

Message Notes

Joy in Gospel Progress
Philippians 1:12-18
Joy Revolution, part 4
October 15, 2006

Remember, learning to “Delight Ourselves in the Lord” involves:

1. Willfully choosing
2. Diligently practicing
3. Humbly using the “helps” that God provides:
 - Creation & the Word
 - Prayer & Praise
 - Christian community

grace
San Luis Obispo

Message Outline

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Joy Stream #2 = Gospel Progress

How dependent is your joy on the circumstances and people that surround you?

I. Rejoice in Gospel progress through and despite DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES (1:12-14)

- A. By embracing Gospel progress as the sovereign and delightful plan of God.
- B. By valuing Gospel progress above our own comfort and convenience.
- C. By leveraging our circumstances for Gospel progress.
 - The palace guards were hearing, because Paul was talking.
 - The brethren were talking, because Paul was encouraging.

II. Rejoice in Gospel progress through and despite DIFFICULT PEOPLE (1:14-18)

- A. By embracing Gospel progress as the sovereign, delightful, diverse plan of God.
- B. By valuing Gospel progress above our own reputation.

Drinking from the Stream . . .

What is one difficult circumstance or relationship in your life that has been or might be used by God for Gospel progress? Rejoice & Act!

Growth Group Understanding Questions

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1. Read Philippians 1:12-18. Where is Paul and what is happening to him? Summarize the text.
2. How were Paul's difficult circumstances turning out for the "greater progress of the Gospel" mentioned in v. 12? Were these things just happening or did Paul have a role in their happening?
3. The situation described in v. 15-18 is vague and hazy. What two groups of people does Paul mention? What might be going on with these "difficult people?"
4. How do we know that Paul's joy was independent of the difficult circumstances and people in his life? What was the foundation of his joy here? How does the sovereignty of God relate to Paul's joy?

Growth Group Application Questions

Joy in Gospel Progress

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1. What was most challenging or new in the text/message this week?
2. What are the streams where you drink for your joy? How dependent is your joy on the circumstances and people of your life? If this is the case, what happens to your joy when circumstances or people are difficult?
3. Why is it so difficult to "unhinge" your joy from circumstances and people? To put it another way, why is it so difficult to stop drinking from streams that don't satisfy and to start drinking from streams that do?
4. Is it always possible to leverage our circumstances for the progress of the Gospel? How are or might difficult circumstances you're facing right now be leveraged for Gospel progress? (Think hard!)
5. Give a personal example of how you've seen a difficult or different person be used to advance the Gospel. Why can our egos and our interest in our personal reputations get in the way of Gospel progress? How can an understanding of the sovereign, diverse, delightful plan of God help us avoid that?
6. How do we choose and practice drinking from the joy stream of Gospel progress?