

## Rejoice - A Study of Philippians by Ps Larry Elliott

### Part 8

Today's Teaching is all about Staying Encouraged for the Journey

#### 1. Worship and Spiritual Joy

**Philippians 3:1-3 NKJV** "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. For me to write the same things to you is not tedious, but for you it is safe. Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the mutilation! For we are the circumcision, who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh,

**Paul had recognized that to Rejoicing is a SPIRITUAL FORCE (Nehemiah 8:10) that gives me power to stay encouraged on my journey.**

- Celebrate your victories but keep them in perspective
- Celebrate your trials because they are working for you

While we are on this remember that:

- True Worship comes from your spirit; it's not a FLESHLY RITUAL

We can get good at being Christian, so we go through the motions in the Flesh but there's no heart and soul engagement

We start to rely on our own formulas and structures and programs rather than His GRACE.

*A preacher dreamed he had died and was standing in front of the gates of heaven. As it will happen in such make-believe dreams, he came face to face with St. Peter, who was holding a big book and was ready to decide if this man - a preacher - was going to be allowed into heaven. St. Peter gave him a surprise announcement.*

*"You're going to need 100 points to get inside the gates."*

*"Well," said the preacher proudly, "I was a minister for 47 years."*

*"That's nice," answered Peter. "That gets you one point."*

*"One point?! That's all I get? Just one point for 47 years of service?"*

*"Yes, that's correct," said Peter.*

*The minister was concerned at the scoring system. He tried to think of other things he had done in life.*

*"Well," he said, "I visited shut-ins every chance I got."*

*"One point."*

*"I developed a number of recovery programs, and I took part in many civic groups in our city. People loved me!"*

*"One point. Now you've got three points."*

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"I worked with youth," said the minister, "and surely you must know what that's like!"

"One more point," said Peter, "and that makes four. You need 96 more points."

"Oh no!" the minister cried out in panic. "I feel so helpless, so inadequate. Except for the grace of God, I don't have a chance."

St. Peter smiled a big smile. "Ah . . . the grace of God! That's good for 96 points. Come on in!"

## 2. The Flesh / Don't Abandon True Righteousness

**Philippians 3:4-7 NKJV** though I also might have confidence in the flesh. If anyone else thinks he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so: circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of the Hebrews; concerning the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; concerning the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ.

We all may have compelling evidence in our Flesh, own achievements, credentials and conquests, but Paul says what he had according to Jewish law trumped it all and yet in coming to Christ, in comparison to what He accomplished at the cross it meant nothing.

## 3. Holy Ambition

**Philippians 3:8-9 NKJV** Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

We can all get into a place of Discouragement, of questioning what it is all about

[Polly's and little Polly's]

**Matthew 11:28 NKJV** "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Just say to yourself, I'm going to get there.

The most important thing in Life is answered by these 3 words of JESUS; "Come to Me."

He doesn't say "Do this first, or don't do that," HE SIMPLY SAYS "Come to Me."

If I will JUST TAKE THAT STEP, my life will be brought into harmony with what He really desires for me.

**Matthew 11:28-30 TPT** "Are you weary, carrying a heavy burden? Then come to me. I will refresh your life, for I am your oasis. Simply join your life with mine. Learn my ways and you'll discover that I'm gentle, humble, easy to please. You will find refreshment and rest in me. For all that I require of you will be pleasant and easy to bear."

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At the most unexpected and most difficult moments in your life the Lord will whisper “**Come to Me,**” and you are immediately drawn to Him.

**Matthew 11:28-30 MSG** “Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me— watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Personal contact with Jesus changes everything and brings us to becoming CHRIST-LIKE.

#### 4. Seeking Christ-likeness

**Philippians 3:10-14 NKJV** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death, if, by any means, I may attain to the resurrection from the dead. Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

#### **KEEP PRESSING ON**

(25 years into his Salvation, since his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus)

The longer a person lives, the greater the possibility becomes that they will be haunted by the words, “WHAT IF”

But for a follower of Jesus, “WHAT IF” doesn't have to be a regret over the past. It can be an exciting challenge to see the future God has for us.

