



## September 18 & 19: Irrational Joy

### Series Overview

We are in this world to make an impact and love others. If we are going to truly impact our world, we must display the life of Christ in our own lives. *Galatians 5:22-23* says <sup>22</sup>*But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness and self-control. Against such things there is no law.* This kind of life will make a difference in our world and in the lives of the people around us.



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### Sermon Highlights

Paul uses the word "joy" 11 times in the four chapters of *Philippians*. *The Message* paraphrases *Philippians 4:4, Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, revel in him!*

Joy is not a result of happy circumstances. Joy is a daily decision to make an impact. We need to be reminded that we cannot manufacture joy on our own. We cannot have joy, regardless of our circumstances, without supernatural help.

Let's talk about some practical ways we can grow in this area of joy so that we can have a ministry with others.

#### 1. **Eternal perspective**

*Philippians 4:5, Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near.*

#### 2. **Grateful attitude**

*Philippians 4:6-7, <sup>6</sup>Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. <sup>7</sup>And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

#### 3. **Positive mindset**

*Philippians 4:8, Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things.*

#### 4. **Supernatural strength**

*Philippians 4:11-13, <sup>11</sup>...for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. <sup>12</sup>I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. <sup>13</sup>I can do everything through him who gives me strength.*

If you don't have that power source, if you don't have His Spirit living inside of you, but you want to know what it means to live with that kind of power, you can be connected to Jesus and know this irrational joy.

#### On joy...

- Take a saint and put him into any condition, and he knows how to rejoice in the Lord. –Walter Cradock
- *Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy. –1 Peter 1:8*
- Followers of Christ have joy and comfort—it is a joy that angels cannot give and devils cannot take. –Christopher Fowler



**Take it home ... Practical Applications**

Take some time this week to make a list of things you can be thankful for. Consider how many of those things are gifts that you are not responsible for and thank God for the goodness that He shows us each and every day.



## Take it to the source ... Bible Study

**Introductory question:** If you were asked what event brought you the most joy in life, how would you respond? Why?

### Read *Philippians 4:4; 2:18; 3:1*.

1. This is the third time Paul has told the church in Philippi that they should rejoice. Why is rejoicing such an important part of the Christian life?
2. *The Message* paraphrases this verse, *Celebrate God all day, every day. I mean, revel in him!* What are some of the ways you celebrate God? How can this change your spiritual outlook?
3. Some Bible teachers call rejoicing a spiritual discipline. What are some things you can do alone or with your Small Group to help you develop a lifestyle of rejoicing in God and all His goodness?
4. Paul says we are to rejoice in the Lord *always*. What kind of life situations make it hard for you to rejoice? What practical things can you do to help you rejoice *always*?

### Read *Philippians 4:6-8*.

1. Why do you think Paul follows rejoicing with *prayer* and *thanksgiving*? How can prayer and thanksgiving help you to develop a life of joy?
2. Do you go through your normal day with a sense of peace? How can these verses help you to handle the daily pressures of life?
3. How can the peace of God guard your heart and mind? What might that look like in practical terms?
4. Why is it important to guard your heart and mind when worry and stress start to take over?
5. What kind of things should you be thinking about if you are going to have a mind that is controlled by God's Spirit? How can disciplining your thoughts make it easier for you to think and act according to God's ways?

### Read *Philippians 4:11-13*.

1. What is the foundation of contentment in your life? What can cause you to lose that contentment the fastest?
2. Would you say that your life is governed by possessions? Why or why not?
3. How can putting Christ at the center of all your thoughts and actions help you be more content? How would that change your life?
4. How much do you look to Jesus Christ to give you the strength to be joyful and content? What could you do in your daily life to make that more of a reality?



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*All Bible references are from the New International Version unless otherwise stated.*

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