



## Episode 6-14: Finding Joy in Christ

### Resources:

#### Podcasts

[Joy in Trials - Joyful Journey](#)

#### Books

[In All Things - Melissa Kruger](#)

#### Website

[Faith Bible Seminary](#)

### Transcript:

Jocelyn: I don't just need to feel better. I need the truth. And ultimately that will make me better.

Janet: I just want to make it as totally simple as possible for ladies to see that the Bible is really applicable to their everyday life.

Jocelyn: When they understand theology, the application flows out of it quickly with joy.

Janet: It is a journey, but even the journey itself is joyful when I'm doing it, holding the hand of my savior and trusting him all along the way. This is the joyful journey podcast, a podcast to inspire and equip women to passionately pursue beautiful biblical truth on their journey as women of God. When you choose truth, you're choosing joy.

Janet: Welcome back, Joyful Journey listeners. I'm Janet here once again with our co-host Leah, and today our episode is all about Finding Joy in Christ. Leah's gonna lead us to share on this topic. just to let you know, in a previous season, Jocelyn and I did an episode on Joy in Trials. Season One, Episode Seven. That one was focused on James 1:2-11. If you haven't heard that, I do encourage you to go back and listen. It was a very encouraging look at how those verses help us find joy in the middle of trials. But today, Leah is gonna use the book of Philippians as a guide to help us find joy in Christ in whatever season of life we're in.

Leah: That's right. I wanna use the book of Philippians to encourage our listeners in how they can find joy in any circumstance because of the hope we have in Christ. And I don't mean finding a way to just have an optimistic go-getter view of life.

Janet: This isn't the power of positive thinking.

Leah: It is not. It is not. Instead, I want us to look at the ways we can find joy in Christ whether in seasons of plenty or seasons of hard and even when dealing with things like conviction of sin.



So for probably over a decade now, Philippians has been a huge tool that God has used to point me to finding joy in Him alone. And it's been incredibly impactful in my relationship with Christ to focus on that theme of finding joy in Him. And throughout this book, Paul is writing to encourage a group of dear friends and fellow believers. He urges them repeatedly to find joy and rejoice not in their circumstances, but in Christ alone. And not only does Paul encourage and spur on his friend's faith, but I also love that so much of it focuses on Christ example as our motivation for finding joy.

Janet: Well, and then thinking about the fact that Philippians is written by Paul while he is in prison and. If you just read the letter and don't know that, you would never guess that.

Leah: Right? Exactly. Never does he complain about being in prison for his faith. Never does he mourn over his circumstances or this path that God's called him to. Instead, Paul believes that all of this has happened to serve to advance the Gospel, like he says in 1:12-14 And I so wish that I always saw my circumstances through that lens, but studying this book is one way that I can keep setting my eyes on the work of Christ and what He's doing in my life.

Janet: I love that because just listening to you say that, one of the things my husband and I have been specifically asking the Lord for this year is just an increased joy. And the temptation for me is to think that will come from some of the turbulence, settling down. And then to think through well, it wasn't settling down for Paul.

Leah: Right.

Janet: And he was still saying that. So after listening today, or maybe you can even pause it right now as we start, you might wanna just stop and go read through the book of Philippians. It's a pretty short letter, but it packed with Gospel truths and hope.

Leah: Yeah and I think again, that is a great way to just get started on this topic again, is spending time in God's word.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And for someone wanting a deeper dive into Philippians, I recommend using the study, *In All Things* by Melissa Krueger. it's a nine week inductive Bible study and I used it about eight years ago when I really wanted to study this book more, and I loved it. So I've actually gone back and used it probably three times now.

Janet: I have never done that one, so that's really helpful to learn about.



Leah: Yeah. And hopefully we can link it in the notes.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: In case it's a useful tool for others too. But for today, I wanna do my own mini study of Philippians with you, just to encourage our hearts again, to live out the joy that's promised in the Gospel. So I'll first do a flyover of this theme throughout Philippians of finding joy in Christ, and then I'll discuss how we can use these truths to motivate us to seek that kind of joy. No matter what circumstances we face. So let's jump right in and to get started in chapter one, we see Paul rejoicing over the knowledge of his friend's partnership in the Gospel. He also rejoices that the Gospel of Christ is being made known because of his imprisonment. As well as by others preaching the Gospel, no matter their motivation as we read in verses 15 through 18. And that's a hard one for me to find joy in.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Since I often become angry or upset when I hear about or see others preaching the Gospel for their own gain.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: Or out of selfish ambition. But Paul boldly proclaims that through his trials, he knows that to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Janet: And that's so fascinating because, you know, we know God cares about the heart. So when someone is preaching with wrong motives, we know that that heart displeases God. And yet Paul is saying, but what they're saying is true. And I'm just excited that the truth is getting out there. Which is that is so selfless. Of Paul. And I love that. And then it's interesting to me to compare Philippians like that, and Paul saying, it doesn't matter to me why as long as they're teaching truth. To the book of Galatians that we're studying even as a church. Where Paul clearly is saying, hey, this really matters. He calls out people that are teaching falsehood to the Galatians, people who are saying they want to honor God, and I don't even know what their motives are.

