

“Joy”

Mount of Olives / October 11, 2026 / Philippians 4:4-13

Pastor Jim Reynen

Prayer of the Day

Heavenly Father, we know that it is Your will that we are joyful, fulfilled people. Nevertheless, our lack of wisdom and insight often prevents us from sensing the peace and joy You intend for us. Teach us to understand the transcendent truth of Your presence in our lives. Help us to better sense Your love for us, and help us to rest in the ultimate security only You can provide. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Reading

Philippians 4:4-13

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you. I rejoice in the Lord greatly that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned for me, but had no opportunity to show it. Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have. I know what it is to have little, and I know what it is to have plenty. In any and all circumstances I have learned the secret of being well-fed and of going hungry, of having plenty and of being in need. I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

Message Notes

Philippians 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.

Philippians 1:12-14

I want you to know, beloved, that what has happened to me has actually helped to spread the gospel, so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to everyone else that my imprisonment is for Christ; and most of the brothers and sisters, having been made confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, dare to speak the word with greater boldness and without fear.

Philippians 4:11

Not that I am referring to being in need; for I have learned to be content with whatever I have.

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through him who strengthens me.

John 15:11

I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete.

Galatians 5:22-23

By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.

Psalms 23:4

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff—they comfort me

Proverbs 3:5

Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight.

James 1:2

My brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of any kind, consider it nothing but joy,

Study Questions: Read Philippians 4:4-13

ICEBREAKER – Getting started:

1. What is something that can make you really happy—but only temporarily? Why do you think that happiness doesn't always last?
2. Have you ever experienced a difficult situation when, despite not being happy about what was happening, you still had an underlying sense of peace or joy? What was that experience like?

3. What is the difference between being happy because things are going well and having joy even when things aren't going well?

Based on Philippians 4:4-13, answer the following questions:

OBSERVATION – What does the text say?

1. As you read Philippians 4:4-13, what comes to mind? What stands out? What is interesting to you and why?
2. In one sentence, how would you summarize this text?
3. What lesson or message do you think the author is trying to convey?

INTERPRETATION – What does the text mean?

1. In verse 4, Paul says, "Rejoice in the Lord always." Why do you think Paul repeats himself by saying, "Again I will say, rejoice"? What does this tell us about the kind of joy Paul is talking about?

2. Paul says to “rejoice in the Lord.” Why is it significant that our joy is connected to the Lord rather than to our circumstances?
3. In verses 5–7, Paul connects rejoicing with gentleness, the nearness of the Lord, prayer, thanksgiving, and peace. How are these things connected?
4. Verse 6 says, “Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.” How can prayer change our response to circumstances even when it doesn't immediately change the circumstances themselves?
5. According to verse 7, what kind of peace does God give us? Why do you think Paul describes it as a peace that “surpasses all understanding”?
6. In verse 8, Paul tells believers to think about things that are true, honorable, just, pure, lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise. How can what we choose to think about affect our joy?
7. Paul says in verses 11–12 that he has learned to be content in both abundance and need. What does it mean to “learn” contentment? Why doesn't contentment necessarily come naturally?
8. Paul says, “I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound.” What does this tell us about the source of Paul's contentment?
9. Verse 13 says, “I can do all things through him who strengthens me.” In the context of verses 10–12, what does “all things” actually mean? How does the surrounding passage help us understand this verse correctly?
10. Looking at Philippians 4:4–13 as a whole, what does this passage teach us about the difference between happiness and Christian joy?

APPLICATION – How can you apply the text?

1. Think about your current circumstances. What is something you are not happy about right now? How could you still experience joy in the middle of that situation because of your relationship with Jesus?
2. When something goes wrong, where do you naturally look for happiness or relief? What would it look like to turn to Jesus first instead?
3. Paul tells us to bring our concerns to God “with thanksgiving.” What is one difficult situation you could bring to God in prayer while also intentionally thanking Him for what He has already done?
4. What thoughts tend to steal your joy when life becomes difficult? Which of the qualities Paul lists in verse 8 could help you redirect your thinking?
5. Paul learned to be content in both abundance and need. Which is harder for you—finding contentment when you have too little or when you have plenty? Why?
6. What is one circumstance in your life that you wish Jesus would change? Instead of waiting for that circumstance to change before experiencing joy, what would it look like to find your joy in Jesus today?
7. Complete this sentence: “I don't have to be happy about _____, but I can still have joy because _____.”