



**SERIES: Philippians (May / June) “Finding Joy in the Journey”**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Thursday, June 17, 2021**

**Scripture: Philippians 4:1**

**NC0179**

**TITLE: Where to Find Joy**

Though I don't like home projects, I can see why they are important. Yes, it can improve the value of a home, but more importantly, at the end of the day, we can say, “Look at that shed.” We can say, “Look at this kitchen and its new cabinets.” For others, it's not the home project; it's the rebuilding of a car. For others, it's the raising of funds for a capital campaign. Regardless of the labor, it's the ability to look and see what you've accomplished.

Well, these things are important. But there's one project that we can point to that is an eternal monument. What do I mean by this? Let's continue walking with Paul in Philippians 4:1 (NLT) for the answer.

*Therefore, my dear brothers and sisters, stay true to the Lord. I love you and long to see you, dear friends, for you are my joy and the crown I receive for my work.*

Paul calls his Philippian friends “my joy and the crown.” If you have a dear friend, a child, or a grandchild, you know the joy it brings you to see them. The world can be falling down around you, but when they show up, you get a smile on your face. It's just what the doctor ordered. That's the experience Paul has when he thinks of this family.

Paul says that they are “the crown I receive for my work.” Paul is not referring to a crown of royalty but a wreath that one would receive for running and winning a race. You see, this is the fruit of our labor we should yearn for. This is the eternal monument of a life lived on a mission.

The Philippian church was proof that Paul had labored well for the Gospel. Now, Paul was clear that we don't save anyone. The Spirit does that. We just get to engage in everyday outreach, and God does the rest. And for Paul to see the seed of the Gospel sprout into a soul saved, and a life saved, is a reward that brought him great joy.

A number of years ago, I spoke at the University of Nebraska. At the end of the talk, a young college student asked if we could get coffee to discuss the content of my talk. During that coffee conversation, we talked through Scripture, its claims, and the Gospel. This young man gave his life to Christ. Now some five years later, I just saw that he graduated from my alma mater: Biola University. He is following Jesus. That brings me great joy.

So here's my challenge for you today: Who is one person you can pray for and engage in everyday outreach with? You're not called to save them. You are called to love them, serve

them, pray for them, and share the Gospel with them. Identify one person, engage with them, share the goTandem app, and allow the Spirit to work.

Paul wants every one of us to experience that joy and crown for faithful service to our gracious Savior. When we follow Paul's example, we will win the day.