

1 Thessalonians 5 - The Waiting Room – part 6

1 Thessalonians 5:12-25—We are pursuing the answers to the question of “[what do we do while we wait on the what God has for us.](#)”

--I'm grateful to the study and work of John MacArthur on this topic we will pursue today and wanted to give him credit for it.

1. Adding to our list of things to do.

1. Rejoice always – This along with the two other commands are modified with “[this is the will of God for you in Christ Jesus.](#)”

--Did you know that?

--Now we know the will of God for our lives! What I call the major or greater will of God.

--“[We want to will of God, but we don't know what the will of God is.](#)”

This is always in reference to the minor or lesser part of God's will: where do we go, who do we call, What decision do we make—these are minor parts of God's will.

--We tend to major on the minors and then, in turn, minor on the majors--waiting for these minor points of God's will all the while neglecting the major points.

--As always, the best way to know the will of God is to do the will of God. God has made His will clear in the major/greater areas; when we do those, we will know the will of God in lesser areas.

2. Since this is a major will of God for us, let's drill down here and see what we need to know or may be missing.

--Notice there are no qualifiers, no caveats, no exceptions, no ifs ands or buts.

--The emphasis in the Greek is different than it appears in the English.

--Their word order is different for emphasis: “[At all times be rejoicing](#)”, in other words, the emphasis is on the “[all times](#)” part not the rejoicing part.

--This is a command, so we haven't obeyed until our joy is unceasing

--How are you doing with that?

Let me put it to you another way so we can all catch the force of this: If joy is diminished in my life or yours as believers, that is sin because it amounts to disobedience to this clear command.

--Also, this is not an isolated command: [Philippians 3:1; 4:4](#) we are called to unceasing joy; even when we suffer: [I Peter 4:13](#).

--This is joy that is not negated by sorrow: [II Corinthians 6:10](#).

Jesus speaks of His disciples joy no less than 8 times on the night before His crucifixion.

--Amazing because this was an excruciating 24 hours of Jesus' and His disciples lives: **Judas** would betray Him, **Peter** would deny Him, **disciples** would dissent Him, they would reach the low point of their human lives.

--They were losing all they had known for the previous three years; Jesus' dying was unimaginable to them.

--They had never had a better reason for sorrow and hopelessness than the next 3 days, and that is exactly when Jesus began to remind them repeatedly of joy and being joyful.

[John 14:28; John 15:11; John 16:22](#)

Joy and rejoicing are continually stressed in the Bible

--[Colossians 1:24](#) – He suffered a lot: shipwrecks, beatings, stonings, etc. **It is possible to rejoice in great suffering.**

--[James 1:2](#) – “all joy” not marginal joy, not minimal joy but **consummate joy**.

--[Psalm 32:11](#)—It is to be Abundant, exceeding and animated!

--[I Peter 1:8](#) – It is to be beyond words.

--The Bible leaves us with a great responsibility to rejoice as believers no matter what is going on, no matter what the condition.

3. The Joy flow chart.

Joy comes from God the Father: Psalm 16:11 – of course, this is supernatural and not dependent or effected by anything that is natural.

Joy comes through Christ: God gives but it flows only to those who have His Son—**John 15:11.**

Joy is energized by the Holy Spirit: From God, through Christ, applied by the Holy Spirit into our lives—**Romans 14:14; 17; Galatians 5:22**

Joy is enhanced by knowing and believing the Scriptures: I John 1:4

From God, Through Jesus, by the Holy Spirit, as we understand and believe the Scriptures.

--If we lack joy it is because there is a breakdown in this flow chart.

--No joy? Do you really know God? are you really Saved?

--No Joy? Are you surrendered to the Holy Spirit?

--No Joy? Do you understand and believe the Scriptures?

--Many Christians struggle with joy, and it is because they do not understand God the He has revealed Himself in the Scriptures.

--What motivates me to Joy is my knowledge of God—His sovereign love, His infinite wisdom and grace.

Ephesians 1:3 – Everything is mine because of His death, resurrection, ascension, intercession, second coming and eternal reign.

--Everything that Christ has done, is doing, or will yet do, accrues to my personal benefit because I am Christ's and He is mine.

Nothing can assail or change this fact.

No circumstance, event, acquisition, loss, gain affects this joy.

This joy is not related to my position or my possessions.

Romans 8:28 – All things aren't good, but God works all things (good and bad) together for my good because I love Him.

--This is God's providential care of us – He takes all the events in the world, all the actions of people in world, who move with their own ideas and plans and He weaves them together to accomplish His perfectly sovereign plan--He does this at all times.

--Our lives with just a few contingencies get almost hopelessly complicated.

--Gotta pick up the kids in three locations, get the groceries, cook dinner, pay the bills, volunteer at church – and we get maxed out.

--God has an almost infinite number of independent contingencies that He perfectly orchestrates to accomplish exactly what He intended before time began.

This is called God's providence; really hard if not impossible to comprehend.

--Miracles are easier for us to grasp; God invades all these contingencies and moves them aside and raises the dead, parts the waters, heals the sick, calms the sea.

--Miracles are information that we can manage, but His providence working all things together—that's staggering.

--Rejoicing isn't waiting on miracles, it's blown away by the reality of a sovereign God.

We rejoice in His providence, that He hears us when we pray, we rejoice at the truth of His word—**I John 1:4**

4. If we are not rejoicing that be caused by several things.

1. Our Ignorance – Satan works on a simple principle, “keep them dumb and you keep them down.”

--You and I have every reason to rejoice, but if we don't accept and believe those reasons, it makes it hard.

2. Our False expectations – Jesus is supposed to do what I want Him to. He makes me win, makes my stocks go up, makes me healthy and wealthy.

--When these false things inevitably don't come as we want, it's hard to rejoice.

3. Our Forgetfulness – My lack rejoicing isn't based on ignorance but is often due to forgetfulness—**Psalm 103:2**.

4. Our focus – **II Corinthians 4:18** – We look away from changeable circumstances to the unchangeable God. Our unchangeable salvation, the unalterable will of God and love of God for those who believe and accept Him as Lord.