

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice.” (ESV)

## Philippians 4:4

The Right to Happiness...

The thrust of Philippians

“I will say it again...”

Philippians 3:1  
Philippians 1:3  
Philippians 1:15  
Philippians 2:2  
Philippians 4:1  
Philippians 2:17-18

“in the Lord, always”

“Many people do not know the joy of the Lord today for the one and only reason that they have never realised their own poverty, emptiness and deadness. Most people who have never experienced the joy of salvation are people who have never seen their full need of salvation... The only way to be happy in Christ is to be desperately unhappy without him.” **Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *The Life of Peace*, page 148.**

“the believer who practices rejoicing in the Lord will increasingly discover balm in the midst of heartache, rest in the midst of exhausting tension, love in the midst of loneliness, and the presence of God in control of excruciating circumstances. Such a believer never gives up the Christian walk. Resolve always to rejoice in the Lord.” **D.A. Carson, *Basics for Believers*, page 106.**

## Case Studies

*How does Philippians 4:4 relate to these situations? How would you use and apply it pastorally?*

① Persephone feels burnt-out at work and at church. She hasn't been sleeping too well either, and finds it difficult to get up in the mornings or feel motivated for anything. She can't concentrate much. After her engagement broke up she went to the doctor, who prescribed anti-depressants. Studying her favourite book in her small group hasn't cheered her up or helped. God feels distant, prayer is hard work. She wonders: is she really a Christian anymore?

② Ethelbert's life has been going exceptionally well lately. He got a huge bonus at work and is in line for a promotion. He's just moved to a great new bachelor pad in Kensington, and is delighted that he'll be able to watch his favourite, successful football team next year (Abramovich United) in a box for which he has a season ticket. He's going out with a beautiful and talented opera singer (he *adores* opera) whose father is a multi-millionaire. He occasionally goes to church if not hung-over from Saturday night parties or shopping trips to New York and Paris.

③ Hansel and Morwenna have been married for 15 years, and are exhausted. They are pushed for money to feed their three kids, and Hansel's job is on the line because of a recent takeover. He also has to care for his elderly mother who has advanced dementia. Morwenna's parents have both died in the last two years and she herself has been diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. They are disappointed to have to drop out of leading their small group Bible study but it has become just too difficult to fit in the preparation required. Friends are worried this will adversely affect their spiritual lives and that they might soon slip away from church altogether.

## Paul on Joy / Rejoicing

**Romans 12:12** Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.....<sup>15</sup> Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

**Romans 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

**Romans 15:13** May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope...

**Romans 16:19** For your obedience is known to all, so that I rejoice over you, but I want you to be wise as to what is good and innocent as to what is evil.

**1 Corinthians 7:30** and those who mourn as though they were not mourning, and those who rejoice as though they were not rejoicing, and those who buy as though they had no goods,

**1 Corinthians 13:6** it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth.

**1 Corinthians 16:17** I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because they have made up for your absence...

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**2 Corinthians 1:24** Not that we lord it over your faith, but we work with you for your joy, for you stand firm in your faith.

**2 Corinthians 2:3** And I wrote as I did, so that when I came I might not suffer pain from those who should have made me rejoice, for I felt sure of all of you, that my joy would be the joy of you all.

**2 Corinthians 6:10** as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, yet possessing everything.

**2 Corinthians 7:4** I am acting with great boldness toward you; I have great pride in you; I am filled with comfort. In all our affliction, I am overflowing with joy.....<sup>13</sup> Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.

**2 Corinthians 7:7** and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more.....<sup>9</sup> As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.....<sup>13</sup> Therefore we are comforted. And besides our own comfort, we rejoiced still more at the joy of Titus, because his spirit has been refreshed by you all.....<sup>16</sup> I rejoice, because I have perfect confidence in you.

**2 Corinthians 8:2** for in a severe test of affliction, their abundance of joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part.

**2 Corinthians 13:9** For we are glad (*literally*, we rejoice) when we are weak and you are strong. Your restoration is what we pray for.....<sup>11</sup> Finally, brothers, rejoice. Aim for restoration, comfort one another, agree with one another, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

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**Galatians 5:22** But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,

**Colossians 1:11** May you be strengthened with all power, according to his glorious might, for all endurance and patience with joy,

**Colossians 1:24** Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I am filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church,

**Colossians 2:5** For though I am absent in body, yet I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good order and the firmness of your faith in Christ.

**1 Thessalonians 1:6** And you became imitators of us and of the Lord, for you received the word in much affliction, with the joy of the Holy Spirit,

**1 Thessalonians 2:19** For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus at his coming? Is it not you?<sup>20</sup> For you are our glory and joy.

**1 Thessalonians 3:9** For what thanksgiving can we return to God for you, for all the joy that we feel for your sake before our God,

**1 Thessalonians 5:16** Rejoice always,

**2 Timothy 1:4** As I remember your tears, I long to see you, that I may be filled with joy.

**Philemon 1:7** For I have derived much joy and comfort from your love, my brother, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you.