Leah: Right.

Janet: But what they're saying he rebukes severely because, you know, so I've had to think through that. Like, wow, why in Philippians is he saying. It doesn't matter why. And in Galatians, he's saying, I'm not afraid to call these people out. Well, because the message was not true. In Galatians, they were twisting the Gospel. So it's like, okay, Paul is so passionate about the beauty



of the Gospel, that it doesn't matter who is twisting it. I'm not gonna be afraid to call that out for the glory of God and the good of the people who need to hear it. And on the other hand, he is not at all passionate about his own reputation.

Leah: Right.

Janet: And what people might be doing to try to hurt him. As long as what they're saying.

Leah: Right.

Janet: Is the truth.

Leah: Yeah.

Janet: Goals.

Leah: It's a good example. It's a great example to remember how we need to value the Gospel message more than anything else.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: And I love that he starts the book of Philippians that way.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: And then in chapter two, he encourages his friends to make my joy complete by being united by the love of Christ and rejecting the worldly way of selfish ambition.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Then verses 5 through 11, we see Paul's beautiful description of Christ's humility submitting to the Father's will at the cross. And then in light of that example, Paul says, the Philippians are to obey without grumbling or arguing, but to instead rejoice and be glad as they pour themselves out to God as offerings to him and in service to others. And Paul also explains that hearing about other believers' faith and endurance is what cheers him. He takes time to talk about his brother's, Timothy and Epaphroditus, with joy and thankfulness, and he encourages the Philippians to welcome other believers with great joy.



Janet: I love that. He's encouraged by what God is doing and he's not jealous. Of what God is doing in others. You know, especially when he's telling us all this from prison.

Leah: Right.

Janet: He could be like, why are they having their ministries blessed in ways that outward circumstances? Mine are not, but instead, when he sees them grow in faith, grow in endurance, all of that just brings him joy. And it's just such a reminder to me that when I find joy in the right things. There's so much around me that can bring me joy.

Leah: Yes, exactly. Going back to the joy in the message of Christ.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: Really will pour over into anything else. How we respond to others, how we receive good news or bad news.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And it's so encouraging to see Paul's example.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Then in chapter three, Paul starts a new section with, again, that call to rejoice in the Lord and then warns the Philippians about those who put confidence in the flesh rather than in Christ. We read about Paul's personal testimony of how worthless it was for him to boast in his flesh compared to the worth, implied joy of knowing Christ as a savior and Lord. He then talks about not yet arriving at his goal, but of pressing on toward the prize in Christ. Paul instructs the Philippians to keep your eyes on those who live as we do in chapter three, verse 17, to follow the example of others who rejoice in the Lord and in His saving grace. And Paul reminds them that their citizenship is in heaven and that they are to eagerly await a Savior who will come there to transform them and the rest of us.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: When Christ returns. And to me that language clearly demonstrates that we are to be joyful here and now in our waiting for our heavenly home.



Janet: Yeah. Yeah. And meditating on our future home in heaven actually allows me to have more joy here, which you'd think. It would just depress me because all the things I'm longing for I don't have, but otherwise I'm expecting it here. And when I expect paradise here. I'm always disappointed, but when I know it's coming, I'm free to enjoy whatever there is here, even when it's not everything and to know that those longings for more are not bad. But that's what it means to live by faith and they're gonna get met. So I'm just free to enjoy the little bits of it here.

Leah: Yeah. And praise God that we have that hope.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: And that freedom.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: That comes from focusing on eternity. In chapter four, Paul entreats the Philippians, calling them his joy and crown, to stand firm and to come alongside those in conflict in their local church. Then in verse four, he says, to rejoice in the Lord always and again to rejoice. In verses five through nine, he walks out practically how we can rejoice, by striving to be gentle, to not be anxious, to pray and give thanks in everything and to think on things that are glorifying to God. Paul talks about rejoicing again in verse 10, as he personally reflects on the joy he has because of the Philippians concern and care for him. And then in verses 11 through 13, we read some of Paul's most famous words, how in any and every situation, whether in need or in plenty, he can do all things through Christ who gives him strength.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: And he ends the book by talking about the Philippians gifts to him being fragrant offerings to the Lord, and by stating that he believes God will meet all of their needs too.

Janet: Man, I mean, yes. Wow. We could take weeks to just talk about as you were reading, I'm thinking, oh, we could talk about that. Oh, we could talk about this. And I hope many of us are considering now we, we need to really study this book more and slow down. There's so much, and maybe the resource you mentioned will help us, but there's so much more here that we're not gonna be able to talk about today.

