

“CHRIST IS THE JOY OF MY LIFE” (Philippians 2:1-3)

David P. Brown, Spring Texas

In the midst of persecution and hardship the Lord’s church came into existence in the Roman colonial city of Philippi (Acts 16:9- 40). It is this church that Paul declares to be his **“brethren beloved and longed for, my joy and crown.”** Hence, the rest of the statement: **“so stand fast in the Lord, my beloved”** (Phi. 4:1—ASV). The joy of Paul’s life was Christ. From the beginning, the church knew by Paul’s example what Jesus meant when He taught: **“Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you”** (Mat. 5:11-12).

From his prison cell Paul now exhorts the Philippians to remember his exemplary life. They were in the same conflict as Paul. As citizens of the kingdom of heaven, Paul, the Philippians, and all Christians were given the privilege of suffering for the cause of Christ (Phi. 1:29-30). The same mind and spirit of the Christ should characterize the church in Philippi, as it characterized Paul (1:21). As the inspired Peter declared: **“Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf”** [“in this name”—ASV] (1 Pet. 4:16).

We would do well to ask ourselves if we would rejoice upon hearing of the persecution of brethren that was brought about because said brethren would not compromise the truth of the Gospel. Today, too many in the Lord’s church just do not believe 2 Timothy 3:12 means what it says! As Christ went to the Cross to redeem mankind, the Scripture declares that **“joy... was set before him”** whereby he **“endured the cross, despising the shame”** (Heb. 12:2). Because our Lord could see in His death on the cross the eternal benefits for all mankind *chara* (joy, gladness, delight) He under-girded His resolve to bear it all that we might live.

Today, most people think of joy as something that comes because one is free from hardship, pain, and anguish. But, the joy that Christ offers does not dissolve when one is persecuted for serving God. Such persecution actually enhances, broadens, and deepens the Christian’s gladness or joy. Luke records of the apostles: **“And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name”** (Acts 5:41). James declared: **“My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing”** (Jam. 1:2-4).

Realizing that man’s faith in the Christ is formed and sustained by the Word of God, we should realize that without faith there can be no true joy. Paul wrote to the Romans: **“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost** (Rom. 15:13). Hence, where there is no faith in the Christ, there can be

no joy. It should be noted that this faith is a living, active, obedient faith. The joy and gladness that the Lord gives comes when one is obedient (1 Cor. 15:58; Phi. 2:12). Hope is another requisite for

The Salisbury Beacon

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FEBRUARY 21, 2016

WELCOME FRIENDS!

Dear friends – we appreciate your willingness to worship God with us this Lord’s Day! If you would like more information about the Church of Christ, or if we may assist you in other ways, please let us know. Come and be part of our family – the Salisbury Church of Christ

Please fill out a Visitor’s Card and place it in the collection plate

Order of Worship

ANNOUNCEMENTS & OPENING PRAYER

SONG #361 At the Cross

SONG #690 Sun of My Soul

PRAYER

SCRIPTURE – HEBREWS 2:1-3

SONG # 371 When We Meet

LORD’S SUPPER

CONTRIBUTION

SONG # 528 Where Could I Go

SERMON: "TO WHOM SHALL WE GO?"

SONG # 903 Lord I’m Coming Home

SONG # 736 Send the Light

CLOSING PRAYER

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND PRAYER CONCERNS

- Please continue to remember: Debbie Post, Stella Reidy, Mary & Jack Callaway, Sharon Travi, Lavinda Mason, Delores Price, Katie Gray, Flossie Hull, Barbara Kuykendall, John Tillman, Paul Marchesault, Marilyn Artis, Linda Alaban, Florence Tucker, George & Lynette Bell, the Jones/Dale family, the Gibson family, Larry Laten, Prince Ituen and all missionaries and military personnel serving overseas.
- **Church Growth:** Pray for both spiritual and numerical growth of our church.
- **Wilma Duke's** sister in Indianapolis passed away on Thursday. Please keep Wilma, Herman, and her family in your prayers during this time, and for safe travels.
- **Ethel Dickerson** will be having an outpatient procedure/examination done on March 2. Please keep Ethel in your prayers.
- **Elaine Bradley** has asked that we keep her son, Bruce Lauder, in our prayers as he deals with his substance addiction. Please pray he will find help, accept help, and find, peace, freedom, and victory over addiction.
- **Ruth Bank's** granddaughter has an undetermined health problem. Please pray for Nicole.
- **Ray Maddox** has not been feeling well. Please remember him in your prayers.
- **Judy Willey** will be traveling to Texas 2/19 to 2/22 to be with her mother who is waiting for test results for breast cancer. Please keep both Judy and her mother in your prayers.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

February 21 (Sunday) Chance Blackmer will be teaching Bible Class and Preaching.