Our breakthrough is ahead of us, God's presence will increase in our lives and we will be able to move forward, we will reach out to more and more people.

I want to encourage us today:

WHAT IF... Today, you let go of what's in your PAST and you PRESS IN TOWARDS God.

WHAT IF... Today, you decide you are going PRESS into what God has called you for...

WHAT IF... Today, you decide to PRESS into His love and forgive or let go of a hurt or offense and start reaching out to that LOST person around you.

Prayer Starter: Lord, I don't want to spend my life asking 'what if?' and never seeing any breakthroughs in my life. I make a fresh commitment to pursue You today, excited to see the amazing things You will do in my life.

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## 5. REST AND ARISE or Strive and Dive

**Philippians 3:15-16 NKJV** Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.

**REST is a true sign of MATURITY & real maturity is WALKING in the Fullness of God, to the degree you have received, as we do that we are FILLED UP AGAIN, we ARISE.**

**Then we walk and we experience MORE OF JESUS, MORE OF GOD'S LOVE and we are FILLED AGAIN, we ARISE**

**Ephesians 3:19 AMPC** “[That you may really come] to know [practically, through experience for yourselves] the love of Christ, which far surpasses mere knowledge [without experience]; that you may be filled [through all your being] unto all the fullness of God [may have the richest measure of the divine Presence, and become a body wholly filled and flooded with God Himself]!”

- God has got more health, abundance and success lined up for us in our lives
- God has MORE THAN ENOUGH OF THESE THINGS
- How do these THINGS come into our lives, not by us chasing after them but by simply becoming full of God
- It's not about praying longer, or doing more or how YOU LOVE God, it's in receiving and knowing Christ's Deep Love for us
- We are designed by God to run at MAXIMUM LEVEL when WE are filled with His love. (Just like your car when it's filled with the right GAS and not PARAFFIN) It's SUPERNATURAL

And to be full of God is to be full, look at the next VERSE...

**Ephesians 3:20 AMPC** “Now to Him Who, by (in consequence of) the [action of His] power that is at work within us, is able to [carry out His purpose and] do superabundantly, far over and above all that we [dare] ask or think [infinitely beyond our highest prayers, desires, thoughts, hopes, or dreams]—”

## 6. Warning Against Carnality

**Philippians 3:17-19 NKJV** Brethren, join in following my example, and note those who so walk, as you have us for a pattern. For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: whose end is destruction, whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame— who set their mind on earthly things.

**The way to stay away from Carnality is to Stay Ahead of it.**

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**1 Peter 5:8-10 NKJV** “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world. But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle you.”

When we are mature we start to understand temptation and learn to aggressively resist it, that's how you stay ahead of what the devil is trying to do.

**James 1:12 AMPC** “Blessed (happy, to be envied) is the man who is patient under trial and stands up under temptation, for when he has stood the test and been approved, he will receive [the victor's] crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him.”

- Enduring also means going through a time of temptation without letting it change your attitude and commitment
- Jesus understands exactly what we're facing with temptation
- The only way you can have all that Jesus wants you to have is to be what He wants you to be, that maturity comes through **STANDING THROUGH** trials

## 7. Our Heavenly Citizenship

**Philippians 3:20-21 NKJV** For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who will transform our lowly body that it may be conformed to His glorious body, according to the working by which He is able even to subdue all things to Himself.”

- LET'S STAY ETERNITY MINDED
- Our CITIZENSHIP is in HEAVEN

**John 14:1-4 NKJV** “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also. And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

- God is not LIMITED, HE'S NOT IN LOCKDOWN and He hasn't LOCKED us OUT...OF HEAVEN OR THE THINGS OF HIS KINGDOM....
- He's ETERNAL, POWERFUL AND ALL-KNOWING

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