Leah: Right. And I hope that that's what our listeners are encouraged to do is a deeper study of this book on their own.



Janet: Yeah.

Leah: I hope, you know, it's a starting point and there's so many other studies out there that you could do about Philippians. Impacted a lot of people for thousands of years now.

Janet: Yes. For a good reason. Yes.

Leah: Yes. And so that was just a very quick flyover of this very deep little book. But I hope it demonstrates why studying Philippians has really helped me grow and finding joy in Christ. So I wanna now share some specific Gospel truths and how to apply them from this book.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And I pray they just help our listeners find more joy in Christ too.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: No matter what circumstance they're going through. So let's start by reflecting on what I see as the key or summary verses of this theme in Philippians, in 4:11-23. So, Janet, could you read those to us?

Janet: I'm not saying this because I'm in need, for I've learned to be content. Whatever the circumstances, I know what it is to be in need and I know what it is to have plenty. I've learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do all this through Him who gives me strength.

Leah: Yeah. Now you might think, wait, these verses are some of the few that don't have the word rejoice or joy in them. How does this point to the theme of finding joy in all things? Well, some synonyms for the word content that's used in verses 11 and 12 here are pleased. Gratified, fulfilled, happy, and cheerful and strong. Concordance defines that Greek phrase as meaning to feed, fill, satisfy.

Janet: All of those things sound very joyful to me and we know that joy isn't just the feeling of happiness. It's a state of our heart, satisfied in the Lord and what we just read in those verses describes that.

Leah: Exactly. And after talking repeatedly about having joy throughout the entire letter, he concludes in these verses that that's the secret to being joyful. It's in Christ, the one who gives Paul the strength to do anything. Whether that's to sit in prison, to share the Gospel, or to



encourage his friends and other believers he understood that whatever his circumstances were, it was the hope in his relationship with Christ that gave him joy, contentment, and peace, and we have access to that same joy as believers.

Janet: Yeah. Which is completely amazing. I do think most people stop to think about these verses in chapter four when they wanna do something difficult, or challenging. I appreciate that the version that we just read, he says, I can do all this through him who gives me strength. The one I memorized earlier. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me. And it's funny that I can do all things now means I can do hard things. No matter what it is I can be a brain surgeon. You know, but Paul here isn't telling us we have superpowers to do whatever we want or to overcome any obstacle we face that just isn't the context.

Leah: Right. These verses are clearly pointing us back to our eternal, lasting hope in Christ.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Defining a deep sense of joy in all of life, no matter if we have external reasons to be happy or not. The reason Paul believes that he can do all things is rooted in this context found throughout the rest of the book.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: He had learned that finding joy in all things comes from a firm grasp of his identity and purpose in Christ, and that's why I love his description of who Christ is and what he did for us in Philippians 2:6-11 that example of the ultimate humility and obedience when we choose to view our lives in light of that Gospel lens, it really is life changing.

Janet: Well, yeah, life stops being about I need to find the next thing that's gonna make me happy. There's where my joy is. So my prayers are really help me get to this next thing because I want joy. And instead. I get to center it on what is the purpose that God gave me? What is my true identity in Christ, my Savior and Lord? And I think so often we use that phrase identity, and then we almost turn it into what can I know about me that'll make me feel good about me? Instead of the whole point is your identity is not about you.

Leah: Right.

Janet: It's about Him and then it's secure. If I'm looking at my purpose that God gave me as an image bearer and that my identity is not even about me anymore, I'm completely covered in



Christ, now I'm secure, nothing's gonna change that. I don't have to be afraid of losing it ever and now there's a reason for joy.

Leah: Right and that's way more filling and lasting than just trying to feel happy.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Feelings in this life change, but our hope in Christ never does.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: His promises are always true and I think that's, you know, the thing we have to focus on, even earlier when I mentioned like, oh, we are called to find joy in Christ. Well, if we're focusing on our identity in Christ and who He is and what He's done, we're going to have joy.

Janet: Right.

Leah: We're not going to have to always.

Janet: It's a fruit.

Leah: Right, not just try to practice it. We're gonna experience it.

Janet: Right.

Leah: We're going to have that hope. So with that truth filled theme in our mind, I wanna dive into some practical applications for using Philippians to help us find joy in all things. So first, let's talk about finding joy in Christ in times of plenty.

Janet: And my first thought, and other listeners might be thinking the same thing. Do we really need to be taught how to do that? Isn't it natural? It's a season of plenty. I'm getting whatever the circumstances that I think I need. I'm joyful.

Leah: Right. I mean, it is funny because it seems like an odd thing to study.

Janet: Yep.



Leah: But I have personally found that in seasons of plenty in my life is when I also become the most complacent in my faith.

Janet: True.

