

The Joy of Being a Christian

by Wayne Goff

The book of Acts records the consistent reaction of those who first obeyed the Gospel: JOY! What were they so happy about?

In the city of Samaria, Philip preached Christ to the people, and confirmed his message with miraculous signs, **Acts 8:5-25**. *“And there was great joy in the city”* (v. 8). Their rejoicing was over the fact that both sin and its diseases were defeated by the Name of Jesus.

In a deserted place, Philip also preached the Gospel to an Ethiopian eunuch of great authority, **Acts 8:26-40**. This devout man was reading **Isaiah 53** on his own and wondering of whom God was speaking. Philip, by inspiration, sat down with him and explained that Jesus of Nazareth fulfilled that prophecy. In doing so, he preached baptism for the remission of sins. The eunuch, upon confessing *“I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God”* (v. 37) was baptized *“and he went on his way rejoicing”* (vv. 38-39). He rejoiced over having been forgiven of his sins. He rejoiced over leaving the domain of Satan and being translated into the Kingdom of Jesus Christ (**Colossians 1:13**)!

In Antioch, Pisidia, Paul preached Jesus to both Jews and Gentiles (**Acts 13:14-52**), and encouraged certain believers *“to continue in the grace of God”* (v. 43). When the Gentiles understood that they were included in the scope of the Gospel, then *“as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed”* (v. 48). The word continued to be spread throughout the region, *“And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit”* (v. 52).

When Paul and Barnabas reported the salvation of the Gentiles on their way back to Jerusalem (**Acts 15:1-4**), the brethren had *“great joy”* (v. 3) in hearing it!

The Philippian jailer, at the edge of death and eternal damnation, heard the Gospel from the lips of Paul and Silas, **Acts 16:9-40**. He went from near certain physical death to absolute spiritual life in the span of a few hours! Naturally, *“...he rejoiced, having believed in God with all his household”* (v. 34). If you were in his shoes, wouldn't you be rejoicing?!

“He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose” ~ Jim Elliot.

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