

The Doctrine of Praise

by George Verwer

George Verwer's sermon emphasizes the doctrine of praise, highlighting the importance of rejoicing in the Lord amidst life's challenges.

Duration: 57:28

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 6:41, Luke 6:20-23, Luke 10:17-20, Galatians 5:22

Topics: "Praise And Worship", "Holy Spirit"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker criticizes activist and ritualistic thinking, calling it a waste of time. He shares his observations of people in the OMers movement collapsing under pressure and losing faith when faced with challenges. The speaker emphasizes the importance of praising the Lord in all circumstances, even when things go wrong. He encourages verbal expressions of praise and highlights the joy that believers can experience through the Holy Spirit. The sermon references various scriptures, including Galatians 5:22, which discusses the fruit of the Spirit, particularly love.

Transcript

We spoke about the heaviness that was on the heart of the Apostle Paul and the sorrow that he often had, especially because of his brethren. And especially keeping in mind that text in Corinthians, sorrowful yet always rejoicing. We gave you some of the reasons, and I was somewhat sharing from my own heart, why as believers we often are in sorrow and heaviness.

Why tears play an important part in the role of the Christian. The Christian is not the happy-go-lucky fellow who's sort of bobbing around like a cork in the middle of the ocean. But he's a man who gives serious thought to the sufferings of this world, to the problems of this world.

He's a man who knows what trial is, what tears are. As I continue this study, and I mentioned that I wanted to let you think about it for a few days, but as we continue this study, we want to swing over now and pick up that last word. In 2nd Corinthians, in that verse, sorrowful yet always rejoicing.

That has been an enormous challenge to my own heart. An enormous challenge to my own heart. You will find the word rejoicing dozens of times in your Bible.

Dozens of times. I'm sure most of you realize that the very theme of the book of Philippians is rejoicing. Joy.

The only way we can explain the joy of a believer, the true believer who counts the cost. I'm going to try to remember to have a little break for our translators. Translators don't always feel that you need to translate me word for word.

I often repeat myself to try to emphasize something. And so you'll find translating me that way may be easier than like word for word. I know it is hard.

It's harder to translate than to preach. So I'll try to go slower. The only way to explain the joy that the believer has is in terms of the Holy Spirit.

Let us look at Galatians. We're going to look at quite a few scriptures tonight. Let us look at Galatians, chapter 5, verse 22.

Preach the whole week on this verse once. Back in 1961. But the fruit of the Spirit is love.

The subject we hope will be brought forth to us again and again at this conference is love. Praise God for the ministry we had from Brian Gilbert last week on this subject and from others. I was listening last night, actually when I was sorting out these mission magazines, to William McDonald preaching on the subject of love.

Very practical, down-to-earth tape. And touching all kinds of areas where love will influence us. It's love that will hold this conference together.

Not rules. Not regulation. Not policy.

We need those. But it's love that will bring a little peace in that dormitory. It's love that will let a man get on with his quiet time.

It's love that will pitch in in the kitchen, or in the cleaning of the table, or picking up of paper, or whatever else has to be done. Love is the most practical, in some ways, of all the virtues. Next to love, in this verse, we read these words.

Joy. Love. Joy.

And this word joy is found also many dozens of times together with the word rejoice. If we add to it other synonyms, other synonyms, in this whole area of praise, I tell you, you have a very, very much emphasized doctrine. We are not talking about a minor peripheral issue.

We're talking to you tonight about the doctrine of praise. The doctrine of rejoice in all things. And I believe this is going to be one of the major things that carries you through this year.

I know it's a major thing in my own existence. Let's look at some other verses. Let's start back in the Old Testament.

There are many verses on this subject in the Old Testament. Not just in the Psalms. We know the Psalms are filled with praise, and we'll look at some of those verses.

Look at 2 Chronicles 6.41. 2 Chronicles 6.41. Now, therefore, arise, O Lord God, into thy resting place, thou in the ark of thy strength. Let thy priests, O Lord God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness. The word saints is not found much in the Old Testament.

Let thy saints rejoice in thy goodness. That's worship, isn't it? Rejoicing in the goodness of God is worship. I was encouraged by William McDonald, by the way.

