**Lesson 2: Your Joy in Christ is in Jeopardy**

An Overview of Philippians

**Introduction**

“Joy leaks. Have you ever noticed that? One minute you can be on top of the world, and the next minute in the pit of despair. To hold on to a joyful state of mind seems as pointless as trying to carry water in a holey bucket” (Ken Baugh). Maybe you have felt that way before. You may be surprised to discover that the Philippians were encountering some of the same pressures you face today. Slowly but surely they were losing joy. We will conduct a brief survey of Paul’s letter to the Philippians to see that joy is a result of a right relationship with Christ. The Philippians needed help, and so do we!

1. **Review:** The Philippian believers were filled with joy when they came into a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
   1. These new believers formed a new, joyful congregation!
   2. The joy they received at the time of their salvation was designed to be an abiding joy.
   3. It was just the type of church that the Lord loves and Satan hates.
2. Their joy in Christ was in jeopardy because of wrong attitudes that were growing in the church.
   1. Approximately ten years had passed since the time of their salvation.
   2. Upon hearing of Paul’s imprisonment in Rome, they sent a love offering by one of their own church members named Epaphroditus.
   3. Paul wrote to express his gratitude.
   4. Typical of Paul’s letters, he also addressed his own situation, as well as issues that were present in the church.
   5. Epaphroditus must have informed Paul regarding division that was growing in the church. (Phil. 2:3; 3:2, 18-19; 4:2)
   6. Joy does not exist in a church where there is a self-centered attitude.
3. There are several “thieves” that could rob you of your joy.
   1. Sin robs you of joy.
      1. David suffered the loss of joy due to his sin. (Psa. 38:3-8; 51:8, 12).
      2. Peter wept bitterly after he denied the Lord. (Matt. 26:75)
      3. Transgression brings a snare. It is hard to sing when you are in a trap! Those who live righteously have reason to sing and rejoice. (Prov. 29:6)
   2. Circumstances can rob you of your joy. What circumstances come to mind that may have threatened the joy of the Philippians? What circumstances threaten your joy?
   3. People can rob you of your joy. How do people make it difficult to maintain joy?
   4. A worldly outlook on life can leave you without joy. Why does a focus on this earth leave you joyless?
   5. Worry is a joy thief. What causes worry in the life of a believer?
4. Warren Wiersbe identified four attitudes that are essential to joy found in Paul’s letter to the Philippians.
   1. You must have a single mind to have joy in difficult circumstances. (Chapter 1)
      1. Paul “did not look at Christ through his circumstances; rather, he looked at his circumstances through Christ – and this changed everything.” (Wiersbe)
      2. A single-minded Christian is focused on the fellowship, furtherance, and faith of the gospel regardless of life’s circumstances. Joy abides where this is the case.
   2. You must have a submissive mind when dealing with people. (Chapter 2)
      1. Strife and contention can affect the life of any church.
      2. When you have a submissive mind, you are looking for ways to serve others rather than being served. This is the mind of Christ.
   3. You must have a spiritual mind to have joy in a fallen world. (Chapter 3)
      1. Most people are focused on earthly things.
      2. The Christian is to be focused on heavenly things.
   4. You must have a secure mind against the onslaught of worry. (Chapter 4)
      1. Worry is wrong thinking about people, circumstances and things.
      2. Spiritual resources are available to guard your mind against worry.
      3. Since you have God’s peace, power and provisions you have no need to worry!
5. **Central Idea:** Paul wrote to the Philippians to exhort them to have a Christ-centered attitude that produces joy.
6. **Application:** A Christ-centered attitude produces joy!
   1. Evaluate where you may be losing joy.
      1. Is there a sin that is robbing your joy?
      2. What circumstances pose a current threat to your joy?
      3. What people cause joyful thoughts to flee?
      4. Has a focus on “things” left you minus joy?
      5. Does worry about finances, relationships, work, projects and other related topics crowd out joy?
   2. Consider how you are currently thinking about life.
      1. Are you single-minded when it comes to the gospel?
      2. Do you find submission difficult?
      3. Do you have a spiritual mind?
      4. Do you have a secure mind that is content in Christ?

**Conclusion**

Your answers to the questions listed above reveal the state of joy in your life. Your joy is in jeopardy! Keep your mind on Christ! He will keep you from sin. He will comfort you in crisis. He will lead you in serving others. He will help you to live for things of eternal value. He will guard your mind. Find your joy in Him!