



Chico Alliance Church  
March 5, 2017



## ***“Rejoice in the Lord”*** ***Part two***

I have found practicing last week's message an actual source of joy.

Throughout the day, I have declared, “I choose joy.” I look forward to completing this important topic. Paul specified some specific joy related actions throughout chapter four.

- **Stand firm in the Lord 4:1**
- **Harmonize in the Lord 4:2-3**
- **Rejoice in the Lord 4:4**

*Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! Philippians 4:4*

As I mentioned last week, the Holy Spirit has extensively woven this topic all through the entire Bible. It appears nearly 380 times. The Hebrew and Greek nouns refer to an inner state or emotion of joy, cheerfulness, delight, fullness translated commonly by the English terms gladness and joy, cheer. The external expression of that emotion is indicated by the verb meaning to “brighten up, cheer up, be glad, be joyful, make merry, rejoice.

There are also other terms like this state of being or emotion.

Inner joy is nearly always triggered by some event, relationship or experience we perceive as positive or beneficial. This may also include thoughts or memories of events, experiences and relationships. Remembering a fun family vacation may elicit joy. Memories of a friend or relative. Anticipation of a visit, a trip, an event may also trigger emotions of joy. Reflection on God and spiritual truths trigger feelings of joy. Jesus Loves me this I know. Jesus will soon return. God works all things together for good. Jesus loves and accepts just as I am. I am a child of God.

Intentional thoughts about a peaceful place. Think happy thoughts. Go to your “happy place.” Negative thinking produces negative emotions. Positive thinking produces positive emotions. Meditation on truth can reverse negative emotions.

When David felt depressed, he instructed His soul to remember and hope in God and anticipated an occasion to praise God. (Psalm 42.)

Jeremiah snapped out of paralyzing despair to sustaining hope by contemplating the truth about God.

*My soul has been rejected from peace; I have forgotten happiness. So I say, "My strength has perished, And so has my hope from the LORD." Lamentations 3:17-18*

The very next verse.

*Remember my affliction and my wandering, the wormwood and bitterness. Surely my soul remembers And is bowed down within me. This I recall to my mind, Therefore I have hope. The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; Great is Your faithfulness. "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him." The LORD is good to those who wait for Him, To the person who seeks Him. It is good that he waits silently For the salvation of the LORD. Lamentations 3:19-26*

In chapter 4 of Philippians, Paul instructed the Philippians to rejoice in the Lord.

**Rejoice** in the Lord always; again I will say, **rejoice!** 4:4

Rejoice in the context of your identity with the God of the universe.

The possibility and reality of a relationship with God ought to inspire joy.

Our connection with the source of all joy stands at the heart of our joy which ought to inspire some external response noticeable to all. The outward expression of our inner joy, which we refer to as rejoicing, varies from person to person or culture to culture. Singing, thanksgiving, music, dancing, shouting, feasting, celebrating, corporate and private worship, prayer, praise, laughing, clapping, even crying are examples of joy outwardly expressed.

## Clear commands to rejoice

## Stirring testimonies and examples of rejoicing.

### Joy and rejoicing triggers (Reasons)

- **Rejoice in God Himself**

*You will increase their gladness; they will be glad in your presence as with the gladness of harvest as men rejoice when they divide the spoil.*

In your presence is fullness of joy. The thought of God as our loving father, good and caring shepherd triggers joy.

- **Rejoice in God's salvation**

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His great mercy has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 1 Peter 1:3*

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ... Ephesians 1:3*

These declarations of blessing God flow out of a joyful heart.

*strengthened with all power, according to His glorious might, for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience; joyously giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified us to share in the inheritance of the saints in Light. Colossians 1:11-12*

- **Rejoice at the salvation of the lost**
- **Rejoice over God's sovereignty**
- **Rejoice in the glorification of Jesus**
- **Rejoice in God's works**

*For You, O LORD, have made me glad by what You have done, I will sing for joy at the works of Your hands. Psalm 92:4*

- **Rejoice in the victory over our enemy**
- **Rejoice in God's word**

God's word enables us to see life from God's eternal perspective which in turn enables us to properly frame life's tragedies. He assures us that He will work ALL things together for good.

- **Rejoice at his judgments**
- **Rejoice to enter God's house**
- **Rejoice at the generous giving to a great cause**
- **Rejoice at the restoration of worship and revival**
- **Rejoice at future reward or benefit**

*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. Romans 8:18*

*We do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day. For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. 2 Corinthians 4:16-18*

- **Rejoice for the privilege of suffering for Jesus**

*but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing, so that also at the revelation of His glory you may rejoice with exultation. 1 Peter 4:13*

- **Rejoice in answer to prayer**

*"Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; ask and you will receive, so that your joy may be made full. John 16:24*

- **Rejoice in meaningful relationship**

Most of the verses listed here are expressions of Paul's love for those to which he ministered.

I'm not sure the key, but Paul found great joy in his relationship with people.

That was not true for everyone along the way, but was true; even for those he had to chastise.