He said, speaking loudly was an act of love. Boy, that really encouraged me. Because he said, it really bothers people in churches when they go to church, and the preacher is just sort of whispering along, and fluttering under his breath, and everything.

He's just trying to share something in the Word of God, and no one understands what he's talking about. Now, of course, we have a microphone, so you all understood that. Very practical love, isn't it? I know an O.N. speaker, one of our real dynamic varieties.

After he got done, it was many years ago, the pastor called me up. He said, this was a tremendous brother. We don't know anything that he said, but it was nice to see him.

That's the truth. He spoke so softly. So be here for tomorrow morning's 11 o'clock orientation.

Let the saints rejoice in goodness. Look at then a few Psalms. Psalms 5, 11.

Praise God for the Psalms. I try to read the Psalms every day. How many try to read the Psalms every day? Well, I see my friend Winston Lindsay out there.

If I had known you were there, Winston, I would have had you come up and sing. Winston can't see. He's completely blind.

But he went to the ship as my typist. One of the things that I praise God for about him was his rejoicing spirit. Not always.

Winston has it moments. He's got a big smile on his face. Praise God for the Psalms.

I recommend you read the Psalms every day. Some of you make a beeline for the newspapers every day we bring over here. That's fine.

I bring mine. I get a paper every day. Usually read the headlines.

That's enough to depress me. Really, I prefer the Psalms to the daily newspaper. I don't know about you.

I've got enough headaches. Of course, there are a few prayer requests. There's also discount flights advertised on the last page of the Paris Tribune, which is pretty important for OM.

Psalm 5, verse 11. Psalm 5, verse 11. But let all those who put their trust in thee, that's us, isn't it, rejoice.

Let them ever shout for joy because Thou defendest them. Let those also who love Thy name be joyful in Thee. Shout for joy.

Some people don't like that. How many believe that once in a while it's good to shout for joy? All right, let's stand up. Those who believe in shouting for joy.

Praise God. Praise God. Amen.

Okay, that's enough. Now, some of you would have been quite, those of you remaining seated, you would have been quite out of place with some of these Old Testament saints, really. They've got all the cymbals

and the tambourines.

That's what I like about the Salvation Army. Some of their meetings, it's very hard to sleep through. Let them ever shout for joy because Thou defendest them.

Let those also who love Thy name be joyful in Thee. Be joyful in Thee. Our first joy is in the Lord.

I think that's very important. The tendency in our age of superficiality oftentimes is to be joyful because someone just sent you a pound note. Well, praise God.

These days I praise God for two pence. I found one. It's actually on my desk.

Probably came out of my pocket. But our first rejoicing is in the Lord. Look at Psalm 9, verse 14.

These are just a few verses I just picked out very quickly because there are so many in the Psalms. Then I may show forth all Thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion. I will rejoice in Thy salvation.

So we rejoice in God Himself. And we rejoice in this great salvation. I tell you, sometimes when everything's gone wrong and it seems that way, I just look to the Lord and I say, I sure am glad I'm saved.

Praise God. Never belittle your salvation experience. In a tape I was listening to on the Holy Spirit by A. W. Tozer, he accuses many in this generation of belittling the salvation experience in order to sell or oversell their second blessing experience.

Now, don't think I'm saying that to attack some of you who believe in a definite second blessing experience because Tozer actually believes that so he wouldn't attack that, would he? But Tozer, a very balanced man, thinks that it's very wrong to belittle salvation in order to push another phase of Christian growth. Salvation is a tremendous, dynamic, radical, revolutionary, explosive experience in which a man is changed and if a man is not changed then I doubt really if he's ever been saved. Really.

And I think some people at times think they've got some kind of a latter blessing and they just got saved. Really. Rejoice in your salvation.

That is very much linked with Luke 10.20. Look at Luke 10.20. As a visitor, when you come, we do hope you'll bring your Bible. It is the textbook of our time. The Seventy returned again with joy.

Now this is interesting how Jesus handled this. You're going to learn something if you'll just study this little passage with me in the next few minutes. The OM team, they returned with joy.

