

**Rejoice Greatly in the Lord**  
**Philippians 4: 10-14**  
Huntsville Bible College

Katrina Munchinsky  
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Instructor: Trevor M. Crenshaw  
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## **Main Idea**

Passage: Philippians 4:10-14

The book of Philippians is presumed to be written during Paul the Apostle's second imprisonment in Rome. Paul is aware of the real possibility that he will be executed but he writes to the Philippian church and still presses forward in sharing the Gospel. He is writing to the Philippians about many things, but the theme of joy is interwoven throughout this book. How can Paul be content in a prison cell, and how do Christians find this same contentment? Philippians 4:10-14 touches on this. In this passage, Paul is speaking of this joy and contentment in all circumstances (Phil. 4:11-12). Is contentment circumstantial or does it come from a deeper place? Paul speaks about that here (Phil. 4:13). Christians can choose contentment in Christ.

## **Outline**

- A.) Introduction - Joy
- B.) The Secret to Contentment (Phil. 4:11-12)
  - ii.) I Can Do All Things Through Christ (Phil. 4:13)
  - vi.) Share in Each Other's Troubles (Phil. 4:14)
- v.) Conclusion - Joy is Jesus (Phil: 4:13)

## **Introduction - Joy**

Happiness is an elusive and fleeting emotion, but once someone feels it, they will spend their entire life searching and sacrificing to obtain it. In Psychology, happiness is described as a state of emotional well-being in a narrow sense of one's circumstances or in a broader sense when looking over one's life in an idealist fashion. Happiness is also easy to detect because the one experiencing the feeling tends to have a smile on their face. (Britanica, ). Scripture tells us there is something more valuable than happiness that believers can experience and that is joy. Joy is a deep abiding feeling of good pleasure that we can trust because it is dependent on who Jesus Christ is rather than our circumstances. Paul joyfully shares in Phil. 4:10-14 the path to secure our joy and this exegesis paper hopes to take the reader through rejoicing greatly in the Lord in all circumstances. While this paper will not be an exhaustive overview of Philippians 4:10-14, it is intended to shine a light of interpretation by exploring God's word in depth by taking the reader through the context, content and application of this passage.

### **The Secret to Contentment (Phil. 4:10-12)**

In this passage of scripture Paul, the Apostle begins to get to the real reason or purpose for writing this letter to the church in Philippi. Paul is writing this letter in 61 A.D. or 62 A.D, towards the last few months of his prison sentence, aware that he would likely be executed soon. He is writing from a cell in Rome. Philippians is the last of his four Prison Epistles and the only one to be delivered by Epaphroditus who has come to give Paul some financial support from the church in Phillipi. (Swindoll, ) Epaphroditus falls ill while he is on the trip to Paul, and it is a severe illness, so it delays the letter. (Phil. 2:25, 4:18) Paul first shares his appreciation for the concern that the Philippian church has shown him. Besides showing his appreciation he also makes it clear that he is not requesting more provisions. He is simply saying he is appreciative of what they have already sent but is not dependent on them for his ministry (Phil. 4:12). Paul

mentioned in scripture that he could have collected a wage if he so chose, it would have been his right but instead he chose to work as a tent maker and support himself. The purpose of this was so that he would be able to remain financially independent while supporting his ministry and that would allow the message of the Gospel to remain unblemished (Acts 18:1-4, 1 Cor. 9:15).

Paul is no ordinary believer, he has endured forced labor, been flogged, imprisoned, exposed to death, received over 200 lashes, been beaten with rods three times, stones thrown at him, shipwrecked three times, lost in open sea once, bitten by a viper and had countless encounters with those that wished to do him and the Gospel harm (2 Cor. 11:23-28, Acts 28:3) As he sits in his prison cell, he preaches contentment and joy (Phil. 4:12). The preaching of joy and the ability to choose it shows that the normal state of man was to be discontent. The secret to contentment, this deep joy, is being able to do all things through Christ (Phil 4:13).

### **I Can Do All Things Through Christ (Phil. 4:13)**

The phrase used in Phil 4:11 uses I have learned the secret translates from Greek with the implication of being admitted into a secret society (the bible says). Paul knows the secret and he is ready to tell the church. Paul shares the secret eagerly with the church, the secret to joy is our focus, we should not focus on our circumstances but on Christ. The same resurrected power is in Christ is available for all believers. Contentment and joy are learned behaviors that the Holy Spirit helps all believers have if they submit to Christ. Christ is the key; he will be the one to get them through their circumstances well. (Phil. 4:13). Paul knew that nothing on earth could destroy his relationship with Christ, therefore any circumstance he faced was worth the price paid to share the Gospel so that others could have the same opportunity to know Christ. The contentment that came with knowing Jesus takes the sting out of trials, even if it does not take the pain away (Fairchild, 22)

What Paul is not saying is that all things as in those things that go against God's character, commands, or Will are permissible with Christ. God cannot and will not commit evil or go against his word. Therefore, when this verse is taken out of context as it often is we can lose sight of the secret's purpose. The secret is to draw us closer to Jesus not further away.

### **Share in Each Other's Troubles (Phil. 4:14)**

Suffering is the universal equalizer. We all will suffer, there will not be one person who gets out of this world without suffering. Paul knew this when he thanked the Philippian church for caring enough to inquire how he was and to share in his suffering (Phil. 4:14). Earlier in Philippians Paul mentions that suffering is a gift (Phil. 1:21-30). He explains that while he is here on earth he will live for Christ, even though he knew that to die and be in Christ's presence is better. Paul is sharing these thoughts with the church in Philippi because he is aware of the persecution and suffering that they are and will continue to experience it. He encourages them to stay strong by showing them what he has gone through, he also shares why they will be able to survive and that is Christ Jesus. Paul does not minimize their reality; he is aware that suffering costs much of the believers, but he champions them through their suffering by pointing them to the purpose. It will all be worth it when we are reunited with Christ. The beauty and privilege of sharing in one another's troubles is to point us back to the cross. When our brother and sister stumble we can be there to encourage and help them along (Ecc. 4:9).

### **Conclusion - Joy is Jesus (Phil: 4:13)**

Joy and happiness are different. Happiness is a fleeting emotion, a temporary good feeling due to our circumstances, while joy is contentment in Christ's promises despite our

circumstances. Our focus should always be on the cross and not the world. Paul followed in his savior's footsteps, he suffered for the Gospel, and he still clung to joy.

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