*For I have come to have much joy and comfort in your (Philemon) love, because the hearts of the saints have been refreshed through you, brother. Philemon 1:7*

The tough question is this. Do we have people in our life with that kind of positive influence? Do we have that kind of positive influence on other people? Are we joy givers or joy robbers?

- **Rejoice in the spiritual growth of others**

*For even though I am absent in body, nevertheless I am with you in spirit, rejoicing to see your good discipline and the stability of your faith in Christ. Colossians 2:5*

*make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Phil 2:2*

Even though Paul's strong words of correction to the Corinthians caused sorrow, he rejoiced in the prospect of growth producing repentance.

*I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth. 3 John 1:4*

- **Rejoice in the wife of your youth**

- **Rejoice in godly children**

## **Source of Joy**

- **The Trinity grants joy**

God is the ultimate source of joy. Some passages state that "The Lord caused them to rejoice." Thoughts about God can trigger joy but there are times when God simply stirs joy in our hearts. Jude prayed to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to make you stand in the presence of his glory blameless with great joy...

The disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. The kingdom of God is joy in the Holy Spirit.

The evidence of the work of the Holy Spirit, among other things, is joy.

The Thessalonians became imitators of the Lord amid much tribulation with the joy of the Holy Spirit. Joyful growth. Jesus said be of good cheer I have overcome the tribulation producing world. Jesus talked about sharing His joy with them.

- **Trust in God accesses joy**

Romans 15 provides a clarifying passage regarding joy.

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

God clearly grants us joy but the means to that provision is faith. Joy and peace come from a settled trust in God's truth inspired by the Holy Spirit.

- **The prayer of others brings joy**

We can pray for God to fill our fellow believers with His joy.

- **The witness and encouragement of other people triggers joy**

*Anxiety in a man's heart weighs it down, But a good word makes it glad. Proverbs 12:25*

*A man has joy in an apt answer, And how delightful is a timely word! Proverbs 15:23*

*Convinced of this, I (Paul) know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, Philippians 1:25*

*May those who fear You see me and be glad, Because I wait for Your word. Psalm 119:74*

*Let no unwholesome (worthless) word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. Ephesians 4:29*

## **Prayer for joy**

There are passages that flat-out ask God for joy.

*Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice. Psalm 51:8*

*Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and sustain me with a willing spirit. Psalm 51:12*

*Make glad the soul of Your servant, for to You, O Lord, I lift up my soul. Psalm 86:4*

## **Application**

How joyful are you in your life? Do you find yourself more negative than joyful? Given the things that trigger joy and rejoicing we can draw some conclusions. There are some things in this study over which we have no control.

We can't manufacture positive events.

I can't will the sun to shine and the rain to stop.

I can't control the actions of my family or the people around me.

These are known as VDP (very draining people)

I can choose to cultivate my relationship with the joy giver.

I can choose to think about positive things as Paul later lists in his letter.

I can contemplate all the amazing blessings of being a child of God.

I can frame the present and the past in the light of future blessing and reward.

I can choose to cultivate meaningful relationships with others.

I can yield to the direction and enablement of the Holy Spirit. (Live by the Spirit)

I can choose to trust God in EVERYTHING.

I can choose to pray for His joy.

I would suggest you start a notebook of joy "triggers". As you encounter truths that stir a positive emotion during your Bible study, jot them down. When you struggle with negativity and sorrow, consult your "joy journal."

The reality is that not everything is joyful and there is a time for sorrow and repenting. Shortly after Jesus offered to share His joy with his disciples, He said this...

*"My soul is deeply grieved to the point of death..." Mark 14:34*

Yet Hebrews records this...

*fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. Heb 12:2-3*

Life in a broken world is full of negatively and sorrow.

*His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for a lifetime; Weeping may last for the night, but a shout of joy comes in the morning. Psalm 30:5*

There is a time for singing and rejoicing.

After the people rebuilt the wall around Jerusalem under the capable leadership of Nehemiah, all the people gathered as one man inside the wall where Ezra the priest stood up and read the book of the law of Moses which the Lord had given to Israel. He read from early morning until midday and the people were attentive to the book of the law. Nehemiah wrote that all the people answered, "Amen, Amen!" While lifting up their hands; then they bowed low and worshipped the Lord with their faces to the ground.

Other teachers explained the law to the people translating to give the sense so that they understood the reading.

The reading of the word deeply moved the people of God and they were weeping. Nehemiah then stood up and said to the people...

*"This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep." For all the people were weeping when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, "Go, eat of the fat, drink of the sweet, and send portions to him who has nothing prepared; for this day is holy to our Lord. Do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength." So the Levites calmed all the people, saying, "Be still, for the day is holy; do not be grieved." All the people went away to eat, to drink, to send portions and to celebrate a great festival, because they understood the words which had been made known to them. Nehemiah 8:9-12*

Yes, there is a time for grieving and deep reflection, but today is not that time. Today we celebrate our Lord for who He is and what He has done. Today is a time to rejoice in the Lord, again I say rejoice!

## **REJOICE IN THE LORD!!**