

JOY RIDE - 1

Philippians Chapter One

Ice Breaker: Who in your past brings you joy when you remember them and why?

1. What insight, principles or observations did you take away from this Sunday's message?

Background on Philippians

"The Philippian colonists were proud of being Romans and would do their best to order their civic life so that it matched the way things were done in Rome. The most recent innovation down that line was, of course, the establishment of the imperial cult: Caesar, the emperor, was to be worshipped as savior and Lord." -NT Wright

This created the challenge of preaching Christ as King because it created a situation where people had to make a choice as to whom they would give their allegiance to: Caesar or Jesus. While conversions were made, those choosing Caesar were angered and beat Paul and his co-worker Silas and threw them into jail after one of their miracles. (Acts 16). Now, years later and in prison in Rome, Paul writes this letter to encourage and strengthen the Christians at Philippi.

"'Joy' is a soulish quality that allows us to delight in God regardless of the circumstances" - Pastor Brian

KEY ONE TO JOY - SERVING

Philippians 1:1-5 (NIV) *Paul and Timothy, servants of Christ Jesus, 'To all God's holy people in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons: 2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 I thank my God every time I remember you. 4 In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy 5*

because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now,

2. Paul identifies himself as a servant of Jesus Christ. Why do you think he would do this? (Philippians 1:1) What does this indicate about Paul's relationship with Jesus?

3. How does seeing himself as a servant of Jesus affect how he chooses to remember the Christians at Philippi? And why? (Philippians 1: 3-5)

4 How does being a servant of Christ allow Paul to live in joy for the Christians at Philippi instead of holding on to the hurts he had previously suffered there? What hurts could you leave behind by living in the joy of serving Jesus?

KEY TWO TO JOY - TRUST GOD TO FINISH THE WORK

Philippians 1:6-11 (NIV) *being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus. 7 It is right for me to feel this way about all of you, since I have you in my heart and, whether I am in chains or defending and confirming the gospel, all of you share in God's grace with me. 8 God can testify how I long for all of you with the affection of Christ Jesus. 9 And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, 10 so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, 11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.*

5. Can you name a project or two that you started but never finished? Have you ever chosen to not start a project because you thought you could not finish it?

6. Has the fear of failure ever kept you from trying to serve Christ? What gave Paul the confidence that God would complete the work He started? (Romans 8:28)

Romans 8:28 (NIV) *And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose.*

7. When has God worked with you in your life to bring you joy in difficult circumstances?

KEY THREE TO JOY - SEEING GOD'S POINT OF VIEW

Philippians 1:12-26 (NIV) *Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. 13 As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. 14 And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear. 15 It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. 16 The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. 18 But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, 19 for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. 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. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.*

8. How did Paul view his circumstances even though he was in prison and could die? What result did he see as the best outcome?

9. How could you view your circumstance from God's perspective? How could He redeem your circumstances?

10. Paul said *“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.”* What would a God empowered life look like for you? (Philippians 1:21, 2 Timothy 1:7)

2 Timothy 1:7 (NIV) *For the Spirit God gave us does not make us timid, but gives us power, love and self-discipline.*

KEY FOUR TO JOY - MAINTAINING COMPLETE DEVOTION

Philippians 1:27-30 (NIV) *Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit, striving together as one for the faith of the gospel 28 without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you. This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved—and that by God. 29 For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, 30 since you are going through the same struggle you saw I had, and now hear that I still have.*

11. What does it mean to you to “conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ”?

12. How does suffering become joy when one is focused on Jesus and the work that God is doing within us?

James 1:2-4 (NIV) *Consider it pure joy, my brothers and sisters, whenever you face trials of many kinds, 3 because you know that the testing of your faith produces perseverance. 4 Let perseverance finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything.*

Pastor Brian stated: Joy is only possible within a committed relationship with Jesus!