Leah: I become content, but often not in a good way. So I might feel happy, but I'm just content because circumstances around me are temporarily good. I'm not content because of my eternal hope in Christ.

Janet: So actually it might feel like you don't need anything else, but you're really in a very unsafe, unstable place.

Leah: Yes. Yes, exactly. Since things are going well, I don't see my daily need for the Gospel of Christ in my mind and in my heart, I'm assuming. Can you relate to that, Janet?

Janet: Of course not. No, I remember. No, no more than I'd like to say yes. I mean. We truly all wanna avoid seasons of pain and suffering. Nobody that I know says, please, could I have more of that? But I also think most of us would have to agree. I would have to say. The times when I'm desperate for God are the times when I experience his nearness in new ways. I want that nearness in new ways. I prefer to not be desperate.

Leah: Right.

Janet: But they go together. You know, a friend recently said to my husband and I, you don't really know that God is all you need until he is all you have. And I've heard that before. But he was saying that to us. In a season of knowing. That.

Leah: Right.

Janet: And it was like, that is so true. And in reality, seasons of plenty, there are so many other things distracting me that my true joy can get stifled and I have these counterfeits that don't last and really end up taking me places I don't wanna go.

Leah: Yeah. It's like almost when we're too happy about just feeling happy.

Janet: Right.

Leah: You know, distracted by that, by the circumstances.



Janet: I'm not looking up anymore.

Leah: Right. We're looking just at ourselves.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And in chapter one of Philippians, I find verses three through 11, very convicting and helpful to think through for the times in my life that feel easy or plentiful. In verses three through six, Paul is rejoicing over his confidence in the continued work of Jesus in the lives of his friends, the Philippians, but the language he uses clearly shows us that just because he is joyful doesn't mean he stopped praying for them to keep moving and growing.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: Or for Jesus to stop working in their lives. In verses nine through 11, Paul prays over his friends that they would keep growing in their love and in their knowledge of God, that they would keep growing in discernment to know what is best, and that they would keep being filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Christ for God's glory and praise. It's not like Paul's friends are struggling or falling into deep sin or trials from what we know about this book.

Janet: Right.

Leah: He's not reprimanding them like we see him do with the churches of Galatia or Corinth. Instead, he's just longing for these believers to keep growing in Christ so that their joy and faith can continue to flourish.

Janet: That's such a helpful thing to really think about. I know my husband and I have been through, just recently a harder season and in that we really did deepen our relationship with God. It strengthened our relationship with each other. But it's so interesting that as things externally, there's less drama. It's like, am I still praying? Am I still, or is it just like, oh good, we got through that. You know? I can easily feel happy in a time of plenty, and Paul is showing that even that's a good season to keep drawing near to the Lord. Keep reminding my heart of what true joy is, which is my relationship with Christ. It's not the current good circumstances. So I can enjoy them. We're not saying don't enjoy good circumstances, they're a gift from the Lord.

Leah: Right.

Janet: But I enjoy them as a gift from the Lord and I keep deepening in the Lord. And the temptation is to take a break.



Leah: Yeah.

Janet: From the Lord because I can.

Leah: And then how do we expect to be ready for the times of hard?

Janet: Right.

Leah: But yet we do.

Janet: Right. No kidding. Yes.

Leah: You know, and like you're right, we can be thankful for seasons of plenty and blessing.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And should be.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: And there's nothing wrong with feeling happy. But we should constantly remind our hearts and other believers about the real reason to rejoice. Yes, it's in Christ alone.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: In chapter three, verses four through six, we see Paul reflect on a time when by worldly standards, he was in a time of plenty before his conversion.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: He was very proud, successful Jewish leader. He had power, prestige, zeal.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: He even believed he had been faultless based on the righteousness defined by the huge, enormous Jewish law. But once he encountered Christ, all of those earthly reasons to rejoice were thrown away. In verses seventh or eight of chapter three, he literally calls these reasons, these old reasons to be happy, a loss or garbage or rubbish.



Janet: And I think about it from what we were just talking about. At a minimum there are distraction. Yeah.

Leah: Right and he says they were useless to him. And I think all of that is just so helpful to think on when we're in a season of ease or success or whatever plenty may look like for you.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Because it doesn't mean we're actually full of joy in Christ. The feelings of happiness that come from worldly treasures or pursuing our selfish, sinful desires will not last.

Janet: Yeah. Yeah. You know, this past year, I was just really struck by how temporary everything is. I'm thankful in painful trials. Yes. Those are the things that feel like they do last forever. But even the good on this earth is also temporary and for me, that growing realization came from the surprising death of my sister. And I told Brent, this is not new theology. It's not like, oh, I didn't know that people die. Oh, I didn't know that. This is temporary and the only thing eternal is heaven. I know that. But I was struck. By that. My extended family got together in February for our Christmas get togethers. First time we get all get together. It was a great day and then it ended. And I think knowing that my other sister will never be part of them again. And even the family, the great family day that we had, like there was nothing that went wrong. It had gone well. It was a day of plenty and I was so sad when it was over. It surprised me. Because it's not gonna last.

