

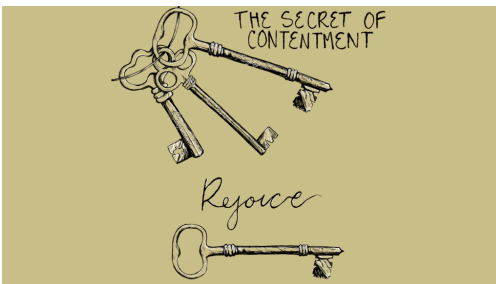
# Phil 4:10-13 Contentment

## Rejoice

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Feb. 16, 2025



Hall full, half empty: At the beginning of a project, I tend to be a half-full person: I'm ready to go. When I'm working with people, I'm convinced people will jump over obstacles. But then after a while, I turn into an Eeyore-type of guy: I vacillate back and forth between half full and half empty.



The idea for this sermon series came from a sermon series we did a while ago about the entire book of Philippians. At the last minute, I ended up subbing for Daniel and his sermon talked about the secret of contentment out of Philippians 4. Now, months later, we want to talk more deeply about contentment.

I think of rejoicing as CHEERING: however, this is not my personality, I really am an Eeyore much of the time.

Here is a definition of happiness: It's external and fleeting. The contrast is Joy that comes from meaningful relationships

Dr. Cynthia Vinney, a psychologist, says that happiness is often shaped by external circumstances—a goal accomplished, a possession acquired.

In contrast, joy, she argues, is rooted in something deeper: a sense of purpose and enduring relationships that give life meaning over time.

Experts Reveal the One Key Difference Between Joy and Happiness



**Philippians 4:12** I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being **content** in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want.

I would argue this contrast is also found in Philippians

4. When I read “content,” I hear “Joy” and think it means wellbeing: However, I have a hard time being content when circumstances aren't quite pleasant. Paul only uses this word once here in Philippians 4: it actually means “self sufficient.” Lately, I am learning

learned how to be content with or without my mom: I need to figure out how to be content.

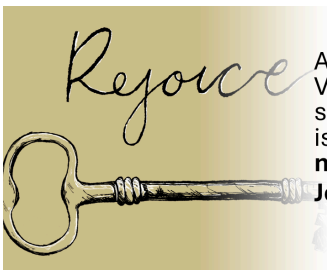
If you go onto TikTok, they tell you lots and lots of ways to be content.

Let's continue with the next verses:

Philippians 4:10 I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to

**A deep, spiritual stability that comes from trusting in God** in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. 13 I can do all this through him who gives me strength.

Notice that verse 13 (often taken out of context) is linked to contentment. Philippians is written by Paul as a thank-you to the Philippian people who sent him stuff while he was in prison; this letter is also full of theology. He wants them to know that even though they've been kind to him, Paul has a contentment that is from something else: a relationship with the living God. He rejoices greatly in the Lord because the Philippians have done things: but ultimately, contentment is a deep spiritual STABILITY (in the middle of chaos) that comes from trusting in God.



At The Village, we say rejoicing is "making much of Jesus."

This is what we say at the Village: The secret of contentment is both accessing joy and making much of Jesus.

The Choice to Rejoice: Proclamation

Two Effects:

Protection

Transformation

Rejoicing is a proclamation to protect us and transform us. These two things produce contentment.

The Act of Proclaiming

**We are Directed to Rejoice:** Not in comfort, not in wealth, but "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4, NIV).

**Rejoicing is a Bold Declaration:** It is a statement of faith, declaring that Christ is enough, regardless of the situation.

Get this in your head: **the people of God are those who make much of Jesus.** You can recognize his followers this way. Technically, rejoicing is a bold declaration: it's not just thinking, but is declaring it using our mouths.



Let's talk about how rejoicing protects us:

Rejoicing Protects

**It is a Spiritual Discipline:** "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4, NIV)

**It Changes Our Perspective:** "But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice." (Philippians 1:18, NIV)



Rejoicing changes your perspective. There are people trying to subvert Paul's authority, yet he says "what does it matter?"

## Rejoicing Protects

**A Safeguard Against Deception:** Paul commands, "Further, my brothers and sisters, **rejoice in the Lord!** It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you" (Philippians 3:1, NIV). Rejoicing keeps our hearts focused on Christ, guarding us from false teachings.



When people cause us problems, we can have a wrong perspective. The verse about rejoicing is in the middle of talking about people trying to distort the Gospel. When we rejoice, we don't mind hearing the same thing over and over. I don't have any problem repeating myself for 20 years; the gospel is being regarded and you have your minds renewed.

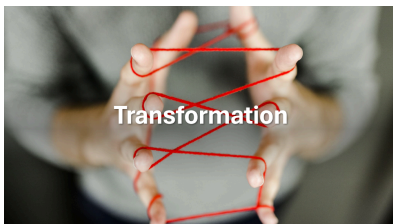
## Rejoicing Protects

**It is the Scaffolding of Peace: Rejoicing is sustained by prayer and thanksgiving:**

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with **thanksgiving**, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7, NIV)



When we thank God for who he is in the midst of both blessing and suffering, contentment and PEACE are developed. Paul had this in prison.



It also has a transformative impact on us.

