

“Rejoice in the Lord” Philippians 4:4-7

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Many want happiness, but there's something _____ than happiness! What's better? Joy! Today we will explore the joy we have in _____. We know God is wise and good. He will always lead us into the _____ that brings us joy and peace, so we turn to His Word, the Bible.

If you ask people what makes them happy, they'll usually speak about all the things they _____ and _____ in their lives. They might speak of ideal houses, cars, or jobs, thinking they can _____ happiness in possessions or position. They might consider the satisfaction of their fleshly _____ or the accomplishment of some _____ in life that will bring them happiness. Many discipline themselves to _____ riches, fame, education, or maybe to set a record. These things, however, belong to this life; they're only _____. Solomon said, “behold, all is _____ and a striving after wind” (Ecclesiastes 1:14). What really matters? What _____ beyond this life?

Read the parable the Lord Jesus told in Luke 12:16-21. Have you laid up treasures in _____? Is God an _____ part of your life?

Our reading today comes from Paul's epistle to the Philippians 4:4-7.

Every person you meet is _____ for joy. Joy is _____ pleasure and satisfaction over a blessing or a positive relationship. The joy that we have in Christ is a mindset of delight and well being that comes from _____ and _____ God. This joy arises from _____ the blessings and promises that are grounded in what God has _____ for us in Christ. It comes from _____ God is our Father, that Jesus is our Savior and Lord. We can have no greater _____ than a personal relationship with the God who created us and can give us an abundant life here on earth and eternal life with Him in heaven. It's no wonder that Scripture urges us to “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice!” (Philippians 4:4).

Joy and our relationship with God are unchangeably _____. When we are _____ with the One who created us, who loves us, who sustains us daily, and who sent His Son Jesus to give us eternal life, our joy is multiplied with peace, hope and gratitude. Day by day God is _____ and He takes _____ of us. Every blessing, the answer to every prayer, the forgiveness of all our sins, and the love of brethren are good _____ to rejoice in the Lord always!

Christianity is _____ than a faith or a religion; it's a relationship with our Father in heaven. The Lord taught us to _____ to Him and to be _____ to Him. In prayer we can _____ out our hearts and our requests. God has given us His Scriptures, the Bible, to guide us and to lead us in the _____. Both prayer and following God's teachings are matters of _____ and _____. **Read what the Lord Jesus said in John 15:9-11.** When people _____ each other and maintain a right relationship, joy just grows and grows.

From the time that Jesus entered this world, He has _____ joy and hope to mankind. Everything about Him speaks of an abundant life _____ with joy, peace, and promise! When Jesus was _____, an angel of the Lord appeared to some shepherds out in the field as they were watching over their sheep. The glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were filled with _____. **Read Luke 2:10-11.** Truly the beginning of the _____ joy in all history was the day that Jesus Christ came into the world.

Can you imagine all the joy that Jesus brought to people as He _____ sinners, as He _____ the gospel of the kingdom, as He _____ everyone who came to Him? The blind could _____; the deaf could _____; the lame could _____; the lepers were cleansed; and those who were maimed were made whole. Jesus fed the multitudes, cast out _____, stilled the terrifying _____, and raised the _____ and welcomed tax collectors and sinners. People's lives were _____ for the better for having known Jesus. He brought _____ joy everywhere He went.

Luke 15 contains three stories of joy, where something is _____ and then _____. A shepherd who'd lost one of his _____ searched until he found it. With joy he calls together his neighbors and friends and asks them to _____ with him. The Lord Jesus said, "I tell you that in the same way, there will be more joy in _____ over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Luke 15:7). Repentance is a _____ to rejoice. In the second story, a woman lost a _____. Searching diligently, she finds it and calls her friends and neighbors to rejoice with her.

In the third story there is a younger son who causes _____ to be lost in sin by wandering off to a far country and wasting his inheritance. A famine caused him to be destitute and hungry. When he came to his senses, he came _____ acknowledging his sin, but the father rejoiced over his repentant son. With hugs and kisses, the father put the best robe on him, shoes on his feet, a ring on his finger. He said, "bring the fattened calf, kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and has come to life again; he was lost and has been found." And they began to celebrate" (Luke 15:23-24). God loves to _____ people; He rejoices when people _____ and turn their lives around. We too should rejoice when we see people turn their hearts toward God to follow and serve Him.

