

I. Rejoice Evermore, vs 16

A Joyful Disposition can change your life.

A. If you control your thoughts you can be continually

1. Marcus Aurelius, one of the great Roman emperors, said "Life is what our thoughts make it."

2. If you want to change your thoughts,

Receive Christ into your mind,

and get rid of all your old dead, tired, listless thoughts.

3. You can do terrible damage by thinking sick thought

4. Story of "Miss Lou" in Edwards, Mississippi, and

"The Sweetest Spot on Highway 88" --

all possible because she learned to think creatively

5. (A man's mind can be completely controlled -  
ill. of the Nazi Commandant of the concentration camp  
at Auschwitz.)

Col. 2:6-7, Weymouth Trans; 9750 bns evol, s'bood

Let Christ be in complete control of your life.

2. Важнейшие моменты

[illegible]

B. The church suffers today from a saddening lack of simple, overflowing Christian joy.

We have plenty of knowledge but not enough joy.

We seem to meet on the Lord's Day more as though

we had assembled to mourn a defeat

than to celebrate a victory.

Jesus invites us to a feast, not a funeral.

His greeting was "be of good cheer."

But today the one who yells like a Comanche Indian

at the football game on Saturday

sits like a wooden Indian in the House of God on Sunday.

C. John 20:20 gives us the secret of Christian Joy:

"Then were the disciples glad, when they saw the Lord."

1. Not "when they saw themselves."

2. Not "when they saw each other"

3. Not "when they saw their circumstances"

4. But "when they saw the Risen Lord.

Jn. 16:22: "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you."



I am troubled by the sad expressions on the faces of some Christians. It reminds me too much of Linus clutching his security blanket, with a dead-pan look, and saying, "No problem is so big or so complicated that it can't be run away from!" But that's not the way the disciples of Christ in the New Testament reacted. Their distinguishing mark was their joy-- the ability to take the world with all its tragedies screaming at them-- and to say that this is a world that can be coped with and can be faced victoriously.

Jesus had said to them, "These things have I spoken to you, that my joy might be in you, and that your joy may be full." This joy of Christ was a reality in their lives. They really felt down in their bones that nothing could separate them from God's love and care.

After the resurrection they had the assurance that Christ was in every event and circumstance working to save, to heal, to forgive, to reconcile, and to restore. And if we today can believe this, then we can rejoice in the Lord always.

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rejoice, and your joy no man takes from you."



## II. PRAY WITHOUT CEASING (CONSTANTLY)

### A. PRAYERFUL SPIRIT CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE.

A. What Prayer is: Response to God's initiative.

B. Once you have said, "God, you" and not "God, he",  
you have begun to pray.

C. Two simple rules to follow at the beginning:

1. Be yourself. Be natural and honest before God.
2. Begin where you are

D. The first three prayers,

1. "O God, help me" ---
2. "O God, forgive me" ---
3. "O God, thank you" ---

E. ~~xx~~ Different kinds of prayers

1. Prayers that you say
2. Prayers that you think (meditation)
3. Prayers that you feel
4. Prayers that you will

F. Practice the presence of God.

G. Prayer will Banish Worry & leave only Poise & Confidence.

1. A famous psychologist has called fear & worry the most devastating diseases known to mankind.

2. The word worry comes from the Anglo Saxon word meaning "to choke". - that is what it does.

3. The Christian opposite to worry is faith.

4. Isaiah said "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee."

5. Don't run away from fear; stand & face it.

a. The Hereford cows on the great plains -

They stand facing into the storm,

while other breeds turn their backs to the icy wind and slowly drift downwind & pile up & die.

b. "Be bold, and mighty powers will come to your aid."

c. Story of very small quarterback on a football team.

(law of physics that momentum equals weight times velocity;

so he hurled himself "like a panicky bullet" at the huge oncoming fullback & stopped him cold.)

6. Why worry when you can pray?

H. Airline stewardess on flight out of Chicago;

spoke to a clergyman about which of two men to marry;

said, "I never thought of praying about a thing like this



Paul said, "Pray constantly."

At first we may feel that this is impossible.

Who has time for continual devotions & prayer?

We have to work for a living.

We have to train, teach, learn, produce.

Yet Paul was a working man, a tent maker.

And he was talking to people who were working people.

He understood life's demands on our time.

What he was really trying to do was to get us

to establish priorities and attitudes.

We are to seek the things that are above

and to concentrate on the things that are

truly worthy.

Much of our energy is devoted not to things

that are really good but

to things that make us FEEL good.

Feeling is not the answer.

Living is the answer.

If you value the best and love the highest

your whole LIFE becomes a prayer.

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### III. IN EVERYTHING GIVE THANKS.

#### A. THANKFUL ATTITUDE CAN CHANGE YOUR LIFE.

##### A. Count your blessings

##### B. Accept your adversities

William Law said in the 18th century:

"If anyone would tell you the shortest, surest way to all happiness and all perfection, he must tell you to make a rule to yourself to thank and praise God for everything that happens to you. For it is certain that whatever seeming calamity happens to you, if you thank and praise God for it, you turn it into a blessing."

"In everything? In sorrow, pain, and loss?

When some hard lesson racks the wary mind?

When, just before, there looms the threat'ning cross?

When nights are long, and morn brings day unkind?

In everything! Each sorrow and each pain

Is known by One who measures every day;

d lessons hard, well mastered, will make plain

The faithful Teacher planning all the way.

Dost know the cross must come before the crown?

And seed unburied must abide alone?

Dost know the cloud that spreads its sullen frown

Harms not the sun, whose power must be shown?

Then waiting not for that which shall make clear

The tender love in what seems harsh and stern,

O Soul redeemed, look up! Dismiss thy fear!

Now is the time when thanks thou shouldst return!"

PRAYER AFTER THE SERMON: Our Heavenly Father, you know the conflicts, the anxieties, the questionings that are in our minds. You know us better than we know ourselves. We need our lives changed in so many ways. In your word you have told us some simple things to do that can change our confused, selfish lives, so that they can be more like the Master's Life. We love you. We long to draw near to You. Enter our lives, we pray, and use us and fill us with the spirit that brings victory, peace and power. Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.



When we live the life of prayer,  
then we learn to count our blessings,  
and to find in the experience of life something good  
even when the outward appearance is distressing.  
Sometimes we find that we have been blessed  
in ways that we knew not.

Suddenly we are ready to give thanks,  
and prayer becomes a happy outpouring of the heart  
in gratitude, appreciation, and thanksgiving.

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