

# Rejoice in the Lord Always

## Philippians 4:4-5

### **Introduction**

Today's passage deals with one of my favorite topics – rejoicing in the Lord. It's one of my favorites because when I first became a Christian I did not think feelings were important. I just focused on believing the right things, and doing the right things. As a result, I had little heart-connection with the Lord, and not much experience of his presence.

But that changed after I saw how much the Bible talked about feelings. And one of the passages that God used back then was our passage for today– Philippians 4:4.

When we read about rejoicing in the Lord we will have different responses, depending on what's going on in our lives. Some of us might be encouraged by these words. But others might be discouraged, or even hopeless. But God has good news for all of us this morning.

### **What does it mean to rejoice in the Lord?**

The Greek word for "rejoice" refers to a feeling of pleasure and delight.

So to rejoice in the Lord means to have a feeling of pleasure and delight in Jesus Christ himself.

### **How important is it that we rejoice in the Lord?**

This is a command.

This is a command Paul repeats three times.

This is a command that we are to obey always.

### **Why is rejoicing in the Lord so important?**

Because no joy compares to the joy of knowing Christ (Philippians 3:8).

Because joy in the Lord is an essential part of saving faith (Philippians 1:25).

Because rejoicing in the Lord is what most highly honors him (Philippians 1:20-21).

Because rejoicing in the Lord keeps us safe (Philippians 3:1).

Because rejoicing in the Lord makes us reasonable toward others (Philippians 4:4-5).

### **How do we go about obeying this command?**

Be honest about the condition of your heart.

Understand why you aren't rejoicing in the Lord.

Confess this sin and trust Christ to forgive you.

Ask God to conquer your sin and change your heart.

Set your heart prayerfully on the truth of who God is in Christ.

When you do this, God will change your heart so you once again see and feel Christ as your all-satisfying treasure.



## **HOME GROUP DISCUSSION OF SUNDAY'S TEACHING**

*(Sometimes in our home groups we talk about Sunday's teaching, so we can work together on responding to God's Word — asking questions, sharing insights, talking together.)*

In the past, how much importance have you placed on feelings in the Christian life? Why did you place this much, or this little, emphasis on feelings?

How do you feel when you hear the command "rejoice in the Lord"? Are you encouraged? Discouraged? Hopeless? Why?

Do you agree that rejoicing in the Lord refers to a feeling of pleasure and delight in who Jesus Christ is? Why or why not?

Which of the five reasons (for why rejoicing in the Lord is so important) was most persuasive to you? Why? Which was the most puzzling to you? Why?

In the past, how have you tried to obey this command to rejoice in the Lord? How well did that work? Did Sunday's teaching change how you will pursue this in the future? Why or why not?

How have you battled for joy this week? How has the battle gone?

What is the state of your heart right now? What have you been trusting for your joy today?

Take time to pray for each other — that God will free you from sin's blinding power, enable you to fight for joy in Christ, and fill you with joy in Christ

