

# Elements of Joy

## Philippians 1:7-8

### Introduction:

### 2 Corinthians 4:1-18

### I. Paul' Joy in Affection v. 7-8

**Feel** ([5426](#)) (**phroneo**) means to think, have a mindset, be minded in this case to be thankful ([Php 1:3](#)), joyful ([Php 1:4](#)), confident ([Php 1:6](#)). The activity represented by this word involves the will, affections, and conscience.

**Phroneo** is **present tense** which pictures Paul continually having his mind directed in a practical way toward the good interest of Philippians. Paul's mind, turned in the direction of the Philippians, would turn to specific prayer in their behalf in ([Phil 1:9](#), [10](#), [11](#))

**Have** ([2192](#)) (**echo**) means to have or hold and so to possess. The **present tense** indicates that they are continually in his heart. What an encouragement this would have been to those saints. Have told anyone recently that they were either "in" or "on" your heart? We are called to encourage one another daily as long as it is still called today lest anyone be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin

**Heart** ([2588](#)) (**kardia [word study]**) does not refer to the physical organ but is always used figuratively in Scripture to refer to the seat and center of human life, the wellspring of man's spiritual life. The heart is the center of the personality, and it controls the intellect, emotions, and will.

The expression **because I have you in my heart** could just as properly be, "because you have me in your heart." The second way of rendering the Greek is more in accord with the context. The Philippians had a large place in their hearts for Paul, and at

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this time especially with reference to the two particulars mentioned here, first, with reference to his defense of the gospel, and second, in his confirmation of the same. The pastor who, like Paul, holds his people in his heart will find them holding him in their hearts.

**Charles Swindoll** writes - An old Marine Corps buddy of mine, to my pleasant surprise, came to know Christ after he was discharged. I say surprise because he cursed loudly, fought hard, chased women, drank heavily, loved war and weapons, and hated chapel services.

A number of months ago, I ran into this fellow, and after we'd talked awhile, he put his hand on my shoulder and said, "You know, Chuck, the only thing I still miss is that old fellowship I used to have with all the guys down at the tavern. I remember how we used to sit around and let our hair down. I can't find anything like that for Christians. I no longer have a place to admit my faults and talk about my battles--where somebody won't preach at me and frown and quote me a verse."

It wasn't one month later that in my reading I came across this profound paragraph: "The neighborhood bar is possibly the best counterfeit that there is to the fellowship Christ wants to give his church. It's an imitation, dispensing liquor instead of grace, escape rather than reality--but it is a permissive, accepting, and inclusive fellowship. It is unshockable. It is democratic. You can tell people secrets, and they usually don't tell others or even want to. The bar flourishes not because most people are alcoholics, but because God has put into the human heart the desire to know and be known, to love and be loved, and so many seek a counterfeit at the price of a few beers. With all my heart," this writer concludes, "I believe that Christ wants his church to be unshockable, a fellowship where people can come in and say, 'I'm

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sunk, I'm beat, I've had it.' Alcoholics Anonymous has this quality--our churches too often miss it."

Now before you take up arms to shoot some wag that would compare your church to the corner bar, stop and ask yourself some tough questions, like I had to do. Make a list of some possible embarrassing situations people may not know how to handle.

A woman discovers her husband is a practicing homosexual. Where in the church can she find help where she's secure with her secret?

Your mate talks about separation or divorce. To whom do you tell it?

Your daughter is pregnant and she's run away--for the third time. She's no longer listening to you. Who do you tell that to?

You lost your job, and it was your fault. You blew it, so there's shame mixed with unemployment. Who do you tell that to?

Financially, you were unwise, and you're in deep trouble. Or a man's wife is an alcoholic. Or something as horrible as getting back the biopsy from the surgeon, and it reveals cancer, and the prognosis isn't good. Or you had an emotional breakdown. To whom do you tell it?

We're the only outfit I know that shoots its wounded. We can become the most severe, condemning, judgmental, guilt-giving people on the face of planet Earth, and we claim it's in the name of Jesus Christ. And all the while, we don't even know we're doing it. That's the pathetic part of it all. -- Charles Swindoll, Leadership, Vol. 4, no. 1.