Rejoicing  
Transforms

**A Work of the Spirit:** Joy is not something **we create**; it is something **given by God**:

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23, NIV)

Joy is put in you through the spirit. When you become a follower of Jesus and follow the suffering servant, the God who came down and got into the mess with us, who suffered, died, and rose again: He puts JOY in us. There isn't a formula; it's a fruit of the spirit. There is a place for it to grow: it's not something we conjure up.

Rejoicing  
Transforms

**It Shifts Our Perspective: Rejoicing is rooted in seeing Christ as our greatest treasure:**

"But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of **knowing** Christ Jesus my Lord." (Philippians 3:7-8, NIV)

We read verses like this and we don't really understand what it says. Everything you think will make you happy is nothing compared to the one who holds your soul, salvation, resurrection: knowing him surpasses everything. It shifts our perspective.

Rejoicing Transforms

It Reinforces our Understand of Eternity: **Our joy is shaped by our true citizenship:**

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we **eagerly await** a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body." (Philippians 3:20-21, NIV)

We taste the king in a new way. We understand eternity, and our citizenship there.

Sometimes I'm hurting and hungry because I am rooted here in this physical body. It's hard to have an understanding of this new kingdom. I am a citizen there and here. It distresses me to consider myself as a citizen of the U.S. and I forget that I have another citizenship that

really defines me. Rejoicing is the thing that centers me and keeps me on track. When I make much of Jesus and make proclamations of Him, it creates an eagerness in me to truly understand my citizenship in eternity.

Rejoicing Transforms

It is Communal Formation: **Rejoicing is never meant to be solitary. Paul invites the church to rejoice together, even in suffering:**

"But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. So you too should **be glad and rejoice with me.**" (Philippians 2:17-18, NIV)

Rejoicing is meant to be done communally. Paul says here that we should be happy about Paul's suffering: we don't pretend the human thing isn't there but we know it isn't the MAIN thing. When we make it the main thing, we lose perspective. So we rejoice together.

Rejoicing is the Lifeblood of Contentment



**Proclamation:** Rejoicing is a declaration that Christ is enough.



**Protection:** Rejoicing safeguards our hearts and minds.



**Transformation:** Rejoicing reshapes us into people of eternal perspective.

These things work together to offer us protection of transformation in our lives.



In the kingdom of God there aren't two cups. Maybe there is one completely empty cup? There is only bubbling over with Jesus. Reality is what we're invited into: What story or narrative will you live in?

How do we make much of Jesus in our story?

Repeat this phrase over and over: **Joy is the reality, rejoicing is the expression, and through both, we learn true contentment in Christ** followed by these four suggestions:

Joy is the **reality**, rejoicing is the **expression**, and through both, we learn **true contentment in Christ**.

• **Speak Gratitude Aloud**

- Make it a daily habit to say aloud one or two things you are thankful for, whether in prayer, conversation, or journaling.
- Example: Before meals or bedtime, say, "God, thank you for this moment, for breath, for your presence."
- This simple practice shapes the mind toward joy and gratitude.

Joy is the **reality**, rejoicing is the **expression**, and through both, we learn **true contentment in Christ**.

• **Sing**

- Rejoicing is often tied to song and music throughout Scripture (Psalm 95:1, Ephesians 5:19).
- Start your morning or drive with a worship playlist that reminds you of truth.
- Humming a hymn or singing a short phrase of praise shifts your focus toward God.

Joy is the **reality**, rejoicing is the **expression**, and through both, we learn **true contentment in Christ**.

• **Vocalize During Trials**

- When facing difficulty, choose to say: "God, I rejoice because You are working even now."
- This aligns with Philippians 4:4: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again, I will say, rejoice."
- Seeing suffering through an eternal lens allows you to rejoice despite circumstances.

Joy is the **reality**, rejoicing is the **expression**, and through both, we learn **true contentment in Christ**.

• **Habitual Rejoicing**

- Attach rejoicing to daily moments:
  - Wake up → Say, "Thank You, Lord."
  - Step outside → Praise God for creation.
  - **Drink coffee → Pause and reflect on His goodness.**
  - Hear a bird sing → Remember: "The heavens declare His glory" (Ps. 19:1).
- These small reminders train the heart to rejoice naturally.

Here is the invitation:

## Practice

- Speak Gratitude Aloud
- Sing
- Vocalize During Trials
- Habitual Rejoicing

1. **Speak gratitude out loud.** Psychology already knows this. Daily, say out loud what you are thankful for.

The more we do this, it turns me towards joy and gratitude. This is the discipline of thanksgiving: our brains try to trick us. It's helpful to speak it out loud.

2. **Singing** is a huge part of following Jesus. The psalms has 150 songs; the entire Bible is full of songs.

Start your morning with a worship playlist and journal while you listen to them. Find a repeating song that proclaims truth and play it over and over.

3. **Vocalize during trials.** Usually we stop talking during trials but this is the time when rubber meets the road: will we be a rejoicing people or not? This is when we practice gratitude, even when it's hard. It puts us directly in a path of rejoicing in all things.

4. **Habitually Rejoice:** Make habits: start your days with gratitude for everything, the little things, the creation. Drink coffee and proclaim how good God is!

Birds **always sing**: they remind us of this habit. These four things will train our hearts.

This is learning to reorient yourself to be a Jesus person whose cup is full and yet we are honest.