Woo! Praise God! Tremendous book sales and somebody was saved and somebody got blessed. So they returned with joy by saying, even the demons are subject unto us through thy name. He said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.

Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions and over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding, in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you, but rather rejoice because your names are written in heaven. I think that is something that we need to keep in mind.

God and the Lord Jesus Christ does give special power at times, especially for certain purposes. We've seen in studying missions that often times in very hard situations, in totally heathen lands, the Lord has

had to give extra power. But he says rejoice that your names are written in heaven.

It's not our victories in Christian service that firstly cause us to rejoice. It's that we know it has been sealed that we shall be with him for eternity. And I believe that some of you in the days to come are going to have to experience a new dimension of crucifying in your life.

And one of the things that God is going to have to crucify is Christian service, in quotes. And in the process of crucifying Christian service, O.M. will have to be crucified in your life. And I know there are some of you who actually appreciate O.M., actually believe in it.

That's okay to a degree. But I experienced before I left North America to come to Europe in 1960, a very deep experience with the Lord in which I don't remember how I saw it or how it happened, but I had this vision in my heart of losing everything. Now at that time, O.M. meant a lot more to me than it does today.

So I was very young. I had seen incredible answers to prayer as a young man of 21 years of age. I started preaching when I was 17.

I had seen hundreds, many hundreds come to Christ. I work in Mexico. I've been born.

We've seen God answer prayer in the area of funds in an incredible way. And then everybody or so many people, spiritual people at that time, thought this was a tremendous spiritual movement. A lot of times you hear people say, well, everybody in the early days criticized the work.

That isn't true at all. Even in Moody Bible Institute, we had very wide acceptance among many. So there was a lot of enthusiasm.

And at times, my eyes were getting on the work. And of course, I was just headed for Spain and I was about to study Russian to go into the Soviet Union. And God had long before this given the vision of Turkey and of Yugoslavia and of Afghanistan and all these other places.

And I had to go through this experience of seeing everything crucified, everything taken away. And in that same vision in my heart, during prayer, God took away my whole family. He took away my wife, which of course, I was only six months married was a rather meaningful thing.

The family was only a future thing because I'd only found out my wife was going to have a child. Everything that seemed so dear to me, the Lord Jesus had to crucify and say, I must be enough for you. I will share you with no one, not even Christian servants.

That experience was 14 or 15 years ago, but I'll never forget it. I've had to renew that commitment many, many, many, many times. Those kind of things are not once and for all experiences.

There came the experience later on when the ship had to be crucified. I believe in these days that many of us are going to go through many experiences in which things we like and things that are meaningful to us are crucified that the Lord may be preminent. It's not the Lord Jesus plus successful Christian service.

It's not the Lord Jesus plus operation mobilization or the Lord Jesus plus your vision for the Muslim world. Can you imagine what it was for Watchman Nee with all of his vision, with all of his burden, to be shut away for 15 years, just shut away? How can you explain that in modern day thinking? Activistic, ritualistic thinking. Boy, what a terrible waste of time.

I tell you, you just watch the OMers on the year program when they get under pressure. I want to tell you I've watched it for many years and it all too often is a pitiful sight. Many, many times this movement has broken my heart as I've seen people collapse under pressure.

Even not being able to go somewhere where we want to go. The truck breaking down or stranded in the mountains or the leader made a mistake and you went 400 miles out of the way. And people really get upset.

And then you see who's on the throne. It's then you see how much of the messages we got here went in one ear and out the other. You know why many people in England think they're actually living the Christian life? Because their Christian life has never been put to the test.

And many of us, it's also the same. And I want to tell you I've fallen on my face under pressure a few times and that's when I learned what George Burrough was really made of. Not sitting back here or standing back here throwing out sermons.

No, I hope I don't do that. And there will be pressure and there will be trials and there will be disillusionment. Winston Churchill said there's only two things you can be sure of in warfare.

Mistakes and disappointments. That's interesting, isn't it? I don't know what other leaders are going to promise you on the year program. You'd better be careful and there are moments of excitement as they try to recruit you.

But as the one who's been in this thing from the beginning I will guarantee you mistakes and disappointments. I hope there will be more. It depends on God, on prayer, on you.

