

Why I Have No Joy - Philippians 2:17-30 – January 6th, 2019

- Woven into the fabric of the text that we have before us today we find three ways that joy can return to our lives as Christians.
- I suppose you could say this is how we can live joyful lives, fulfilling lives, and to take back a word the world stole, “successful.”
- Spoiler alert, it's the polar opposite of what the world's definition of success is, which is to “get all you can and can all you get.”

Matthew 10:38–39 - 38 Whoever does not take up their cross and follow me is not worthy of me. 39 Whoever finds their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake will find it.

1. Serve sacrificially (Verses 17-18)

17 But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. 18 So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

- The Apostle Paul's reference to being poured out like a drink offering on a sacrifice is from the book of Numbers chapter 28:7.
- The reason I point this out is that the drink offering was to be poured out to the Lord along with the animal that was sacrificed.
- What Paul is saying here is it's very likely that his execution awaited him at the hands of Rome, which ultimately did happen.

Philippians 1:20–26 - 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.

2. Have genuine concern (Verses 19-24)

19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. 20 I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. 21 For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. 23 I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. 24 And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

- What's striking to me about what Paul says concerning his sending Timothy to them, is when he says he has no one like him.
- This because, he had a genuine concern for others welfare in that he wasn't like others who look out for their own interests.
- It seems that Timothy had proven himself as a son would in serving his father and was exceptional in the work of the Gospel.

3. Take a risk for Christ (Verses 25-30)

25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. 26 For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. 29 So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, 30 because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.

- Paul tells the Philippians that not only is he going to send Timothy; he's also going to send back his dear friend Epaphroditus.
- The reason he does this is because he almost died and was homesick, which concerned them and caused anxiety for Paul.
- He then goes as far as saying that they're to welcome him and honor him, because he risked his life for the work of the gospel.

- I'll bring it to a close with a question that I think every single one of us would do well to both consider and answer in this regard.
- Could the reason that my joyless life is riddled with difficulty and even conflict be that I'm living for myself instead of the Lord?
- If so, then serving sacrificially with genuine concern for others and taking risks for the work of Jesus Christ may be the answer.