Thieves of Joy

Robert Harkrider · Philippians 4:4

INTRODUCTION

- He wrote this letter to the church of Philippi from prison.
- At least some twenty times in these four chapters, Paul mentions the word joy, rejoicing, thanksgiving, and peace.
- Another word that's key in the book of Philippians is the word mind.

1 Our Circumstances Rob Us of Joy

Philippians 1:21; Philippians 1:15–18; Philippians 1:20–24

- It's not perfect life, because life is not perfect, but yet the Christian can rejoice, even when his circumstances are not what we'd wish.
- If joy depends upon circumstances being perfect, then we'd be miserable most of the time.
- For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. That sums it up in a short way. My whole purpose and focus for life is Jesus Christ.
- Whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached, and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.
- Not that Paul be glorified, but that Christ be glorified.

2 People Rob Us of Joy

- If we're not careful, we take the initiative to react with eye for eye and tooth for tooth.
- People sit on us or they mistreat us, and so we react with like kind. But that's the wrong reaction.
- Let nothing be done through selfish ambition or conceit. But in lowliness of mind, let each esteem others better than himself.
- The submissive mind. That doesn't mean we become a doormat, but it does mean there's a different attitude in our response to what others are doing.
- Our purpose needs always to be to glorify the Lord in all that we do.

3 We Set Our Mind on Earthly Things

Luke 12:16–21; Matthew 6:19–21

- When I say things, I'm talking about most often material things.
- The storing up of possessions may really be that which robs us rather than makes us wealthy or rich.
- Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead. I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.
- Our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.
- It isn't wrong to have things. But the underlying principle is store up for heaven.
- Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

4 Worry Is the Greatest Thief of All

Philippians 4:6–7; Philippians 4:9

- Worry is the greatest thief of all. It's a greater thief than our circumstances or what people may do or say, or even things of this world.
- We can purchase sleep at the pharmacy, but not rest.
- Be anxious for nothing. But in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God.
- If those principles are not in your heart, then don't expect yourself to be able to overcome worry.
- If in fact you have developed a single mind, the submissive mind, the spiritual mind, then it's easy to say you will have that secure mind.
- The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do. And the God of peace will be with you.

THE CHALLENGE

Pray about developing this kind of spirit, this kind of attitude. That Christ is everything in my life.

MY NOTES