Jesus knew that He would die on the cross, and it caused Him great _____, to the point of death. Even those who went to the _____ with Him sorrowed; Luke 22:45 says Jesus found them “sleeping from sorrow.” When He was speaking of His resurrection, Jesus said, “Therefore you too have _____ now; but I will see you again, and your heart will rejoice, and no one will take your _____ away from you” (John 16:22). Though Jesus suffered through a painful trial and bore an agonizing cross, He could _____ joy even in His suffering (Hebrews 12:2). What could possibly be joyful in the cross?

The joy of the cross was not in the _____ or the suffering or the _____ that the Jews heaped upon Him as they mocked Him. No! The “joy set before Jesus” that allowed Him to _____ the cross came from what He was dying for. He died to _____ people, people who would follow Him in this life and live with Him forever. Acts 20:28 says He purchased the _____ with His own blood. He was _____ to sacrifice Himself on the cross because He _____ us. He knew that in dying, we would come to understand just how _____ He was willing to go to demonstrate His love and to save us from our sins. He knew that His death would make a _____ in our lives. So He rejoices every time a sinner _____ and comes to Him. That’s the joy that’s set before Him.

When the women came to the _____ after the resurrection, they came wanting to anoint the body of Jesus early on the first day of the week, and they saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. An angel had rolled away the _____. The guards shook for _____ of Him and became like dead men. **Read Matthew 28:5-8.** They left the tomb quickly with fear and great joy and they _____ to report it to His disciples. Jesus conquered the grave, and we can rejoice in the _____ that He gives to us that one day we will rise from the dead.

You may be going through a _____ time right now. You might not have _____ to rejoice about or to be thankful for. But even in our heartache, the Lord Jesus can _____ us. **Read James 1:2-4.** Your struggles may be the very thing that allows you to _____ and become the person that God wants you to be. So rejoice even in your _____. Like Paul, we can say, “For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the _____ that is to be revealed to us” (Romans 8:18). If all we see is the suffering, we may _____ what great things God has in store for us.

Christians find their joy not only in what the Lord has done in the _____ by forgiving their sins but also in the _____. Paul spoke of “Rejoicing in _____” (Romans 12:12). We have a _____ hope in Christ that cannot be taken from us. **Read 1 Peter 1:3-5.** Salvation and a home in heaven are certainly great _____ for joy. **Read 1 Peter 1:6-9.**

Christians will _____ various trials and tests; but when Christians face trials, their _____ sustains them. God sees the _____ of their faith and blesses them for it. Though

we've never _____ Jesus, we love Him. Though we do not see Him now, we _____ to see Him when He comes again. So, we rejoice with a joy that is inexpressible because we _____ that we have a place reserved in heaven just for us. Nothing can take the joy that comes with a _____ hope.

God proved His love for us by _____ Jesus to us, and Jesus proved His love for us by _____ upon the cross. When we demonstrate our faith and love for Him, our faith becomes more precious than _____. Our faith will _____ in praise and glory and honor from the Father. One day the Lord will _____ those who remain faithful. **Read what Paul proclaimed in 2 Timothy 4:6-8.** Do you love His appearing? Do you love the Lord? Do you rejoice in all that He has _____ for you? Do you have that _____ and that _____ deeply in your heart and soul? If not, I hope you'll consider the things we've talked about.

The joy that we want and need is _____ than a temporary happiness that perishes. We want a joy that can never _____, a joy that lasts forever. There can be no _____ joy than this, to know that we are forgiven, to know that we are walking in the truth, to know that we're right with the living God, to know that He hears our prayers, to know that He watches over us, and to know that He has prepared an eternal home in heaven for us. Lasting joy, which is so much better than a temporary happiness, comes only from Christ!

The wonderful thing about the joy of Christ is that the more we _____ it, the more we _____. Paul wished that everyone were a Christian, and so do we. We rejoice when we hear of people _____; we rejoice when we hear of souls forgiven by the Lord; or our fervent prayers being answered causes great joy. We rejoice when people are baptized into Christ Jesus so that they may become children of God; and we rejoice when saints are called _____ to be with Jesus. Indeed, the joy of the Lord is our _____ as Nehemiah says in Nehemiah 8:10.

I'm, asking you, do you have the joy of the Lord in your _____? Do you have the joy of your salvation? Are you at _____ with God, knowing that God has forgiven your sins? If you have unresolved sin in your life; if you have strayed from the straight and narrow road; or if you're a prodigal son or daughter; you're _____ the joy that God wants for you. Give your heart and your life to God.

To become a Christian, _____ in the Lord Jesus and His words with all your heart, then _____ of your sins, _____ Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and be _____ into Christ for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38). When you're baptized, God will _____ away your sins (Acts 22:16). After the Eunuch was baptized, the Bible says that he went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:38-39). You can too, when you are obedient to the will of God.