

Philippians #2
Philippians 1:2-6
“Barriers and Breakthroughs of Joy”

Often times it is not the large catastrophic events in life that most often rob our joy – it can be the little things. In this lesson, Tom explores the things (big and small) that can become a barrier to experiencing joy. But he also points out biblical strategies that can destroy these barriers.

What are the “four penny” aggravations of your life?

In verse 2 Paul opens with a wish for grace and peace to his readers. How have you tried to find peace in the conventional ways – in a person, place or thing?

Let’s look at this quest for peace in a different way. How can peace be achieved through each of these?

- In a person – the person of Christ. (John 14:27)
- In a place – the presence of God. (Psalm 16:11 and 21:6)
- In a thing – the joy from God’s Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)

We intentionally plan a vacation for a time of peace and rest. How can you intentionally plan to experience the personal calmness and settled confidence of joy?

Tom observes that our lack of joy is demonstrated in the following three ways. What scriptural antidote is prescribed for these joy-less manifestations?

1. Negative thoughts and words. (Psalm 19:24 and Psalm 64:1-5)
2. Lack of concern for people’s welfare. (Matthew 9:36 and John 11:35)
3. Failure to intercede for others. (Colossians 1:9-12)

Paul is so appreciative of the Philippians partnership with him in the gospel. Their support (in prayers and finances) helped Paul fulfill his missionary efforts. Do you have this same bond of partnership with others who share the good news of the gospel? Why are these kinds of partnership such a good investment? *[And for those who have supported Priority Living – thank you for your partnership!]*

Tom spent quite a bit of time developing the principle that joy is produced through trials. Spend some time thinking through James 1: 2-4. Why are the struggles of life such a catalyst for joy?

Tom mentions four “joy blockers” (the first three from Chuck Swindoll). Which of these four is your thickest or highest barrier to joy? Can you think of a scripture that would address your selected barrier?

1. Worry
2. Stress
3. Fear
4. Sin

Verse 6 stresses the confidence that a follower of Christ can have in the firm belief that what God starts He finishes. Review the passages that Tom used. How do security and joy complement each other?

- John 10: 27-18
- Romans 8:38-39

“Our relationship with Christ is not determined by what we’ve done but despite what we’ve done.” (Refer to Romans 5:8 and Ephesians 2:8-10). Why is this doctrinal truth so foundational to Christianity? How would a deep understanding of this statement produce a spirit of thankfulness, a sense of joy, and an expression of thankfulness through prayer?