But I can guarantee you disappointments and mistakes. And I could lengthen the list. But the Word of God teaches that our joy is in the Lord.

And if it's 14 years in prison we shall rejoice. Job said, Though He slay me, yet shall I trust Him. And when you're trusting Him, you rejoice.

They come together, don't they? If you're trusting, you rejoice. If you're not trusting, you're not rejoicing. How important that is.

Look at Psalm 33, 21. Psalm 33, 21. Now this message probably is mainly for me tonight because these last days with things mounting up at an interesting pace, many things I'm not even able to share, I need this message.

I don't know about the rest of you. By the way, I really appreciate feedback. And anything you want to say to me, I have two hours every day on the train.

And the train is sometimes longer. To get into the Word, to read my post, give out a few tracts and to read your feedback. And feedback is simply you write a note, put it in my box.

Something you misunderstood in the message or something you agreed with, you just want to say amen to. You know how hard it is for a preacher sometimes to know whether he's getting anywhere or not? It's very difficult. Some of you know one of my favorite illustrations, it's true actually, that the idea to do this basically came from George Whitefield.

When he preached and he often preached to 20,000 people in the open air, people would write notes to him as he was preaching, tremendously. Maybe I'll try that some night. But they handed notes up and notes like, saving faith has just flooded my heart, hallelujah.

Can you imagine getting a note like that in the middle of the sermon? He probably almost took off. Believe me, these men didn't preach any little 25-minute sermonettes. I only had that happen to me a few times.

Once in Chicago at a very well-known study class of Christian, particular Christian group. I got a note, it says your time is up, please sit down. So I've always asked people to keep the notes after the meeting, put them in my box.

But I'm sure other preachers here and speakers would love to hear from you. Don't be afraid to write men like Billy Strachan. Any of these men, don't assume that all these men are so busy and they get so many hundreds of letters, they wouldn't read your letters.

I get quite a few letters, I send out prayer letters to, my signature goes on letters to about 20,000 people, many different languages. I invite those people all to write me, not many write. I'm still answering a high percentage of them personally.

Not all of them anymore. I read all of them or read at least a summary of the letters in hieroglyphics. So, don't think that men like those we invite here to guest speakers would be overwhelmed with letters from OMs, most of whom have writer's cramps.

So let's have feedback, it helps. Helps us know so that we can straighten things out in further messages. Psalm 33, 21, For our heart shall rejoice in Him because we have trusted in His holy name.

I'd love to give a message at this conference on the holiness of God. I believe one of the most neglected doctrines is the holiness of God, the righteousness of God, and the need for believers to have something of a real awe and a real fear of God in their hearts. And I'll tell you, quite honestly, one of the reasons I have not left this work is fear of God.

I, quite some time ago, got mainly over, I still have my struggles over what people will say. Ultimately, I've had to learn not to care too much. Of course, if it's something about my life that's wrong, that's different.

But if it's just something about, you know, what people so often talk about. But all my, what God says, what God thinks, we lack a fear of God in our day. We lack an understanding of the holiness of God.

This is why I literally beg people all over the world to read these books by A.W. Tozer, because he emphasizes the holiness of God, the great attributes of God. It would be wonderful if George Smiley could give us his extended study on the attributes of God that he gave us at our India conference. We're hoping he'll be with us tomorrow or the early part of next week.

He'll be with us for the weekend, but he'll be busy. The holiness of God, trusted in His holy name. Look at Psalm 68, verse 3. We're going to have to leave the Psalms.

Our time is sort of going. 68, verse 3. But let the righteous be glad and let them rejoice before God. Yea, let them exceedingly rejoice.

Praise God. Some of you are having a little trouble in the mornings, getting into orbit. I don't say this as a boast.

I say it only as a testimony to God's grace and the simple fact that to me it's just a normal Christian life, but in no way should it be thought of as being spectacular. There are very few mornings in my life since I was converted. Maybe a few dozen in 19 years that I've not experienced the Lord.

And especially this aspect of praise. Now, to balance that out, I must say that sometimes even after praising the Lord and worshiping the Lord, the devil has just moved in on me. So I don't believe quiet time is a cure-all for the rest of the day.