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HOW I LONG FOR YOU ALL: os epipotho (1SPA1) pantas humas: (Phil 2:26; 4:1; 2Co 13:9; Gal 4:19; Col 2:1; 1Th 2:8; 2Ti 1:4)

Long (1971) (epipotheo [word study]) from epi = intensifier + potheo = yearn) means to have a strong desire for something, to desire earnestly.

Epipotheo is also used in Philippians 2:26 (see note), Romans 1:11 (see note), 2Timothy 1:4 (see note); 2Co 5:2 and in the Septuagint of Ps 42:1 where David writes

As the deer pants [epipotheo in the LXX] for the water brooks, so my soul pants for Thee, O God

**Affection** (4698) (splagchnon [word study]) literally refers to the bowels but in the NT used figuratively to describe the inward parts indicating the heart as the seat of emotions and passions. That region was regarded as the seat of passions such as affection, sympathy, and compassion, even as the word *heart* is used figuratively today. The allusion is to the sympathy, tenderness, and love of the Redeemer. **Splagchnon** was the strongest and most tender expression the Greeks had to denote the ardor of one's attachment to another..

Paul thus describes his longing, not as his individual emotion, but as Christ's longing, as if the very heart of Christ dwelt in Paul.

In Paul not Paul lives, but Jesus Christ (Bengel)

The great apostle lived so close to the Lord Jesus, and he had so shared the sufferings of his Lord for righteousness' sake, that his heart was very tender, and beat as one with the heart of Jesus. His **affection** was internal, in his heart, and was most tender and strong like the tender concern Christ had for them, and which Christ had stirred up in Paul.

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Clarke adds that Paul is saying in essence

I love you with that same kind of tender concern with which Christ loved the world when he gave himself for it" As evidence of this feeling Paul adds in the next chapter "I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith (Php 2:17-note)

Henry adds

O the bowels of compassion which are in Jesus Christ to poor souls! It was in compassion to them that he undertook their salvation, and put himself to so vast an expense to compass it. Now, in conformity to the example of Christ, Paul had a compassion for them, and longed after them all in the bowels of Jesus Christ. Shall not we pity and love those souls whom Christ had such a love and pity for?

### II. Paul's Joy in Participation v 7

**Imprisonment** (1199) (**desmon** from **déo** = to bind) refers to a bond or band and then to a chain or shackle (of a prisoner). Paul was chained to a Roman guard during his imprisonment he at which time wrote epistles to the Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Timothy, Titus and Philemon - the "prison epistles".

**Defense** (627) (**apologia** from **apó** = from + **lógos** = speech, English = apology but Greek does not convey our idea of

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apologizing) means to give a reasoned argument, an answer or speech in defense of oneself or in this case of the gospel.

**Confirmation** (951) (**bebaiosis** from **bébaios** = sure, fixed) refers literally to that on which one can walk solid.

**Bebaiosis** was a legal technical term for guaranteeing or furnishing security. Here it is the process of establishing the truth of the gospel or of supporting the truth of the gospel by evidence.

During his imprisonment, the Philippians sent Paul money and Epaphroditus' services to support the apostle, thus sharing in God's gracious blessing on his ministry ([Php 2:30-note](#))

**Partakers...with** (4791) (**sugkoinonos** from **sun** = with, which speaks of intimacy - see [word study on "sun"](#) + **koinonós** = companion, partner - see [word study on related word koinonia](#)) means co-participant or companion in an enterprise or matter of joint concern, in this case the salvation of the lost! What an eternal enterprise!

