A place of joy, peace, and exaltation Rev 7:16-17
 - 4. God cares for us and will preserve us if we remain obedient 1Pet 5:7; Rom 8:31-39
- D. Joy is based in the wonderful things that God **HAS DONE, IS DOING, and WILL DO** for us
- E. This joy ought to be natural
 - 1. After all, are we of all people not most blessed?
 - 2. God gives all spiritual blessing in Christ Eph 1:3
 - 3. We have salvation more valuable than anything else in the world Matt 13:45-46; 16:25-28?

- 4. Should be natural reaction to be happy people
- #### II. THE NEED FOR THE COMMAND

- A. If so natural, why does God need to command it
 - 1. Why does Paul repeat the command in Phil 4:4
 - 2. Shouldn't joy be automatic
- B. Yet, we know Christians become discouraged
 - 1. They may not think they're doing well spiritually
 - 2. They may have endured suffering or persecution
 - 3. Brethren or others may have discouraged them
 - 4. They may just be weak
- C. For whatever reason, Christians are often not the happy people they ought to be
- D. Happiness a conscious deliberate choice – hence the command
- E. Can't control life's circumstances-- but we can control how we react to life's circumstances
 - 1. What's our attitude when things don't look so good
Consider Acts 5:41; 16:25; 2Cor 6:10; 1Pet 1:3-9
 - 2. Christians can be happy even in dire or difficult circumstances Acts 16:25
- F. Great comfort-- no external force can separate us from the love of God Rom 8:31-39
 - 1. We are the only ones that can do that
 - 2. Nothing you can experience so negative that you can't maintain the joy of being a Christian
 - 3. No trial or temptation so great that it entirely obscures Heaven from us
 - 4. We simply need to choose to be positive
- G. We can choose, therefore, to be positive or negative
 - 1. Importance of Phil 4:8
 - 2. Where our mind is, there will our attitude be also
 - 3. There is plenty of negativity always around us
 - 4. Anyone can be a downer
 - 5. Let us instead strive to build up in joy
- H. Attitude of joy and rejoicing is not automatic-- it must be trained, desired, and worked for
 - I. What will our choice be

CONCLUSION:

- A. We have every reason to rejoice in Christ Jesus
- B. We should indeed be happy people
- C. Maybe not everything works out as we would like, but even in the worst of times, we can know that God is on our side and we can have joy in that
- D. We choose whether joyful (positive) or sad (negative)
- E. Choose to be a Christian so you can rejoice today