It is a major factor. The Bible says resisting. To me that means all day, not just the mornings.

Not just mornings. But I think there's something that may help you in the morning if you learn to blow the trumpet of praise. You know the trumpet of praise? I was speaking in a German Bible school about this.

Explaining how most mornings for the last couple of years I've been running instead of exercising. Most of my life, I guess since 1960 or somewhere around there, I've been exercising in the morning. It's a very meaningful thing to me for many, many reasons.

But lately, the last two years, I've been running for a half a mile or a mile. And I found this very helpful. Running, and as I run, to be praising God.

Now, you girls, you can run in place. You may get in trouble running around the streets at 6.30 in the morning. My greatest problem is I run into dogs every morning.

Most mornings. One jumped on me this morning. That dog weighed more than I did.

There were two of them. But as you run in the morning, and often times you will feel miserable. Most of the time I do.

Just start praising the Lord. Don't listen to feelings. I know it's somewhat a habit you have to develop.

Just start praising the Lord. Sometimes if nobody's watching, sometimes if nobody's watching, I actually blow the trumpet. As I go through the streets running, praise the Lord.

And I never forget after speaking in this Bible school, this German, it was the middle of winter. It was very cold. It was raining.

And he said, you really get up in the morning? I said, yeah. I said, you want to come? He said, yeah, I want to come. And it was a great experience to see this sort of somewhat cold German running through the streets, praise the Lord.

I believe also that there's great value in praising the Lord verbally. Verbally. This is why I like to get out when possible where there aren't any people and praise the Lord.

Many times it's obvious in the Old Testament these people were praising the Lord. And just think of those words. Exceedingly rejoice.

That to me is just like the water flowing over the top of the glass. Exceedingly. The Bible says God can do exceedingly, abundantly above all we ask or expect.

I believe one of the reasons so many of us don't break through daily for God in spiritual power is we not learn the secret of praise and rejoicing in all things. Even when your feelings feel like just a blob. Don't

expect to feel so tremendous early in the morning.

And even throughout the day it's normal in a prayer meeting to begin to at times feel a bit listless. And this is when we need to praise the Lord even more. Need to be more free in our spirit.

Praise the Lord even orally. I think this is something that we can learn from the Pentecostal people. Charismatic people.

I don't care what criticisms people can throw up against them. Every movement has its weaknesses. Most of you know our position.

And I think that there's a lesson that we can learn from every movement in history and certainly one from this movement is that people are more free in their meetings. Oh, we know there's excesses and that is a danger. But certainly the tendency is to lean too far on the other side and people are all inhibited and people are even afraid to say amen in a meeting.

Well, I'll say amen. I don't care what anybody thinks. Because I see this in the Word of God.

And I believe that many of us have this problem of being inhibited and introverted and afraid to express ourselves. And we don't know reality in worship. I'm not saying for a minute the main thing in worship is noise.

Of course not. We know it's very easy to make noise. But because one person abuses something doesn't mean you just go the other extreme.

And of course, I know these things are controversy. And, you know, and we don't want to stumble others. And certainly when we go in to certain churches we'll have to be more careful than when we're in our own team night of prayer.

I know OM nights of prayer when everybody started marching around the room. I had OMers all up on the chairs years ago. Of course I got criticized.

You get criticized no matter what you do. But I believe that we need to know more of blowing the trumpet of praise. Because a lot of people react from anything that I say.

Believe that or not, it's true. Because they're afraid, they're petrified of being accused of copying George Verwood. This is why 80% of the leaders in OM don't do exercises.

Apart from many of them being lazy, also working too hard into the night, they're petrified of being accused of following George Verwood. Of course I don't blame them. I don't blame them.

Probably one good reason for me to resign. Then they'd all come in to a newfound liberty, probably doing their exercises like never before. I've got 21 reasons why I should resign.

Only one why I should go on. The one is that it's the will of God. Let's look at a few more New Testament verses.

Look at Luke 1.14. Luke 1.14. Luke, by the way, for newcomers is in the New Testament. Matthew, Mark, Luke, John. Luke 1.14. About the birth of Jesus.