Leah: Yeah.

Janet: When I'm clinging to earthly joys, I'm either fearing they're gonna end or I'm shocked when they do. Unless I'm staying rooted in my joy in Christ because that is eternal and out of that I can enjoy days of plenty. And I can, even with the longing to wish things lasted here, that's a longing for the permanence of heaven.

Leah: Yeah.

Janet: That's okay. Am I happy just because of the good circumstances or in the midst of those sweet circumstances that are a gift from the Lord, am I still seeking to give God glory in the good and find my joy there?

Leah: And that's a great question for all of us to reflect on, and we have to just think. How can I even evaluate and reorient my heart to seek that kind of joy in Christ alone during seasons of plenty?



Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And for me, going back to that prayer in chapter one and praying it over myself is just a great.

Janet: I love that.

Leah: Spiritual practice.

Janet: I mean, what a very practical tool. I can pray that.

Leah: Yeah.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And I personally use the PrayerMate app. I know we've talked about that a lot before, but one of the types of prayers that I include in my rotation is biblical prayers.

Janet: Nice.

Leah: So putting verses like that, Philippians 1:9-11, there is so helpful. Or you could even list out each of those specific requests that Paul makes for his friends in those verses.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And go through that, pray through it, and especially in times of happiness or Thanksgiving. Those are great reminders that our hearts still need to pursuing the Lord.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And another great way is to go through Philippians 4:4-7, that's another, you know, very popular section of Philippians, but we have to remind ourselves to rejoice always in the Lord.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Even when we're already rejoicing or to be gentle towards all, to be praying, to give thanks in every circumstance. Like those are practical things that we can be doing to point our hearts back to Christ, when everything around us is going well.



Janet: And I love that you included those because I know for me, and maybe for those listening, it's like I hear what you're saying. I see it in scripture. It's true. Now what? Because that's not where I am. Well, it's not where any of us naturally are. So here's just a couple of great practical ways that just help me keep my focus vertical and we need them.

Leah: Yeah. Okay, so we discussed the easy part of finding joy in seasons of plenty, but now I want us to think through how we can find joy in Christ through seasons of hardship or of want and need.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: So think about the times when it feels hard or impossible to be happy content, or even thankful. Maybe our listeners have experienced another relationship disappointment. Maybe you're dealing with the loss of a loved one. Maybe your doctor calls with a bad diagnosis. You could be struggling in your marriage or with how to discipline or manage your children, or maybe you lost a job. All of those things are hard, and all of those circumstances do make it hard to feel happy. But the hope scripture has to offer can lead us to find joy in Christ. Even in those hardships in Philippians, we find several passages of encouragement and truth for how to do this. In chapter one verses 12 through 26, Paul reflects on the hard circumstance of being imprisoned and instead of being upset or bitter at the Lord for allowing this, he boldly states that he is in chains for Christ. Paul had a lot of earthly reasons to complain, honestly.

Janet: No kidding.

Leah: By the time he wrote this letter, he had probably been in prison for about two years. So he could have been upset that God was hindering his so far fruitful life in ministry.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: I mean, come on, he'd been on three successful missionary journeys. He'd spread the Gospel throughout the world. Why did he deserve being in prison?

Janet: How could that be best? I mean, if you looked at it from a human standpoint, it would be like, how is this best even for the Gospel?

Leah: Right.

Janet: Yeah.



Leah: Doesn't that deserve abundant blessing from the Lord?

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Or he could have been questioning why his friends, the Philippians, weren't taking up arms to come and break him out. You know, why were they just sitting around instead of coming to his aid if they're such good friends? Didn't they owe Paul more than just financial support?

Janet: Oh, my word. Entitlement. As you, as you're asking those questions, my mind's going, ah and I wish I could say it's only because I see it in others. No, but not the case. It sneaks in when we don't even realize it. Many times, I think to quote Paul Tripp, we add hard to our heart. So Paul's in a hard circumstance, but we add hard to our heart in trial by believing I deserve better from God. We don't say it out loud. Because we know better.

Leah: Right.

Janet: We just think it, we compare ourselves with others and of course, especially others, we think we're doing more in whatever category we wanna do. And then we kill our own joy. We'd be better off. Which is what I remind myself, compare yourself to Jesus. And on a human level to somebody like Paul, and I'll get a better perspective.

Leah: Yeah. And I like to think, you know, as you're talking about entitlement, how does Paul avoid that entitlement, you know.

Janet: Yeah. Yeah.

Leah: How does he just sit there and write such an encouraging letter?

Janet: Yes.

