

# Rejoice

By David Phillips

**A**t times it can be so easy for us to get caught up in our aches and pains. It can be just as easy to get caught up in how bad people in the world are treating us or how much we dislike our job or school. These same things can get people in the world down as well. As Christians, however, we cannot fail to see the immense joy that we have in Christ Jesus. In Hebrews chapter eleven we can read of person after person who had such great faith in the promises of God that they were willing to rejoice, even when in danger. Why? Because as it says of Moses, "...esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for **he looked to the reward**" (Heb. 11:26). Moses and the rest of God's faithful people were assured of the promises of God and knew that their present suffering, when compared to the glory of their hope, was nothing. Paul reminds us of this in Rom. 8:18 where he writes, "*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*"

In spite of this there are many Christians today who are not rejoicing. When people see them in the world they do not seem glad to be a part of God's holy family. We need to understand that this is a contradiction of the character God expects. "*Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, Rejoice*" (Phil. 4:4). A study through the book of 1 Peter teaches us that a person who has a "genuine faith" in Christ and in the hope of His glory is going to rejoice, no matter the physical circumstances. We learn that we are able to "rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory" because our faith is so strong in that spiritual inheritance which we look forward to in Christ. We ought to be able to submit to all men and still be joyful. We ought to be able to suffer wrong for the cause of Christ and still rejoice. We ought to be able to live a life of service, and yet still be the most joyous people on earth because of our faith in the promises of God.

To be able to rejoice in the midst of trials, as the apostles did in Acts 5:41, is one of the many blessings we receive when we become Christians. Let us understand, however, that rejoicing does not mean we have to be perky and bubbly all the time. Rejoicing is something we can do even when it seems the world is caving in on us (Habakkuk 3:17-19). Rejoicing is seen in our ability to praise God and glorify Him at all times. We rejoice when our lips glorify God rather than complaining about the life He gave us. In Phil. 3:3 Paul associated his rejoicing with the fact that he worshiped God in the Spirit and that he had no confidence in the flesh. What keeps a Christian from rejoicing? When we put confidence in the flesh (our physical status and well being). When we put more value on how the world treats us than on what God thinks of us. When we have to feel a certain way before we can glorify our God.

Brethren, let us overcome this by putting confidence in God when our fleshly body is suffering (2 Cor. 12:9). Let us set our desire upon the love of Christ when men persecute us and treat us poorly (Matt. 5:44-45) so that instead of using our voice in complaint, we can use it to preach the word and glorify God (Phil. 2:14-16). Let us learn to do all things as unto the Lord, even when we do not like the job we are doing. If we can do this, then we can truly say that we rejoice in our Lord.