February 28 (Sunday) Evangelism Committee Meeting

March 6 (Sunday) Pot Luck (*Fried Chicken was missing last Pot Luck – just saying*)

March 12 (Saturday) Ladies Bible Class

March 13 (Sunday) Daylight Savings Time (Spring Ahead).

April 17 (Sunday - Wednesday) Gospel Meeting with Jerry Brewer & Song Service

April 23, 2016 (Saturday) – Ladies Day, Laurel church of Christ

... Continued “Christ is The Joy of My Life”

joy in the Christian. Paul said that Christians were to rejoice “**in hope**” (Rom. 12:12). Hope, the expectation of heaven coupled with the earnest desire to receive our promised inheritance, keeps the Christian’s “eye of faith” sharp and constant as he searches “**for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God**” (Heb. 11:10). Joy is also strengthened by others of like precious faith. The letter to the Philippians radiates with this principle (Phi. 1:3; 2:2, 17- 18, 28; 4:4-5, 10). What John said to the elect lady concerning her children should characterize us as we know of brethren

standing fast in the faith (2 John 4). The sympathetic spirit among brethren is a significant part of faithfulness among the saints (Rom. 12:15-16). The text of this article is further proof of this significant point. Of course all of the aforementioned principles that cultivate joy are based on and undergirded by God himself. God alone is the source of all joy. The psalmist declared that God was his “**exceeding joy**” (Psa. 43:4). Paul said that “**we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement**” (Rom. 5:11). One would, therefore, expect Paul to write to the Philippians that they along with all Christians are to: “**Rejoice in the Lord always: and again I say, Rejoice**” (Phi. 4:4).

The Most Effective Advertising

Gus Nichols preached for nearly half a century in Jasper, Alabama. During the time he was there, the church grew and became a very powerful influence throughout that area. The church was deeply respected for the many lives which were changed through its evangelistic efforts. Nichols once described the most effective gospel meeting they ever had and the method they used to advertise it. Before the meeting began, the members were told they would *not* be using radio, TV or the newspaper to let others know what was happening. In fact, they did not give the members any flyers to hand out to others. The thrust of the effort was, “If people in Walker County even know that we are having this gospel meeting, then that information *must* come from you.” Now think about it for a moment. Is it that hard to understand why that meeting was the best attended meeting the church had ever had?

There is nothing personal about hearing of an event on the radio. The same is true of television advertising. Nor is there anything personal about reading a flyer or newspaper ad. These are wonderful ways of conveying information but are so “cold.” Is there anything more persuasive than someone giving you a personal invitation? Especially if the event has no strings attached and is entirely for the benefit of the person invited. I cannot think of anything more persuasive. BUT, suppose it were possible to combine both kinds of advertising. Imagine the impact when there is extensive use of commercial means of advertising in addition to a personal invitation. This dual approach can have a tremendous impact on the attendance of our Gospel Meeting. The success of any church or Gospel Meeting is dependent upon YOU!

Tell your friends, neighbors, and loved ones that you love them and care for their souls. Tell them you desire for them very much to come hear some gospel preaching. On a number of occasions, the apostle Paul tells his brethren: “***I plead with you brethren.***” If Paul wasn’t afraid to “***plead***” with others, why should we? We are counting on every member to involve themselves in the most effective advertising – **A PERSONAL INVITATION TO OTHERS!** We may never have this opportunity again. Those souls may never have this opportunity again. May God help us to have eyes to see what can be done and the determination to care for lost souls! **DP**

When the Saints Meet Here in Salisbury

Sunday Bible Study – 9:30 AM Sunday Worship – 10:30 AM

Wednesday Bible Study – 6pm