

Find the Joy

Ready:

“Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice!” – Philippians 4:4

Set

At the end of one of our basketball games, the score was 48-3. In four quarters, my players had managed to score a mere 3 points – all of them were free throws.

As a new coach, I felt I was failing my young team. Certainly, I was not cut out for coaching.

As Christians, we know that life does not always go our way and yet we are commanded to rejoice in the Lord always. Paul assures the Philippians that his joy is not dependent on circumstances. “... I have learned the secret of being content – whether well fed or hungry, whether in abundance or in need. I am able to do all things through him who strengthens me.” ([Philippians 4:12b-13](#)) So, there had to be joy in that loss.

In life and sport, experiencing joy is not easy or automatic. It takes strength and intentionality. Paul understood this. He did not depend on a win/loss record or material goods or even his circumstances to bring him joy. And Paul was no stranger to difficulties. Looking at [2 Corinthians 11](#), we read about many of Paul’s trials. Yet, he found contentment and joy through his relationship with the Lord, the promises of Jesus, and faithfully pursuing his mission. We can experience this as well by intentionally focusing on things from above. ([Philippians 4:8](#))

Finding joy is easy when you’re winning and everything is going great. To find joy when you’re losing can sometimes take some searching. Paul found joy through the Lord. Athletes and coaches find joy through setting and meeting goals and through the relationships built through sport. Christians find joy by walking faithfully with God ([James 1:2-3](#)), connecting in Christian community and noticing the small blessings the Lord gives us every day. If we look for joy, we will find it.

Looking at my players, I realized they were not downcast. They were congratulating the player who made the three free throws. They still loved the game. That was joy. My joy didn’t depend on the outcome of the game; it was in helping a group of middle school girls grow in the game we all loved.

There is joy to be found in all circumstances; we just need to look for it!

Go

- What circumstances bring you joy? What circumstances rob you of joy?

- If someone asked you why you have such joy, what would you say?
- How can you find joy through your sport when things are going well and when they are not?

Workout

Romans 15:13

Nehemiah 8:18

Overtime

“Lord, open my eyes to see the joy You have set all around me. Help me to rejoice in You and in the incredible gift of Your son. Grow in my life and enable me to rejoice in You always. Amen.”



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