

July 31, 2022

The Lord wants you to experience real and abundant life:

Phil. 4:4-5 *Rejoice in the LORD always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The LORD is near.* (NIV)

After we have presented ourselves to the LORD as a living sacrifice, we can then move forward in obedience. One hindrance that stands in our way is worrying. But how can we overcome our worries? First of all, we must rejoice in the LORD. This is a command, not a suggestion. The Greek term **xaipete** is used in the present tense, imperative mood, meaning a command. Not is we feel like rejoicing. Our emotions fluctuate constantly. This is an imperative command that he even repeats to make sure we heard it the first time. You might not feel like rejoicing but do it anyway. We are to rejoice ‘in the LORD,’ not in our circumstances, but in our Savior. Circumstances change; He never changes. **Hb. 13:8 *Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.* (NIV)** Because He never changes, neither does our reason for rejoicing. This rejoicing is to be constant, without stopping. It is to be perpetual, not periodic. His command is that we choose to rejoice continuously. Rejoicing is an act of our will, not an emotional response. Joy does not produce rejoicing, but rejoicing does produce joy.

This continuous rejoicing will bring for a gentleness in our lives that is only found in Christ. The Greek term is **epieikeia** which means gentleness that is not demanding but is fair and mild in relationship to others. How does this connect with rejoicing? Much of our worry or anxiety comes from the inter-personal conflict in our lives. It controls us rather than us controlling it. Many people are known for their continual worry. As Christians, we should be known for our continual rejoicing and praise. We should see in every circumstance that God is at work. Now rejoicing in the LORD continuously brings a wonderful result. The LORD is near. This is resting in the LORD. He is near literally means He is in and around us. **Ps. 46:1-3 *God is our strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging.* (NIV)** He is present right now and always will be. We don't have to wait for Him to show up. In fact, He's been waiting for you. There is a friend that sticks closer than a brother. His name is Jesus!

Dear LORD, we choose this day to stay in Your presence and we will rejoice. Our worries are worthless, but You are Worthy to be praise. And so today, we will praise you with our hearts and our lips. In Jesus Name, Amen