

Summons to Rejoice Always (v. 4)

VERSE 4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice (Χαίρετε ἐν κυρίῳ

πάντοτε· ἄλλιν ἐρῶ, χαίρετε [*pres.act.imper.2p. chairo rejoice + prep en + noun loc.m.s. kurios Lord + adv pantote always, at all times + adv. palin again + fut.act.ind.1s. lego say + pres.act.imper.2p. chairo rejoice*]!

ANALYSIS: VERSE 4

1. In vv. 4-7 Paul issues three summons: rejoice, be gentle, and relieve anxiety through prayer.
2. The command to rejoice stands in a class of its own.
3. This command is a recurring theme in this letter (cf. 2:18 and 3:1).
4. This imperative coming at this point almost signals a farewell.
5. These three imperatives mesh together well (gentleness and inner peace) within a setting of the testing faced by the Philippian church.
6. The threat posed by their opponents (1:28; 3:2, 18), their deep concern for their leader in prison (1:18, 19; 4:10) to name just two things the corporate body was facing.
7. Neither Paul's precarious circumstances nor the fearful dangers they were facing should be allowed to eclipse Christian joy as an indicator of positive volition in the angelic conflict.
8. Paul does not have in mind the kind of superficial happiness that is dependant on when things are going well (cf. Matt. 5:12; 2Cor. 7:4; 8:2; Phil. 2:17; 1 Thess. 1:6; Jam. 1:2).
9. Although it is activated by favorable circumstances (Rom. 15:32; 2Cor. 7:13; Phil. 2:2, 29; 1 Thess. 3:9; 2 Tim. 1:4; 3 Jn. 1:4).
10. Rather it is the kind of joy that can be experienced "always", because it is not tied to changing circumstances, but on the One who does not change.
11. Joy (+H) is one of the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22; Rom. 14:17; 15:13cf. Acts 13:52) and so requires that the believer is in fellowship as the STA undermines the joy factor.
12. It is also dependant upon truth in the inner man (cf. Jn. 15:11 "These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full/complete."; Phil. 1:25; 1 Jn. 1:4).
13. "Joy" arises when believers are adjusted to the unfolding plan of God (Jn. 16:20-22, 24; 17:13; Acts 15:3).
14. +H should characterize those who serve in leadership positions within the local church (Heb. 13:17).
15. Occupation with Christ brings great joy (1 Pet. 1:6).
16. It is to be experienced under face to face teaching (2 Jn. 1:12).
17. +H is the experience of those who stand blameless at the Bema (Jude 1:24).
18. We should rejoice that our names are written in heaven (Lk. 10:20).
19. Four times in this letter Paul issues this command (Phil. 2:18; 3:1; 4:4 [2x]; cf. 2 Cor. 13:11).
20. Paul repeats the command ("again I will say") with respect to their future.
21. It is as though Paul is anticipating a common objection as in "How can we possibly rejoice given our circumstances?" and so he felt the need to reiterate the command.

Summons to Gentleness (v. 5)

VERSE 5 **Let your gentle spirit be known to all men** (τὸ ἐπιεικὲς ὑμῶν γνωσθήτω πᾶσιν

ἀνθρώποις [d.a.w/adj. nom.nt.s. epieikes gentle, forbearing + pro.gen.m.p. su + aor.pass.imper.3s. ginosko know + adj.dat.m.p. pas all + noun dat.m.p. anthropos]).

The Lord is near (ὁ κύριος ἐγγύς [d.a.w/noun nom.m.s. kurios + adv. engus near]).

ANALYSIS: VERSE 5

1. This next Christian virtue Paul enjoins the Philippians to display before others is “gentleness” (d.a.w/adj. *epieikes*).
2. This term occurs 5x: 1 Tim. 3:3 & Titus 3:2 (characteristic of a pastor-teacher); Jam. 3:17 (of the wisdom from above); 1 Pet. 2:18 (of masters who are good and gentle); and here for all believers to display before men.
3. A gentle demeanor before a hostile antagonistic person serves to diffuse wrath (Prov. 15:1 “A gentle answer turns away wrath. But a harsh word stirs up anger.”).
4. A gentle breeze is one that is 8 to 10 miles per hour.
5. A gentle disposition is one that does not come on as abrasive and confrontational.
6. Here Paul is admonishing these believers to manifest this virtue (FHS) before others.
7. Believers primary goal should not be whether or not they are being dealt with justly/fairly thus preferring others above personal rights.
8. Abuses will arise, but we are to maintain our poise as ambassadors for Christ.
9. We live among people who are self-seeking and aggressive but we should stay calm knowing that no one can overturn the truth.
10. A term that is akin to this one is meekness (*prautes*) which also refers to a disposition that is the result of being in control of one’s emotions when confronted with those who are antagonistic (cf. 1 Cor. 4:21; 2 Cor. 10:1; Gal. 5:23; 6:1; Eph. 3:2; Col. 3:12; 2 Tim. 2:25; Titus 3:2; Jam. 1:21; 3:13; 1 Pet. 3:16).
11. It is a divine characteristic (Ps. 18:35 “You have also given me the shield of Your salvation, And your right hand upholds me. And your gentleness makes be great.”).
12. Those who inherit the earth a designated “the gentle/meek” (Matt. 5:5 “Blessed are the gentle, for they shall inherit the earth.”)
13. Jesus exhibited this virtue (Matt. 11:29 “Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOUR WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS.”; Matt. 21:5; 2 Cor. 10:1 where both these terms occur: “Now I, Paul urge you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ—I who am meek when face to face with you, but bold toward you when absent!”).
14. Other terms are forbearing and considerate.
15. All these similar terms form what we call humility.
16. An incentive to exhibit a gentle spirit is presented here with the words “The Lord is near.”
17. The thrust of this command is essentially the same as that of 2:3-4.
18. And in that chapter Paul followed up his exhortation with an appeal to the humility of Christ before whom all humanity will bow in submission.
19. “The Lord is near” is taken by some to refer to the Parousia.

20. But it seems best to take this declaration as it is clearly intended in Pss. 34:18 & 134:16 where the situation is that of a beleaguered believer.
21. This phrase is used in connection with Christ's return (Isa. 13:6; Ezek. 20:3; Joel 1:15; 3:14; Zeph. 1:7 and Jam. 5:8).
22. Occupation with Christ should affect our behavior as He is constantly monitoring us.