The angel speaking to Elizabeth. I think this is referring to the birth of John. Is that right? Or the birth of Jesus? Yes, John.

And now shall have joy and gladness and many shall rejoice at his birth. When I wrote this down I didn't study it carefully. Of course, this is a good opportunity to comment on the simple fact that there's nothing in rejoicing in human things.

There is the rejoicing in God, but that doesn't mean it's wrong to rejoice, say, at the birth of a baby, just like Peter Conlon and his wife are rejoicing as God gave them a baby girl early this morning. And so, don't think it's unspiritual to praise the Lord if you get your favorite meal tomorrow. I tell you, when chicken comes on the O.M. plate, my heart jumps an extra leap.

And not that I don't praise God for noodles and cheese and rice, but, you know, I think God understands us. So, of course, Elizabeth had a special reason to rejoice over John considering the ministry he had. Luke 6, 23.

Luke 6, 23. Rejoice ye in that day and leap for joy, for behold, your reward is great in heaven, for in the like manner did their fathers unto the prophets. Now, this is interesting.

Leap for joy. Huh. Can you imagine if it got around that George Burroughs was leaping for joy? Well, one of the reasons I don't do that much in public is because we live in such a strange day that people do tend to copy the outward things.

Also, I was very frightened once when I heard about this story of a dear lady who got really blessed. And when she got this special blessing from the Lord, she leaped into the air for joy. And it was so real to her that she began teaching the leap experience.

And, of course, when women become teachers, I tell you, we won't get into that controversial area tonight. But she got in front of this great group and taught them about the leap experience. And the invitation at the end was to leap.

And, of course, people were leaping all over the place and most of them didn't get quite the same blessing that she got. It's interesting how difficult it is for Christians to do things in a balanced, biblical way. Truly, a Christian can leap for joy.

I tell you, when I've heard of the Lord sometimes bringing in the funds, people have seen me a good six inches in the air. But I would be very hesitant to go around and teach that as a new experience for spiritual growth. Or say that you couldn't join OM until you had the leap experience.

On the other hand, our danger seems to be more in the opposite direction. How important this is. Now, here's the thing we miss.

This verse is written not for people sitting in a meeting. It's easy to get people wound up in a meeting. Evangelicals are very susceptible to meetings.

Now, as I've said, I've got the marching around the room and standing on chairs and sometimes felt a little bad about that afterward. Thinking maybe I was taking advantage of their emotions. But this is written in the context of suffering.

It's not an evangelical holiday camp experience. Maybe we ought to read the verses just before it. Look.

Verse 20. And he lifted up his eyes on his disciples and said, Blessed be ye poor, for yours is the kingdom of God. That's a rough one for these days.

Isn't it? We'd better find a new translation. Blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled. Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh.

Blessed are ye when men shall hate you and when they shall separate you from their company and shall reproach you and cast out your name as evil for the Son of Man's sake. Rejoice ye in that day. That's a little different, isn't it? Than 20th century evangelicalism.

And so really, it sort of says until you have the experience of suffering, until you can experience some depth of persecution, some depth of hardness, of hardship, you will not really get to know a depth experience in terms of rejoicing. Boy, I tell you, that hits me very hard. Because in many ways, in so much of what I'm doing, in so much of the work of God, things are not going the way I would pray and desire as I've been crying to God for 18 years for revival.

The first nights of prayer I organized were for revival. I discovered somewhere after that that Christians actually could live in revival daily. And so now I'm more along the line of Vance Havner, of believing not so much in the need for revival, but as the reality of vival.

Do you know that word? Not revival, but vival. He says it with a southern accent. Vival.

Something like that. Praise God, I had the privilege of preaching together with this man in Chicago to 700 pastors in June. He had them the night before I got there.

He preached on repentance. 200 pastors came forward weeping, repenting. And it's after the brokenness, after the repenting, after the confession, that the real rejoicing comes.

And as things are going hard, and some of us are very disappointed that we haven't got more new recruits this year. We could blame ourselves. We could do a lot of rationalizing.

I think we have those that God wants us to have. And in many ways, it's an answer to our prayer that we wouldn't grow any larger. But there's a lot of paradoxes involved in that.

