

Bay City Wesleyan Church
December 29, 2019

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Sunday Morning 12-29-2019

Jesus gives the greatest Christmas gifts of all time.

He gives faith to defeat fear.

Hope to drive out despair.

Love to expel apathy.

Peace to overwhelm worry.

Joy to replace powerlessness.

<http://bible.com/events/6946065>

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[Image]

Our First Series of 2020 Starts Next Sunday

<https://imageproxy-cdn.youversionapi.com/320x320/https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/mushroom-event-images-prod/5722009-1576356534837.jpg>

Our First Series of 2020: The Spirit's Prayer Guide for Ordinary People

It seems like most people pray even if they aren't particularly religious. But we all struggle to pray. Ordinary people like you and I need all the help we can find. Let's smash our prayer struggles this year with a few simple practices.

Romans 14:17-19 NLT

<small>17</small> For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <small>18</small> If you serve Christ with this attitude, you will please God, and others will approve of you, too. <small>19</small> So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.
<https://bible.com/bible/116/rom.14.17-19.NLT>

Romans 15:13 NLT

<small>13</small> I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.
<https://bible.com/bible/116/rom.15.13.NLT>

Luke 2:21-38 NLT

<small>21</small> Eight days later, when the baby was circumcised, he was named Jesus, the name given him by the angel even before he was conceived. <small>22</small> Then it was time for their purification offering, as required by the law of Moses after the birth of

a child; so his parents took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord.
<small>23</small> The law of the Lord says,
"If a woman's first child is a boy, he must be dedicated to the Lord ."
<small>24</small> So they offered the
sacrifice required in the law of the Lord—"either a pair of turtledoves
or two young pigeons." <small>25</small>
At that time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon. He was righteous
and devout and was eagerly waiting for the Messiah to come and rescue
Israel. The Holy Spirit was upon him <small><font
color="#999999">26</small> and had revealed to him that he would
not die until he had seen the Lord's Messiah. <small><font
color="#999999">27</small> That day the Spirit led him to the
Temple. So when Mary and Joseph came to present the baby Jesus to the
Lord as the law required, <small>28</small>
Simeon was there. He took the child in his arms and praised God, saying,
<small>29</small> "Sovereign Lord, now let
your servant die in peace, as you have promised. <small><font
color="#999999">30</small> I have seen your salvation,
<small>31</small> which you have prepared
for all people. <small>32</small> He is a
light to reveal God to the nations, and he is the glory of your people
Israel!" <small>33</small> Jesus' parents
were amazed at what was being said about him. <small><font
color="#999999">34</small> Then Simeon blessed them, and he said
to Mary, the baby's mother, "This child is destined to cause many in
Israel to fall, and many others to rise. He has been sent as a sign from
God, but many will oppose him. <small><font
color="#999999">35</small> As a result, the deepest thoughts of
many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your very soul."
<small>36</small> Anna, a prophet, was also
there in the Temple. She was the daughter of Phanuel from the tribe of
Asher, and she was very old. Her husband died when they had been married
only seven years. <small>37</small> Then
she lived as a widow to the age of eighty-four. She never left the Temple
but stayed there day and night, worshiping God with fasting and prayer.
<small>38</small> She came along just as
Simeon was talking with Mary and Joseph, and she began praising God. She
talked about the child to everyone who had been waiting expectantly for
God to rescue Jerusalem.

<https://bible.com/bible/116/luk.2.21-38.NLT>

Philippians 4:4 NET

<small>4</small> Rejoice in the Lord
always. Again I say, rejoice!

<https://bible.com/bible/107/php.4.4.NET>

How can we rejoice when our lives are out of control and we feel
powerless?

Philippians 1:12-19 NET

<small>12</small> I want you to know,
brothers and sisters, that my situation has actually turned out to
advance the gospel: <small>13</small> The
whole imperial guard and everyone else knows that I am in prison for the

sake of Christ, 14</small> and most of the brothers and sisters, having confidence in the Lord because of my imprisonment, now more than ever dare to speak the word fearlessly. 15</small> Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from goodwill. 16</small> The latter do so from love because they know that I am placed here for the defense of the gospel. 17</small> The former proclaim Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, because they think they can cause trouble for me in my imprisonment. 18</small> What is the result? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being proclaimed, and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, 19</small> for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

<https://bible.com/bible/107/php.1.12-19.NET>

Philippians 2:17-18 NET

17</small> But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice together with all of you. 18</small> And in the same way you also should be glad and rejoice together with me.

<https://bible.com/bible/107/php.2.17-18.NET>

Philippians 2:25-30 NET

25</small> But for now I have considered it necessary to send Epaphroditus to you. For he is my brother, coworker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to me in my need. 26</small> Indeed, he greatly missed all of you and was distressed because you heard that he had been ill. 27</small> In fact he became so ill that he nearly died. But God showed mercy to him - and not to him only, but also to me - so that I would not have grief on top of grief. 28</small> Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you can rejoice and I can be free from anxiety. 29</small> So welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, 30</small> since it was because of the work of Christ that he almost died. He risked his life so that he could make up for your inability to serve me.

<https://bible.com/bible/107/php.2.25-30.NET>

Philippians 4:4 NET

4</small> Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I say, rejoice!

<https://bible.com/bible/107/php.4.4.NET>

Sermon in a Sentence:

Whatever this is, Jesus is with me, and this is not the end of our story.

Because we seek comfortable and secure circumstances more than we pursue Jesus, we confuse joy with happiness. Allow me to draw a line to distinguish them from each other.

Happiness is a feeling we have in response to what happens to us. When what is happening is pleasant, comfortable, and secure, we feel happy. Joy is an action that the Holy Spirit living in us produces. The Spirit gives us the power to rejoice because of our relationship with Jesus. Rejoicing is an action we decide to do. Joy surpasses our situations. When we resolve to rejoice, joy replaces our powerlessness.

Rejoice in the Lord always. Again, I say, rejoice!

How can we rejoice when our lives are out of control and we feel powerless?

Whatever the situation is, Jesus is with us, and this is not the end of our story.

Hallelujah - Choir of King's College, Cambridge

By the way, while this is not the end of our story, this is the beginning of God's great new story with us.

https://youtu.be/C3TUWU_yg4s