Leah: And how did he find joy in such difficult circumstances that were unfair? Again, from a worldly standpoint.

Janet: Yeah, they were.

Leah: It seemed very undeserved. Well, as you studied this book, we begin to understand that Paul sought to find joy by giving thanks and pursuing Christ-like humility. Chapter two, for example, is full of Gospel centered truths that can help redirect our hearts to finding joy in Christ



in these seasons of heart. So Janet, this is a little bit of a longer passage, but could you read Philippians 2:5-18 for us?

Janet: Yes, absolutely. You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to clinging to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges. He took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor and gave him the name above all other names that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven and on earth, and under the earth and every tongue. Declare that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the father. Dear friends, you always followed my instructions when I was with you, and now that I'm away, it's even more important. Work hard to show the results of your salvation. Obeying God with deep reverence and fear, for God is working in you. Giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him. Do everything without complaining and arguing so that no one can criticize you. Live clean, innocent lives as children of God shining like bright lights in a world full of crooked and perverse people. Hold firmly to the word of life. Men on the day of Christ return, I will be proud that I did not run the race in vain and that my work was not useless. But I will rejoice even if I lose my life, pouring it out like a liquid offering to God. Just like your faithful service is an offering to God and they want all of you to share that joy, yes, you should rejoice and I will share your joy.

Leah: I just love those verses and that passage.

Janet: Wow.

Leah: I mean, Christ's example there in verses five through 11 is the complete opposite of entitlement.

Janet: As I was reading it, I was convicting myself. As I'm reading this. It's so true.

Leah: Yeah. And then, you know, Paul in 12 through 18 is talking about because of that beautiful example, because of that sacrifice our Savior made for us, we can trust in God's work and will in our lives. And because He's the one doing it, we can obey by doing everything without grumbling and complaining. We can rejoice in being poured out as sacrifices and again, sometimes our suffering isn't us pouring out our lives on purpose. It just are things that happen to us. But still, Paul is telling us that we can rejoice and suffering when we reflect on Christ's servant life.

Janet: Yep.



Leah: Paul believed it was a privilege to imitate Christ in that way.

Janet: Wow.

Leah: So Paul chooses to rejoice even in the hard circumstance he was in.

Janet: Yeah. I mean, I truly can't imagine what it was like for Christ to leave the unity of the Godhead, where there was no sin, where there was perfect fellowship, where there was perfect love among them. He had a belonging there and a love that was pure, like there was no jockeying for position, and he left that to choose to come and humble himself to the point of death. Why? Because He loves his father and He loves me. Before I try to emulate Him, I just have to revel in that fact. He loves me like that, and that alone gives me a solid joy in any circumstance.

Leah: That's right. It's not something you're doing.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: It's something you're experiencing and our motivation to obey has to come from that kind incomparable love that God shows us in the Gospel.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Because again, like you said, it's what gives us the joy.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: I think it's also so important to note that Paul doesn't let the negative circumstance dictate or color his outlook on life. He writes this letter of encouragement through the lens of what he's experienced in the Gospel. So while this book was written when he was in prison, from a life's work and spiritual standpoint, he probably saw himself in a season of plenty. This was written just a few years before his death.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: And over 10 years after he had originally planted the church in Philippi. And we don't know how many people made up the church there, but it had obviously grown in number and in maturity of faith by the time Paul's writing this letter to them.

Janet: Yeah.



Leah: Besides just having reason to rejoice in the fruitfulness in the ministry of Philippi, Paul had been on three missionary journeys, had planted multiple churches throughout the world, so spiritually he had so much to rejoice in and he chose that. He chose to rejoice in those circumstances. Rather than just the imprisonment.

Janet: Wow. And we have those too.

Leah: Right.

Janet: Ways that God is at work.

Leah: That's right. And you know, another reason he could be rejoicing is that he was actually probably just under house arrest when we talk about his imprisonment.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: Not chained. Not chained up in some dungeon or prison.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: So that's actually a great thing for him to be thankful for.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: And so for two years he'd been able to use that circumstance to have visitors, to write to encourage his church plants and fellow coworkers and a witness to the Roman guard assigned to him.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: So, again, it could be easy for us to see this great apostle Paul view his life through this positive lens and say, well, of course he could still rejoice while he was in prison. He was Paul. But like you said, all of us by God's help and grace have these same benefits.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: These same Gospel benefits to help us respond well to our trials and difficulties. And I don't mean respond well, as in always have a positive tone or always be happy no matter what's happening. I mean that we can all choose to give thanks in all circumstances.



Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And we can ask for God's help to be anxious for nothing.

Janet: Yeah. Because Paul was not a super saint. He was like us. So that means that we have access to the same spirit inside each of us who are followers of Jesus hearing this. Paul also says in 1 Corinthians that there was a time when they, and he was part of that despair of life, so I can acknowledge strong emotions. And even in that, I can take it all to the Lord and rejoice because He hears me and He cares.

