

“Stolen Joy”

Introduction to Philippians

Background: The last of four books written by Paul while imprisoned in Rome, approximately 63 A.D. It was a letter of thanks to the church for their help to Paul. Philippi was the first European Church founded by Paul and Silas on his second missionary journey. It was a city steeped in Greek and Roman culture and occult worship *Acts 16*. The theme is the mindset of joy, for joy is not found in circumstances but the purposeful thought process of the Christian *Proverbs 23:7*.

Four Things that Steal our Joy

1. Circumstances – “What if?” “Why me!” Expecting circumstances to fulfill.
2. People – “But they...” “If they...” Expecting people to be perfect. Happiness from others.
3. Things – Materialism, financial security, comfort ability
4. Worry – Trying to control, fix, or change things that we can not.

Four Joy Givers

1. Single Mindedness – Intently focused upon God, His will, His provision
James 1:2-8
2. Submission – To God and His Sovereignty then to others as unto and from God
Luke 14:7-14
3. Spiritually Minded – Looking at things through God’s glasses. *2 Kings 6:15-17*
4. Security – Taking into captivity all that interferes with seeing God
2 Corinthians 10:3-6

Practical Guidelines

Choose sides – God’s or Satan’s.
Realistic self view – Humbleness.
Surrender to His way of thinking and seeing.
Seek opportunities to practice what He has given you.

Application

Discussion Questions

What do I allow to steal my joy?

What has God provided to nurture joy?

How can I share that joy with others?

Homework

Read *Philippians 1:1-2*

Answer the following questions:

1. What does God's Word say? List the facts.
2. What does God's Word mean? Learn the lessons.
3. What does God's Word mean to me? Listen to His voice.
4. How will I respond to God's Word today? Live it out.

Write down everyday five different ways that God has shown you love today. You can not use the same thing twice.