



## Transcendent Joy: Learning How to Rejoice No Matter What

Message #4: **God's Lemonade** (Philippians 1:12-18) – November 6, 2022 - Pastor Jeff

- If anyone had the right to be unhappy, it seems it would be Paul. Though well-educated, law-abiding, respected Pharisee, hard trouble followed him as a believer, chief apostle to the Gentiles, church planter, and author of 13 New Testament letters. He endured continual opposition, false accusation, gruesome stoning, multiple near-death floggings, shipwrecks, and imprisonment for the sake of the gospel. Yet, he abounded in joy (1:18)
  - God told Paul he would minister in Rome (Acts 23:11), but little did he know how he would providentially arrive there (Rom. 1:10; through his arrest, then appeal to Caesar – Acts 23-28).
  - In this section (1:12-18), Paul uses his own experience to show us as believers how to live for Christ with joy in any and every situation of life.
- ❶ **Your circumstances can be profitable opportunities (1:12-14)**
- Rather than being angry, bitter, despairing in wallowing in self-pity, Paul takes his “circumstance” (imprisonment) and took eternal advantage of it.
  - Paul’s “*circumstances*” were profitable for ministry expansion (v. 12-13). Paul’s gospel voice was heard throughout the world of Romans guards and led to conversions (4:21-22).
  - Paul’s “*circumstances*” were profitable for ministry encouragement (v. 14). His ministry in difficult, limited circumstances inspired commitment to Christ (church was “*trusting in the Lord*”) and courage (they dared “*to speak the word of God without fear*”).
- ❷ **Your critics can be providentially overruled (1:15-18)**
- Paul lived his life with a heavenly perspective and regularly looked for the eternal good in everything even when there were many trials and troublemakers on the prowl.
  - Paul experienced wrong representation of his life and ministry (v. 15-17). His critics used Paul’s limitations (imprisonment) for their own selfish advantage (they were jealous, stirred up strife, selfishly ambitious and caused distress for Paul). There were a few who served “*from good will*” as they supported Paul’s evangelistic ministry.
  - Paul expressed the right response (v. 18). Paul looks at ministry beyond his own contribution as a kingdom builder (not in it to build his own kingdom). He recognized that God could use the ministry of others even if their motivations were misguided. He didn’t care who got the credit. It is important to note that these critics were not heretics (who would deserve rebuke and condemnation), but they allowed self-serving motives to drive them (the me, myself and I heart).