But there are a lot of problems facing OM right now to get enough leaders for all these teams. So many other things. I won't go into it.

But we can experience, in the midst of these trials, a greater degree of rejoicing. Do you believe that? Do you believe that we get stuck back here on October 6th and can't move out because of the lack of supply? And we end up waiting on God for one month. Do you believe we can be rejoicing through that? I believe we can.

Even if some of our favorite little plans go down the drain. I'm ready for that. It's not easy to say it.

Just a few more verses. Will you look at John chapter 14? The gospel of John is rich. Read John's gospel at least four times a year as a young Christian.

Memorize it if you've got a good memory. If you've got a bad memory, try to memorize it, like me. John 14.

What verses these are to encourage our hearts tonight from God's Word. Let not your heart be troubled. Oh, I need that word.

Ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you.

I go to prepare a place for you. Think of that. The Lord Jesus got on ahead of us to prepare a place.

You all know the verse where it says, in this world you shall have tribulation. Look at 14.27. Peace I leave with you. My peace I give unto you.

Not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. You have heard how I said unto you, I go away and come again unto you.

If you love me, you would rejoice because I say, I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I. Rejoice. Rejoice. This is another major emphasis of John's Gospel.

Chapter 16, verse 22. And ye now therefore have sorrow, but I will see you again. And that day has already come for us, hasn't it? And your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man taketh from you.

Praise God. No man. You say, what about the fellow who comes to me tomorrow and criticizes me? Isn't he going to take away my joy? What about this O.M. leader who doesn't understand me? He's going to take away my joy.

What if O.M. tells me to go home and wait a year before I come? Is he going to take away my joy? What if my parents don't let me go? What if when I go home next weekend, my father criticizes me, my mother calls me stupid again? Isn't that going to take away my joy? What does it say? No man taketh this joy from you. This joy is related to the cross. It's related to the atonement.

It's related to the finished work of Jesus Christ. No man can take this away. A believer has a spring of water that is deeper than any man can ever touch.

Praise God and rejoice. And then in closing, a few verses from Philippians. I'd love to take you through Acts, really.

For years I've dreamed of preaching to O.M.ers all night right through to the morning. Never done it. Don't want to take away.

I really get excited when I start thinking about these truths. But look at Paul in Acts chapter 16, verse 25. This is just one of about 40 verses we can look at in the book of Acts.

I tell you, these people were liberated. And it wasn't just for a year. It wasn't just in the meetings.

It was in the prisons. Verse 25. And at midnight, Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God.

And the prisoners heard them. What a terrible thing disturbing all these poor prisoners trying to get a decent night's sleep. They sang praises.

Do you sing in your quiet time? If I get a few notes from you, at least more than five, if you want me to speak on practical ways to carry on in quiet time, I'll speak. Otherwise, I don't have any message planned on that. Somebody else may speak on it.

But there are ways to have your quiet time. When some people tell me about their quiet time, I can understand why they're bored and don't have it. Now, one thing you ought to do in your quiet time, not every morning, but often, is sing praises.

Now, I got the little flock hymn book. You've never seen a hymn book like this thing. This is the old hymn book of the old brethren that part of it went exclusive.

And I think this is still the exclusive hymn book in some places. But the hymns in this book, I tell you, some of the greatest hymns ever written. Now, when I sing in the morning, I don't have to worry about the organ or the piano.

I get in a room alone or I go in the woods. I love to get in the woods. And I make up my own tunes.

Of course, most of them are out of tune. And I tell you, I believe in this singing praises. And as we walk, it's not just in our quiet time, your little official quiet time.

Too many of you are caught up in official quiet times. All day we have unofficial quiet times. You're walking down the road just praising the Lord.

You can even do this with the unconverted, with some kind of people at works. And just pop a little word of praise. You get some interesting reactions.

Amen. Praise the Lord. So there Paul was in prison, terrible situation.

Everything went wrong, inner prison, and their feet were in stocks. Their feet were in stocks. Some of you stop praising the moment your feet get cold.

Of course, you know what happened after that praise meeting, don't you? Suddenly, there was a great earthquake. What happened to this guy? He's changed, hasn't he? He's more sophisticated now. He's certainly more quiet.

