

Being a part of the Lord's people and the Lord's work is a joy

Being a Christian is not always easy, but *being a part of the Lord's people and the Lord's work is a joy*. Whatever difficulties or frustrations may be involved, the joy outweighs the sorrow.

Our joy in Christ is rooted in Christ Himself. Both individually and congregationally, we rejoice because we are in fellowship with Christ and we live in the hope of sharing life with Him in eternity. Our connection to Christ causes us to relate to one another in a way that would be impossible if it were not for Christ. Because we love Him, we love His people and we love His work.

Some who would say the Lord's people and the Lord's work bring them joy are those who happen to be surrounded by Christians they especially like or they happen to live in a place where they find the congregation uniquely appealing. But if it is truly the Lord whom we love, we will love His people wherever they are (even those who are not so likable) and be enthusiastic about His work wherever it may be occurring (even when it is not our preferred locality). After all, if we only enjoy work when it is "enjoyable," we are doing no more than worldly people do.

In Paul's life, it is remarkable how much he loved his fellow Christians in various places. They were truly his "glory and joy" (1 [Thess. 2:20](#)). With the Thessalonians, what is amazing is that he had only about three weeks to learn to love them before he had to leave because of persecution ([Ac. 17:1-9](#)). But as with the Romans, all Paul needed to know about people was that they were brethren. That caused him to think of them as "loved by God and called to be saints" ([Rom. 1:7](#)). To love them and work with them, it was enough to know that they were in Christ.

Today, we need to be more mature about the joy of the Lord's work and His people. That joy needs to supersede all the sources of joy that people outside of Christ believe are so important. In Christ, there is work to do that is the most important work in the world — and when we have the privilege of doing it together with others who are in fellowship with Christ, that makes it even more special. Throughout the coming week, let's give thanks for our brothers and sisters in Christ whoever they may be. And let's appreciate the value of the work we are privileged to participate in.

Monday: Acts 8:4-8

Key Idea: The coming of the gospel to a community brings joy to that place.

Questions for Family Growth: What does this text say about how the gospel came to Samaria? What does [v.8](#) say the result was? Does the joy of the gospel mean that Christians have no difficulties or sorrows in their lives? What are some things that cause Christians to rejoice?

Wisdom for the Day: [Proverbs 30:7-9](#).

Tuesday: Philippians 4:1

Key Idea: Our brothers and sisters in Christ bring us joy.

Questions for Family Growth: Although Paul was separated from the Philippians at the time of this writing, what was his attitude toward them? What is meant by the term “beloved”? What was Paul’s attitude toward the Thessalonians in **1 Thess. 2:17-20** and **3:6-10**?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 30:10.**

Wednesday: Philippians 2:25-30

Key Idea: It is a joy to participate together in the Lord’s work.

Questions for Family Growth: What was the working relationship described in this text between Paul, the Philippians, and Epaphroditus? In **v.29**, what should be our attitude toward those who do the Lord’s work faithfully? What does the word “partnership” mean in **Phil. 1:5** and **4:15**?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 30:11-14.**

Thursday: Ephesians 4:11-16

Key Idea: When we serve one another with our various abilities, we grow to maturity in Christ.

Questions for Family Growth: According to **v.12**, for what purpose did Christ provide all the various works that can be done by His people? In **v.13**, what is the goal being sought by Christians in their work? In **v.16**, what happens when each member of the body does its part?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 30:15,16.**

Friday: 1 Corinthians 15:58

Key Idea: When we abound in the Lord’s work, our work is not in vain.

Questions for Family Growth: What is the “work of the Lord” that Paul speaks of? Is it just gospel preachers who do this work? How is it encouraging to know that when we work together in the Lord our work is “not in vain”? How does this work contribute to our joy?

Wisdom for the Day: **Proverbs 30:17.**

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