

SERMON STUDY GUIDE

unbreakable

JOY

Unshakable: Finding Joy That Lasts. November 2, 2025

READ

Read the Scripture of the week: Philippians 4:4–9

DISCUSS

- When you hear the command *"Rejoice in the Lord always,"* what's your honest first reaction—encouraged, inspired, or intimidated?
- Where do you find it hardest to rejoice right now, and why?

COME AND SEE

Paul finishes his letter with a call to joy that's as startling as it is freeing. **Joy is not a feeling we chase, but a choice we practice**—rooted in the Lord's nearness, not our circumstances.

1) Joy Is Commanded, Not Suggested (v.4)

"Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!"

Joy isn't an optional mood for the spiritually cheerful—it's a command for everyone who's spiritually alive.

- What makes joy hard to obey as a command? How does understanding "in the Lord" change what kind of joy Paul means?
 - Read **John 15:10–11**. How does obedience lead to joy rather than rob it?
- "Joy is the gigantic secret of the Christian."* – G.K. Chesterton

2) Because Christ Is in Control, We Can Be Constantly Confident (vv.5–7)

"The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything..."

Paul ties joy to peace and gentleness, which grow from trusting Christ's control.

- What happens to your gentleness when you're anxious or hurried? How might remembering "the Lord is near" calm you?
- Read **Isaiah 26:3**. How does fixing your mind on God produce peace that guards your heart?

"The gentleness of Christ is not weakness, but strength under control—a heart so confident in God's sovereignty that it has no need to retaliate or panic." – Sinclair Ferguson

Practice this week: list your top three anxieties and, with thanksgiving, present them to God in prayer. Watch how His peace "sets up a guard" around your heart.

3) Because Christ Is in Control, We Can Concentrate on What Matters (v.8)

"Whatever is true, whatever is noble...think about such things."

Joy grows where we intentionally shape our thoughts. What we dwell on determines our direction.

- What dominates your mental feed—fear, comparison, or gratitude?
- How could you practice **Philippians 4:8** thinking? Try replacing one anxious thought with a truth about God's character.

"Faith is not the absence of thinking; it is the presence of thinking rightly about what is true." – Tim Keller

4) *Because Christ Is in Control, We Can Imitate the Right People (v.9)*

"Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me...put it into practice."

Joy is contagious—it spreads through imitation. We learn joy by watching others live it.

- Who models *joyful* steadiness in your life right now?
- Who might be watching you for cues on what faith looks like under pressure?

Application:

- Identify one person you want to imitate in joy.
- Identify one person you want to influence toward joy.

FOLLOW ME

Reflection Exercise:

- Write down one worry that's been consuming you.
- Pray through Philippians 4:6–7, releasing that worry to God.
- Each time it returns, repeat out loud: "The Lord is near—I will rejoice in Him."

GO AND BE

- Each morning this week, begin with this short prayer:

"Jesus, You are Lord. You are near. Today, I choose to rejoice."

- Each evening, record one moment where you saw God's peace replace anxiety.
- Let your gentleness and gratitude be evident to everyone around you—because joy is the mark of those who truly know who's in control.

Sticky statement:

Because Christ is in control, you can make the choice to rejoice—confident, caring, calm, and centered on what matters most.