Maybe we need to do some studying. And then Philippians, just to close off with, the epistle of joy. The epistle of joy.

2 verse 2, Fulfill ye my joy. And look at this, verse 4 in chapter 1. Always in every prayer of mine for you all, making requests with joy. When we pray, it should be with joy.

We're asking God for funds, with joy. We're praying for labors, with joy. We're praying over the problems, with joy.

Then look at chapter 4. Therefore, my beloved or brethren, long for my joy and crown. So stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved. You see, it's important to realize that a very legitimate source of joy is the joy that comes to us when the brethren are going on for Him.

There are many things that have happened in O.M. over this past year that have brought tremendous joy to my heart. Truly, there are many negative things. There are many unfulfilled burdens.

But there are so many positive things. The Bible says, Rejoice when one soul comes to Christ. This year in O.M., God has given us thousands.

Thousands. We should be having nights of praise, nights of joy over the thousands who have repented through our own feeble efforts, much less the efforts of other works of God. I believe there needs to be a lot more praise in these days.

Forgive me if I've not set the pace in this up to now. I believe it with the depth of my heart. I've been experiencing it every morning that I've been reattacked on the train and when I get here by the old devil who, of course, always trying to take away our joy.

And it's easy to get our eyes on circumstances. I'm afraid sometimes I do that. It's easy to get our eyes on people.

It's easy to get our eyes on ourselves. And praise God, there is a lot of reason to rejoice. You think of so many babes in the Lord going on for God.

Sure, there are some who have gone away. But the Word of God says, think on that which is pure, that which is lovely, that which is of good report. That's where our main thinking must be.

Someone in my position, perhaps, has to think a little more on the negative. Because my major job, in some ways, is dealing with problems. But my thinking, ultimately, must always go back to the positive.

On that which is good, that which is pure, that which is honorable. And I do that. It's a very important thing in my life.

And so verse 4 says, Rejoice in the Lord always, and again I say, rejoice. This is not a minor issue. This is a major doctrine of the Christian faith.

That the believer is a man who is always rejoicing. Whether he abases or abounds, as Paul said in this very epistle, and he wrote that from prison. The Philippian epistle of joy was written from prison.

I found it a little hard to rejoice the first days here, every time those trains went by. Now I'm just praising God for those trains. You'll appreciate quiet and other more quiet conference centers much more in the years to come.

Up to now, you hardly ever thought of it. No matter how black the situation is, no matter how dark the hour, no matter how confused you may be, how many here, be honest if you can, sense in your own heart a little bit of confusion, where to go, what to do. You sense a little bit of confusion in your own spirit in these days.

Ready? We'll raise our hand. I'm in that category. Any others? Raise your hand.

Good. About it, 75%. And so, how important it is.

The main thing these days is not to figure out what field you're going to. God is going to work that out. The main thing isn't getting under some deep burden about this money you've got to pray in.

We're all uptight because you've been here only four days. You're already in love with four different girls. Or somebody else has stepped on one of your favorite things.

The important thing is the Lord. He's here. He's present in the midst of the confusion, in the midst of the loneliness, in the midst of perhaps feeling that you can't even listen to more messages.

You're already knocked out by the first couple of days, much less go through three weeks. In the midst of that, we can rejoice, we can praise Him, we can worship Him. He's working out the problems.

Again and again, God has saved me by simply saying, look, Berwer, don't you call me that. Call me George. I don't want my last name used by anybody.

Call me George or brother or something else. In fact, the Lord sometimes says Berwer because that's sort of strong with me when you lose your last name. And He says, look Berwer, again and again He's had to save me.

This is not your work. That's right. So just relax and enjoy me.

And you need to learn that. I'm still learning it. This is not your work.

This is God's work. So relax. Worship Him.

Praise Him. And you'll find a reality and a fountain and a well deeper than you ever dreamed existed in the all rejoicing Savior who's in heaven rejoicing in the presence of God with the angels over every sinner who repents and who actually is blessed and rejoices over each step you take forward in your Christian life and counts it a privilege in some ways to pick you up when you fall. Rejoice! And again I say, Rejoice!

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