### **Here is a list of those things that can steal your joy**

**1 false salvation...** That is to say seeking joy without the Holy Spirit. There are some people who seek joy, it is elusive. They become immensely frustrated. Their lives are not happy. And maybe they're in the church and involved in some way or another in the church, and active in some way or another and maybe they think they're pursuing righteous activities and they're trying desperately to be religious and experience joy and it never comes because it is the work of the Spirit and they have not the spirit because they are not Christ's. There will be no true joy. And when there is no true capacity for joy because Christ is not there, the Spirit is not there, the process becomes very frustrating. And I personally believe the churches are filled with people who are not genuinely saved, they therefore do not possess the Holy Spirit and joy therefore is elusive, absent.

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Many of those people spend some time in the church, never able to discover and effect joy in their life. They leave frustrated and lost. So if you have an absence of joy in your life, if it seems consistently elusive to you, go back to the beginning somewhere. And as Paul said in [2 Corinthians 13:5](#), "Examine yourself to see if you're in the faith." You may be pursuing something you will never catch. You may be seeking something you will never find because you do not possess God's Holy Spirit at all. In other words, be sure you're saved...be sure you're saved.

**Secondly, Satan and demons** may do all they can to steal your joy. After all, [1 Peter 5:8](#) says that the devil is a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. And there may be efforts made on the part of the hosts of hell to rob you of joy in a myriad of ways. We need to be aware and alerted to the fact that definitely is Satan's ploy and effort, to take away the joy of believers. That could come in many many forms. We have to understand the source of that.

**Thirdly, an inadequate understanding of God's sovereignty...** In other words, fretting as if God was not in control, worrying, anxiety ridden, feeling the threat of others controlling your life or of your own inability to control it and ignoring the reality that God is sovereign, that no matter what is going on or what is happening, God is in control, that all things in the classic terms of [Romans 8:28](#), are working together according to His purpose for your benefit. The sovereignty of God is the surpassing doctrine for Christians to understand. It is the overarching encompassing reality that keeps everything in perspective. God is in control of all it. If you don't understand that, you're going to struggle with your joy...an inadequate understanding of God's sovereignty will take your joy.

It took Habakkuk's joy. He cries out, "How long...how long...how long?" And he gives God all this distress and then he starts to recite what he knows about God and by the time he gets to the end of his prophecy the circumstances haven't changed at all, not one bit, but his attitude has changed. His attitude is changed so that he says, "I rejoice in the God of my salvation." If you understand the sovereignty of God you rejoice.

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**Fourthly, is prayerlessness,** That is failing to commit things to the Lord, leaving them to yourself to fret and worry and fume, trying to orchestrate all of life's elements yourself and never going to the place of prayer breeds frustration rather than dependence. Boy, I really believe this is such a vital thing and so missing in the church today. It literally is replaced today by what we call counseling. Instead of going to God with your needs, you go to somebody who sits across a desk and supposedly tells you things that are neither sovereign nor supernatural in many cases, in most cases. And the best of human insight is a far cry from divine assistance. No wonder James said when you reach a place of impotence in your life, when you reach a place of total weakness, when you no longer can tap the divine resource for yourself, go to the elders of the church and let them pray over you. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man has tremendous effect. Commit your way unto the Lord, Proverbs says, trust also in Him. Take it to Him. Get the divine resource involved. Trust in the Lord with all your heart. In all your ways acknowledge Him, focus on Him. And then he says in chapter 4 of this very letter, doesn't he, in verse 6 "Be anxious for nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication let your request be made known to God." Go to God. Go to the Lord. And if you don't have the strength and you feel like you're in such shambles spiritually you can't do that, then get some godly people to go. Prayerlessness will steal your joy because you'll scramble all over this world trying to find solutions to the dilemmas that only God can solve. Don't you try to orchestrate life. Don't you try to find some guru behind a desk who can orchestrate life. Go to God.

**..number five, a low after a spiritual high.** Have you noticed that? Monday after Sunday. You're here and it's glorious and you're enriched and blessed and encouraged. And you walk in that place you work and it's humdrum or you get up in the morning and mother's got dirty clothes and the weekend's blitzed the kitchen and blitzed the laundry room and all the cars are filthy again and it's all there. And you go from the spiritual high to the humdrum low of life...to say nothing of going from some great spiritual experience to a severe trial.

