

INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **Philippians 4:4-7**.
- B. Certain things make us laugh, while other things make us cry. We react with a variety of emotions depending on the situation.
- C. The lesson tonight says that because we are people who love we do not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoice in the truth.
- D. There may be wrong things that look like they give joy, and right things that look like they give misery-- both are illusions. There is no real joy in wrong, and no right thing that is not joyous.
- E. "Hell can't invent joy, it all comes from 'heaven.'"

I. REACTING TO WRONG.

- A. Other translations of 1Cor. 13:6 are important:
 - 1. "Love is never glad when others do wrong" (Moffatt).
 - 2. "Love does not gloat over the wickedness of other people" (Phillips).
 - 3. "Love does not gloat over other men's sins" (NEB).
 - 4. "Love does not delight in evil" (NIV).
- B. The church in Corinth reacted to wrongs in an unloving manner:
 - 1. There was no sorrow over immorality (5:2).
 - 2. They had fellowship sinful members (5:9-11).
 - 3. They took brethren to pagan courts to settle differences (6:1-8).
 - 4. There were divisions and factions among them (1:11-13; 11:18).
 - 5. They conducted in disorderly worship services (14:40).
 - 6. They abused the Lord's supper (11:17-34).
 - 7. They believed that certain spiritual gifts made them superior (12:12-27).
- C. We can practice SPIRITUAL SMUGNESS if we do the following:
 - 1. We rejoice in the wrongs of others **hoping to gain some advantage**.
 - 2. We rejoice in the wrongs of others **because of resentment**.
 - 3. We rejoice in the wrongs of others **therefore approving of evil things, not the good in their lives**.
- D. "If I rejoice in the wrongs of others, I contradict God's purpose for making, sustaining and redeeming us."

II. REJOICING IN THE RIGHT.

- A. Paul is saying in 1Cor. 13:6, that love rejoices in that which is steadfast, dependable and constant.
- B. Jeremiah (in Jer. 9:23-24) speaks of three sources of joy, God's:
Thus says the LORD, "Let not a wise man boast of his wisdom, and let not the mighty man boast of his might, let not a rich man boast of his riches; **24** but let him who boasts boast of this, that he understands and knows Me, that I am the LORD who exercises lovingkindness, justice, and righteousness on earth; for I delight in these things," declares the LORD.
 - 1. **Mercy** (His lovingkindness towards us).
 - 2. **Justice** (this is ultimate steadfastness and dependability).
 - 3. **Righteousness** (God is not capricious or fickle).
- C. The apostle Paul speaks of 4 reasons to be joyful in Phil. 4:4-7:
Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice! **5** Let your forbearing spirit be known to all men. The Lord is near. **6** Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.
 - 1. Being **in the Lord**.

2. Knowing **the Lord is near**.
 3. Talking **to the Lord in prayer** w/o fear.
 4. Having **the peace of God** in our minds and hearts.
- D. We can rejoice in love because of the outcomes of our faith--salvation (1Pet. 1:6-9).
In this you greatly rejoice, even though now for a little while, if necessary, you have been distressed by various trials, **7** that the proof of your faith, being more precious than gold which is perishable, even though tested by fire, may be found to result in praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ; **8** and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, **9** obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.

CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. In the Intro., to this lesson we talked about things that make us happy and things that make us sad. By way of examination; do you rejoice in evil? Does your definition of fun or enjoyment include sinful things?
- B. A person who is trying to do the loving thing will not find any enjoyment in sin. What makes a Xian happy are those things in accordance with the truth. Loving disciples do not rejoice in the unrighteousness of others.
- C. The next lesson in this series is next week (Lord willing). We will look at: Love... The Enduring Proof.
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.