

PHILIPPIANS

JESUS OUR JOY

A Worship Study Guide for Individuals, Groups, and Families for the week of November 1, 2020

Christ is Proclaimed

This week, Pastor Steve Shelby preached from [Philippians 1:15-18](#)

If you have Paul's perspective in this passage, regardless of the outcome of this week's election, you can have joy. But you will not have joy if you view yourself primarily as a Republican or Democrat. You and I are first and foremost followers of Jesus Christ. And you and I will still be brothers and sisters even if we vote differently. No ruler holds office except by God's appointment. *"Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God"* ([Romans 13:1](#)). Our hope must not be in who holds office. *"Put not your trust in princes, in a son of man, in whom there is no salvation"* ([Psalm 146:3](#)). Regardless of who wins the election, the Christian is serene and confident. We know who is enthroned as King. *"The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD and against his Anointed, saying, 'Let us burst their bonds apart and cast away their cords from us.' He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision"* ([Psalm 2:2-4](#)). Nations rise and fall, but Pilate, though without understanding, speaks the truth: *"Behold, your King!"* ([John 19:14](#)) The title on the cross proclaims the one whom God Himself elected: *"Jesus of Nazareth, King of the Jews"* ([John 19:19](#)). The Word of God is not on the ballot, nor can it be. Written by God, it is firmly established. The ongoing mission of the church is set. Whether Donald Trump or Joe Biden wins this week, nothing changes for the mission of the church. The Day of Judgment is fixed, and cannot be moved. *"Every knee shall bow, every tongue declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* ([Philippians 2:10-11](#))

How can I get this perspective?

Paul, in jail and suffering. His life is even under threat in part because of the preaching of bad Christians or at least people who know and can articulate the facts of the Gospel.

I am losing, but the Gospel is gaining.

"What are the deepest ambitions and aspirations of your heart? What do you long for most? Really, now. What are your deepest aspirations? What are your real ambitions? What does your heart most ache for? If you tether your ambitions to your own comforts, to your family, to your children, on your future, if you tether your deepest hopes and aspiration to this world they will always be vulnerable to the shattering effect of trial and suffering and disappointment. If all your hopes and aspirations are this-worldly and material, they will always be vulnerable to the shattering effects of trial and suffering, and you will be robbed of joy over and over again. But Paul has fixed his joy to the honor of the name of Christ so that no matter his circumstances, God is at work at them all, he

knows, so that the name of Jesus might always be made much of. He has, therefore, an unshakeable foundation for joy. Wed your hopes and your joys not to your circumstances, but to the advancement of the cause, and glory, and fame of Jesus Christ. God has promised that His glory would cover the earth as the waters cover the sea. He has promised that every tribe, and language, and people-group will be gathered around the throne one day, and they will sing, 'Worthy is the Lamb.' He's promised that every knee will bow in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. That is certain. And when you have harnessed, and hitched, your hopes for joy to those promises, your joy can never be undermined. Your joy will always prosper, despite your trials, and in all your circumstances. May the Lord help us to make the deepest ambitions, and longings of our hearts, the honor of the name of Christ." (David Strain)

For Further Discussion: *Philippians 1:15-18*

¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. ¹⁶ The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice...

- What does it mean to **"preach Christ"** (15)?
- Paul describes two groups in vv.15-17. What is **each group's message and motive**?
- What does Paul mean by his question, **"What then?"** (18)
- **Why is Paul unconcerned** about the selfishness of those who preach Christ to make trouble for him (17-18)?
- What would it even look like to **proclaim Christ under pretense** (18)? Can you think of an example?
- Paul concludes with rejoicing (18). What does it **mean to "rejoice"**? **How can Paul rejoice**?
- Compare today's passage with Paul's angry conflict with other preachers in [Galatians 1:6-9](#). What is the **difference between these two situations**?
- **When have you been troubled and critical** of the motives and methods of other Christians? Does today's passage have anything to say to those situations?
- **What hinders you from rejoicing** in the ministry and message of the Gospel?
- **Pray together** in light of today's passage.

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