Classic, of course, is Elijah who goes on Mount Carmel and withstands the priests of Baal, takes out a sword and massacres the priests, defeats 450 priests of Baal on a mountain. And God sends fire from heaven, burns up a



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sacrifice, the wood, the stones, licks up the water in an incredible supernatural event and Elijah has just seen the great God, the almighty God act in his behalf in response to his prayer in a monumental way. Spiritual high on Mount Carmel has few equals in the history of the prophets. And he goes right from there to wanting to commit suicide. He wants God to kill him. He runs like a maniac down a path and sits down in the sun and says, "Kill me, kill me, kill me, I can't stand it, there's a woman after me." That's hard to understand...450 men gave him no problem, one woman scares the living daylights out of him. "Kill me, Lord." He went from the height of spiritual victory to the depths of spiritual depression even to the point of true depression where he wanted to die. Sometimes severe trials, Jezebel did have some power to throw around, severe trial following immediately upon the heels of some great spiritual experience causes us to lose our joy by contrast. If we just sort of go along in life maybe we don't sense it that way but when you go from the very high to the very low, it can take your joy. So be aware of that.

**Sixth, circumstance orientation.** There are some people in this life as Christians who will know very little joy because they take all their signals from the material world. In other words, their emotion is controlled by the shallowness of the world. It is a substitute for the true joy. If their husband treats them the way they like him to treat them, they have joy. If he doesn't, they don't. If their kids do what they want them to do, they have joy. If they don't, they lose it. If they can own what they want to own, they have joy. If they can't, they don't. In other words, they get all of the signals for response from the material world...materialism is what it is. It's a lack of focus on God. It's a lack of contentment with God. They don't see God at work. Every response is controlled by the things of time and space. Most people live like that. They're joyous because it's a big event. Their joy rises and falls on whether they get something new, whether they have some special event, whether they're going on a trip or not, all of that controls their responses because they are totally linked to a circumstance orientation and taking all their cues from the material world. That will rob you of joy and put you on a roller coaster that's unrelated to true spiritual joy.

**Seventh, ingratitude.** In fact there are few things in human life uglier than ingratitude, few things. If I were a parent all over again, raising

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the children I've already raised, I would spank them oftener and longer and harder for ingratitude than I think almost anything I can think of. Certainly that would be worthy of a spanking far more than if they spilled the milk or dumped the paint or whatever other things we spank them for out of anger so often. Do you train your children to be grateful? How sharper than a serpent's tooth is a thankless child. Ingratitude, failure to be thankful, instead of focusing on things which you have received from the Lord and in everything giving thanks, whatever the circumstances, whether they seem positive or negative, some people are never thankful because they are never satisfied. They don't see life's trials as blessings from God, conforming them to Christ. They're never satisfied, they never say thanks. It has to do with pride, unquestionably, ingratitude.

**Eighth forgetfulness.** I think forgetfulness will steal your joy. You say, "What do you mean by that?" Well, failure to keep the memory of what you were saved from. Why is that new Christians always seem full of joy and you get to the people who have been saved 40 years or so and they begin, many of them, to look really sour? Have you noticed that? Why is that? I never knew a church split led by new Christians...never. Never heard of a major church problem created by new babes in Christ, never heard of it. Never heard of conflict in a church between a group of brand-new Christians, never heard of it. Never heard of a group of miserable griping murmuring complaining people in a church all of whom were just saved. Ridiculous thought. You've got to be a long-time Christian to be like that. Why? Because somehow we forget what we were saved from. We lost the freshness when new Christians seem to have that joy of the psalmist in [Psalm 103:2](#) says, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits," cultivate a memory of good things, will you? Don't be a joyless cranky sour-dour person. What kind of an advertisement is that? You're going to have the young Christians saying, "Lord," you know, "take me home soon. Don't let that happen."