Leah: Yes. Exactly. And another passage from Philippians that helps me think through how to find joy in that season of hard is found in chapter three, verses seven through 11. It reminds me of what my true goal in life is, to know Christ and to become like Him. So, Janet, can you read, 3:10-11?

Janet: I want to know Christ. Yes, to know the power of His resurrection and participation in His sufferings becoming like Him in death. And so somehow attaining to the resurrection from the dead.

Leah: Man, how I wish that this was what I always wanted first.

Janet: It's hard to read, so i'm like, I know that isn't always what I want.

Leah: I wish, that's what I always wanted when I'm going through trial, to know Christ.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: But even though that's not what I'm always thinking about in the middle of hard things, I'm so thankful that I can ask for God to help me.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: Desire that. I can be thankful that Philippians 3:12-14 are true of me too. It says, I don't mean to say that I've already achieved these things, or that I have already reached perfection.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it. But I focus on this one thing, forgetting the past and



looking forward to what lies ahead. I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God through Christ Jesus is calling us.

Janet: Oh, how hopeful it is to know what we're called to do is press on not be perfect. God knows the pain of the difficult times we go through, we don't need to minimize them. Part of pressing on is the act of faith of bringing all that to Him. I'm pursuing Christ's likeness when I run to Christ with my hurt and the Gospel tells me, He understands. He knows. And I can rejoice in that I'm not alone even in my hurt.

Leah: Yes, exactly. And that hope of being made more and more into the image of Christ is what led me to want to discuss the last point for today's episode, we've talked about today and in previous episodes of finding joy in trials and in difficult circumstances.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: But I wanna talk specifically about how to find joy in Christ when we're convicted of sin. I wanna touch on this because honestly, studying Philippians for this podcast again, has really helped me see how so often I do not relate feeling joy when dealing with confronting sin in my life.

Janet: And I'm gonna have to say, I can totally relate to that. Conviction of sin doesn't feel good. It usually comes because we've hurt ourselves or others with sin. And it can feel defeating because I'm a Christian and I should know better. I'd like to think I'm above that. Just yesterday, a precious friend came and talked to me about something that I had said. And I thought, ahh. It wasn't, thank you Lord. Although I got there. I praise God. But it's embarrassing. It's humiliating.

Leah: Yeah. And when I'm convicted of sin, I struggle with that feeling of shame.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Like, come on Leah, you know better. You know what is right and pleasing to God.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: You are taking God's grace for granted. But when I give into the feelings of shame. I'm not experiencing the blessing of joy that comes from a thankful heart desiring to be changed by the Gospel.

Janet: Yeah. Yeah.



Leah: And I know we've mostly stayed in Philippians in this episode, and I wanted to do that for a reason. But two different sermons from Galatians recently have helped me think on this truth when I respond to my sin and shame. I'm minimizing the power of the Gospel.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: If I respond instead by running to Jesus, I'm giving Him the glory He deserves and I can experience the grace that He's extended to me.

Janet: Yeah. Just thinking about that, like what I get to experience and show when I need to confess my sin is look how amazing Jesus is that He forgives me and the grace when other people forgive me, but instead of, I need to show you that I'm better than that. Look how amazing I am.

Leah: Right.

Janet: Now, it's I'm not. Look how amazing Jesus is that He forgives.

Leah: Yeah. And it's all about running back to Him.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: You know, two songs have also helped me think about these Gospel truths recently and just that beauty of being convicted by sin. So I wanted to share some of these lyrics with our listeners.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: Because they've really helped me as I reflect on this topic and on just again, on studying Philippians and again, I'm just going to read these. I'm not going to sing them.

Janet: What you're not going to sing for us?

Leah: But the first song is "Yet Not I but Through Christ in Me" by CityAlight and we sing this song at church.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: And I just love the verse that says to this, I hold, my sins have been defeated.



Janet: Yes.

Leah: Jesus, now and ever is my plea. Oh, the chains are released, I can sing, "I am free". Yet not I, but through Christ in me. And those words have really been reminding me of this theme of Philippians that I brought up earlier from chapter four, but specifically verse 13. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens. I am not a slave to my sin.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: I am free because Christ is in me, living in me, strengthening me all for the purpose to become more like Him and to bring glory to God, His Father. And that truth gives me such hope and joy. Jesus really is my only plea. So when I'm convicted of and wrestling with my sin, I've gotta run back to Him.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: Run back to the cross. Conviction is a gift from God's Spirit. It's one of the ways that God's working in us. He will continue to do this good work of convicting and drawing us near to Him until we are complete and before Him in the day of Christ when He returns. Just like Philippians 1:6 promises.

