

“Joyride”
 Focus on the Positive
 Joe Wright

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¹² Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. ¹³ As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. ¹⁴ Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

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¹⁵ It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. ¹⁶ The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. ¹⁸ But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

3

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. ²⁰ I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

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²² If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³ I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴ but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

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²⁷ Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm one Spirit, contending as one man for the faith of the gospel ²⁸ without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you.

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This is a sign to them that they will be destroyed, but that you will be saved... and that by God. ²⁹For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him..."

Philippians 1:12-29 NIV

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A *sure way* to make yourself miserable is to always focus on the negative.

"...As a man thinks in his heart, so is he."
(Proverbs 23:7 NKJV)

9

...whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about these things.

Philippians 4:8 NIV

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Three Areas of Negativity:

- Tough Circumstances
- Difficult People
- An Unpredictable Future

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Focus on the positive!

Evaluate life realistically and *choose* to respond positively because of your *faith* in God.

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Transforming Hardship:

1. Into a *positive testimony*.

“I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.” (Philippians 1:12)

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Two Positive Results

- Evangelism

“As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ.” (Philippians 1:13 NIV)

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“All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.” (Philippians 4:22 NASB)

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Two Positive Results

- Evangelism
- Encouragement

“And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.” (Philippians 1:14 NIV)

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“I didn’t use to understand how God could love me even before I was born, but now I understand. I love this child even though I had never seen her.”

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Transforming Hardship:

2. Into *positive ministry*

“It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will.” (Philippians 1:15 NIV)

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“Now, these people preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me, while I am in chains.” (Philippians 1:17 NIV)

“But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or truth, Christ is preached. And because of that I rejoice.” (Philippians 1:18 NIV)

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“...If anybody is preaching to you a gospel other than what you accepted, let him be under accursed!” (Galatians 1:8 NIV)

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We give up our egos to advance the cause
of JESUS CHRIST!

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Transforming Hardship:

3. Into a positive *destiny*

“...I will continue to rejoice, for I know
that through your prayers and the help
given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ what
has happened to me will turn out for my
deliverance!” (Philippians 1:18-19 NIV)

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“I hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but I will have
sufficient courage, that now, as always, Christ will be
exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.”
(Philippians 1:20 NIV)

“For me to live is Christ, but to die is gain!”
(Philippians 1:21 NIV)

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“Living means opportunities for Christ,
and dying—well, that’s better yet!”
(Philippians 1:21 TLB)

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“And God is faithful; he will not let you be
tempted beyond what you can bear.”

1 Corinthians 10:13 NIV

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¹⁶Therefore we don't lose heart, though outwardly we are wasting away. Inwardly, we are being renewed day by day. ¹⁷For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all. ¹⁸So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen, for what is seen is temporary, what is unseen is eternal. ¹For we know that the earthly tent we live in when it is destroyed, we have a building of God eternal in the heavens, not built by human hands.

2 Corinthians 4:16-5:1 NIV

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Therefore we are confident, and know that as long as we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. We live by faith, not by sight. We are confident, and we would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord.

2 Corinthians 5:6-7

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God is going to work it out for your good!

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