

9/05/10 (pm) - Series on Philippians - Sermon 22

A Surprising Command!

Philippians 3:1a

Theme: Christians are to continually rejoice in the Lord.

Finally, my brothers ... (3:1)

Paul is not about to end his letter!

He is at a transition point.

Finally is better translated
as for the rest, or furthermore.

We must not pass over the glorious
statement of 3:1a.

The Train of the Apostle's Thought

What does *same things ... again* refer to?

Rejoicing (3:1b) or what follows after 3:2?

Commentators are divided.

It probably refers to what follows after 3:2.

We can extract four important principles from 3:1a based on the grammar and terms the Apostle uses.

**1. Christians are *commanded* to
rejoice in the Lord.**

The Philippians are to be active in
doing this!

The same command comes to
Christians today.

2. Christians are commanded to *rejoice* in the Lord.

Rejoice is not a display of saccharine smiles or hypocritical happiness that denies the circumstances of life.

Rejoice is a deep, foundational, inner, genuine, overflowing-into-behaviour rejoicing.

Paul uses Psalmists' language, *cf*
Psalm 32:11.

Joy is a manifestation of the fruit
of the Spirit, *cf.* Galatians 5:22.

3. Christians are commanded to rejoice *in the Lord*.

The Lord Jesus Christ is to be the source, object and sphere of the Philippians' rejoicing.

A Christian's rejoicing today is to be *in the Lord*.

4. Christians are commanded to *continually* rejoice in the Lord.

Despite their circumstances, the grammar shows that the Philippians are commanded to rejoice *continually*.

An important question to ask is *Why should Christians continually rejoice in the Lord?*

I suggest five reasons:

**1. because the Lord is worthy of a
Christian's rejoicing in Him.**

When a Christian *actively meditates* on what Jesus has done, it results in joy.

2. because of what a Christian is in the Lord.

Justified, positionally sanctified, progressively being sanctified, saved from God's wrath, a new creation, adopted into God's family, united to Jesus, indwelt by the Spirit of Jesus, led by the Spirit of Jesus. When a Christian *actively thinks* about what (s)he is in Christ, the result is joy.

3. because the Lord is at work even in the adverse circumstances of life.

There is a good side to the messy under-side of the tapestry of life. When a Christian realises this and meditates on this truth, the result is joy.

God works all things together for the good of the Christian, *cf.* Romans 8:28.

God is working through your circumstances to fulfil His purposes for you in Christ!

**4. because the Lord will never
abandon His child,**

cf. Matthew 28:20; Hebrews 13:5; John
10:28-29.

5. because unbelievers need to see evidence of the Lord in a Christian's life.

Just as our greatest learning moments are often in times of difficulty, so others should see the Lord [most] clearly in our lives in our times of difficulty.

His power is made perfect in our
weakness, His grace is sufficient for us,
cf. 2 Corinthians 12:9.

When this happens others take note
and see the transforming,
supernatural power of the Gospel in
our lives.

*Brother/sister in the Lord, do you
grasp these things?*

*Do you realise who you are and what
you have in Christ?*

*Meditate on these things, in good
times and adverse times.*

*As we do, we will find ourselves
rejoicing in the Lord—3:1a.*