Janet: That's so true. And we say all the time, I want to be changed to look more and more like Christ, which when I'm thinking biblically, I would expect then I should be convicted. Like frequently.

Leah: Right.

Janet: Because if I'm acknowledging I'm not Jesus yet and I want to grow to be more like him, well that means I'm gonna have to be convicted of sin. And it's my pride that wants me to be better than that. And that isn't about rejoicing in God. I'm trying to find a way to rejoice in me. The Gospel frees me to just run to him when he exposes sin and know here's what my God is like. He delights to forgive it. He delights to cover me. He delights to embrace me in that moment. Experiencing that undeserved love just gives me another reason to rejoice.

Leah: Exactly. And another song that's been helping my mind a lot while fighting those bad feelings that often accompany conviction of sin is "Can't Steal My Joy" by Josiah Queen. Fitting song title for this episode, right? But I really love the verse that says, in the valley of the shadow, I got a feeling it's the season that'll make me grow. I'm still breathing. I got praise in my lungs



and a choir in my soul. Can't steal my joy, can't steal my joy. And man, in trials and difficult circumstances, it definitely feels like walking through the valley of the shadow of death.

Janet: And honestly, it is. It's because your idols, your sin is being killed. There is death going on.

Leah: Yeah. But having to confront our sin. Feels that same way, right?

Janet: Yes.

Leah: It's dark, lonely, painful.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: And I love the hopeful words of that song though, that say, I got a feeling it's the season that'll make me grow. That hardness of dealing with the ugliness of my continued sin is a reason to praise and have joy, and I only feel that conviction because I've been saved. I have to remind my heart constantly of that truth.

Janet: Wow.

Leah: To be thankful when I feel exposed or defeated because then I can find joy in the hope of the Gospel. I'm actually known, I'm loved, and I'm victorious in Christ. Philippians 2:12-13 encourages us to keep striving in obedience, which means putting off sin and putting on righteousness.

Janet: Yeah.

Leah: So Janet, could you read those verses for us?

Janet: Work hard to show the results of your salvation. Obeying God with deep reverence and fear for God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases Him.

Leah: And I just love how encouraging that passage is, like Philippians 1:6, that points us to the reason that we can work hard to obey. God's the one in us.

Janet: Yes.



Leah: He's giving me that desire and the power to do what pleases him. I don't have to deal with sin on my own. He's revealing it to me, and it gives me the power to obey.

Janet: Yep.

Leah: He has already conquered sin and death, and conviction of sin leads me to experience more of His victory personally.

Janet: Oh, I mean, amen because when my sin is exposed, if I actually hate it at all. It's just evidence that God's already at work or I wouldn't even hate that.

Leah: Right. And you know, it's funny, I was wondering why God kept putting songs in my mind as I studied this part of our topic today, and it hit me. It's kind of wonderful and joyful to connect these songs to scripture, especially when you think about Paul's first visit to Philippi. When he was imprisoned in Acts 16:25, we read that Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God. Isn't it wonderful that God created songs to point us back to Him, to give Him the glory in all things? And songs so often help us truly feel that joy of hoping and trusting in Him. You know, I think especially at times where I'm in a season of hard, maybe I don't feel happy.

Janet: Right.

Leah: Listening to songs of praise, focusing on joy in Christ, that person is demonstrating the joy that is mine.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: Even if I don't feel happy right now.

Janet: Yes.

Leah: And I love that, that God has given us that beautiful gift of his word and of music, that we can connect that and uplift our hearts when we need that help.

Janet: Yep. Yep.

Leah: Hope and trust in Him. The book of Philippians really is such a gift to us as believers. Because of these beautiful truths that we've talked about today, and all of God's word is Jesus in John 15:11 says, I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be



complete. So one of the best ways we can find joy in Christ is going to His word, the Bible. Without it, we truly can't find joy because we aren't seeking Him.

Janet: Oh, Leah, this has been really good. Thank you. Thank you for helping us see the path to a joy that's not dependent on other people or other circumstances. It's eternal and secure, and as Paul has said, as you have reminded us, it's all because of Christ.

Leah: Amen.

To keep from missing any future episodes, please sign up for our newsletter on our webpage [faithlafayette.org/JJP](http://faithlafayette.org/JJP) From there you can also subscribe to this podcast on Apple, Google, or Spotify. You can also visit us on our Facebook page or Instagram at Joyful Journey Podcast. If you have questions or comments for us, you can email us at [joyfuljourneyquestions@outlook.com](mailto:joyfuljourneyquestions@outlook.com). Joyful Journey Podcast is a ministry of Faith Bible Seminary. All proceeds go to offset costs of this podcast and toward scholarships for women to receive their [MABC through Faith Bible Seminary](#).

Host Janet and her husband, Brent, also speak at a variety of conferences as a way to raise money for the seminary. If you want to look at what they offer or book them for a conference, [go to their website](#).