**Number nine, dissatisfaction with your earthly condition....** Some people lose their joy because they don't like the way they look. They don't like where they live. They don't like the gifts or lack of gifts that they have. They don't like the particular place in life they have been given. They're always living as if they were the recipient of something less than they deserved. Paul said, "I have learned in whatever

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state I am there with to be...what?...content," [Philippians 4:12](#). "I know how to be abased and how to abound." It's the same to me. I don't care. I can have it or not have it. But some people lose their joy because they're basically dissatisfied. We all have disabilities. We all have handicaps. Some people lose their joy because they're in a wheel chair. Some people lose their joy because they can't get a job they think lifts them to the level of their ability. Some people don't have joy because they feel that they ought to be more appreciated. They don't like where they fit in the church structure. They wish they could be doing something more significant. They wish they were prettier or more handsome or more capable athletically or mathematically or academically or whatever it is. And it goes into the dimension of whether they have or have not material things as well.

**ten, fear of the future...**Why do some people always imagine that the worse possible thing is going to happen in everything? They just go around in fear all the time. Fear of failure, fear they will lose what they have, fear they might lose their power, they might lose their reputation, fear of illness, fear of death. Fear...constant fear of the future. Jesus says, "Take no thought for what you shall eat and drink, what you shall wear, I'll take care of that," Matthew 6. Jesus said, "I'm going away but whatever you ask in My name I'll send it to you. Don't let your heart be...what?...troubled, neither let it be afraid." What are you afraid of? Some people live in fear, fear of all kinds of things that aren't happening. Have you noticed that? Fear of things that aren't happening. It's the "what if" syndrome.

**Eleventh morbid self-analysis.** That's why I have such an aversion to psychology. In the first place, it seems to me utterly unnecessary since the Scriptures give us all we need for life and godliness. But secondly, because it tends to make a person concentrate on his own navel to the degree where he becomes morbidly and self-centered, self-centeredly, if there is such a word, analytical. Worrying about his failures, worrying about the possibility of negative attitudes, negative results, negative actions, worrying about the fact that somewhere deep down inside there's something that needs to be uncovered, poking around and scrambling around in a pile of whatever is going on, in the past trying to uncover some secret to spring him loose. And what he winds up with is a whole ton of morbidly self-analytical baggage that doesn't help him at all. Hey, we're inadequate. That's generic enough to satisfy me, I'm not going to

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poke around in it forever. I mess up, I know that. I'm not going to dwell on that, I'm not going to poke around in it, "O you did this, O my, there you did that, here's your problem, you've got to pull all this stuff and find the..." you know. And somewhere down the line you're...you got abused and somebody didn't treat you well and now you can blame all of it on that. That isn't going to make you happy. I...morbid self-analysis will take your joy. Forgetting the things that are behind, looking not on your own things but the things of others, move ahead.

**Twelfth self-centeredness.** Self-centered people are always unhappy cause they're always unsatisfied. That is a dead-in. Show me a self-centered person and I'll show you a miserable person. Self-centered people can't be satisfied. They can't be. Unselfish people are satisfied all along because they don't ask you for anything.

**Thirteenth guilt,** the unwillingness to accept forgiveness...the unwillingness to accept forgiveness. You just won't accept forgiveness. For many people, you see, it goes like this, "I just can't forgive myself," and you remind them, "But God forgave you." "I know, I know, but God does not understand my standards." You have a God complex, my friend. You have just crawled up one ahead of the trinity. You can't forgive you for what God has long ago forgiven you for. That is a massive ego problem. And for many people it's that one sin, they've got one sin somewhere in their life or one little period of sin and they can't forgive themselves for that so they literally limp through life, always going back to that one thing which is a non-issue with God which is a joy thief in their life. That one...what a waste of energy, what a waste of needless guilt. That's why I don't see any virtue in poking around to discover sin. Somebody said to me recently, "You know, we need to discover the sin that is hidden." What do you mean by that? I don't think I need to poke around to find hidden sin. If God is in my life at work, He'll bring it to the fore. The problem isn't finding it, the problem is dealing with it. I don't need to poke around to discover stuff that the Lord has already what? Forgiven. Why would I waste my energy doing that? It will steal your joy.