

PHILIPPIANS

Rejoice In
The Lord!

Get The *Word* Out

Lesson Seven

Philippians

Rejoice In The Lord!

Lesson Goal: To help students see that telling the Good News is most important.

Scriptures: Philippians 1:15-18

For Memory: “The important thing is that in every way...Christ is preached.”
Philippians 1:18

Get The *Word* Out

What a difficult position Paul found himself in as he was captive in Rome. He wanted to be out telling the Good News. He wanted to be telling everyone about Jesus. He had been given great opportunities to preach (talking to other people about Jesus) in many places, and now he couldn't even walk down the street without dragging chains and a Roman soldier.*

Randy was a good man. He could think on his feet. He was good looking and other people were drawn to him before they really knew much about him. Randy decided to run for city councilman. He made good campaign speeches. He did well in debates with his opponents. Now, his major opponent, Gerard, was not nearly so good looking, and usually didn't speak as well. However, he knew a lot more about city business than Randy did, and was constantly involved in community improvement activities. Both of them talked about how good the city was and what good things they wanted to help the city do when they were elected. Gerard tried to stick to the issues. He didn't attack Randy. However, Randy thought that the only way he could win was to make Gerard look bad. In the end, Randy won. Gerard, when he was asked for his reaction, said that as long as Randy lived up to his promises, he would cheer him on.**

There were, according to Philippians 1:15, some folks who didn't like Paul. They were jealous of Paul's popularity. They were also preaching the Good News. Their preaching must have been right, because Paul doesn't question or condemn it.

There were also some people who were trying to follow Paul's example, telling the Good News where Paul couldn't preach. They admired Paul, and he appreciated them and their determination to tell everyone about Jesus. As we have said, Paul was in prison and couldn't do his missionary work anymore. So, these folks were doing their ministry and working to complete the task Paul had set out to do.

So, we have a situation like Randy and Gerard. We have folks who want to look good and tell the story of Jesus with a more self-centered goal of getting the praise for doing it. They wanted to make Paul look bad, according to verse 17. That kind of behavior makes us think that they wouldn't be the kind of people that Paul

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appreciate. But, Paul looked beyond how people treated him and was more concerned about what they were doing for the Kingdom. He says a very interesting thing. Though they were telling the Good News about Jesus with the wrong motive, they were telling the truth, and Scripture promises that when God's truth is told, it will have a good effect. Isaiah 55:11.

We need to learn the lesson that, obviously, Gerard had learned, and one that Paul had definitely learned. That is, it really doesn't matter who gets the credit when good things are done. Paul was not jealous. In writing to the church at Corinth, Paul said that he had no reason to boast as a preacher of the Good News. I Corinthians 9:16. He was a preacher of the Gospel because God told him to be one. The word he used is "compelled." He had a God-given urge to tell people about Jesus.

How often we condemn someone, who is doing a good thing, because they don't do things our way...or because they criticize the way we do it. That is very wrong. The thing that Paul wanted most, the thing that he was giving his life for, was telling the Good news. So what, said Paul, if someone else tells it. The point was, in Paul's mind, the Good News was being told. That's what mattered. That is what brought Paul joy!

*Underlined statements in this Teacher's Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher's Guide.
**Stories in these lessons are original with the author. The teacher should feel free to enlarge or change the story to be more appropriate to his or her purposes.



Teaching Tips:

1. There are great ideas about Paul's preaching, just for the joy of it, in I Corinthians 9.
2. Songs that emphasize telling the Good News, Christian service, and praising Jesus will be appropriate.
3. Pray with your students about overcoming jealousy or envy of those who seem to be more successful than themselves as well as following God's will for their witness.
4. See also II Corinthians 4:1-6; Galatians 2:1-9; Ephesians 6:19, 20 and especially I Thessalonians 2:1-9.
5. The Greek word that Paul used in verse 17 translated "selfish ambition" is the word, that, in Paul's day, meant "running for office."
6. You should place emphasis on your students telling the Good News, and encourage them not to be occupied with questioning the motives of others who are telling it.

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Student Worksheet

For Memory: “The important thing is that in every way...Christ is preached.”
Philippians 1:14

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=Paul had been given great opportunities to _____ (talking to other people about Jesus) in many places, and now he couldn't even _____ down the street without dragging _____ and a Roman _____.

=Their preaching must have been _____ because Paul doesn't question or condemn it.

=Folks were doing their ministry, working to complete the _____ Paul had set out to do.

=Paul looked beyond how people _____ him and was more concerned about what they were doing for the _____.

=Though they were telling the _____ about Jesus with the wrong motive, They were telling the truth, and Scripture promises that when God's _____ is told, it will have a good _____. Isaiah 55:11.

=It really doesn't matter who gets the _____ when good things are done.

=The point was, in Paul's mind, the Good News was being _____. That's what mattered.

That is what brought Paul _____!

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be determined to live for him all the rest of your life.