

JOY

by Elder Bob Rapp

December 5, 2014

Over the past several days I've been reflecting on Pastor Andrew's sermon, "Spreading the Gospel through Joy." As the final message in our series from Philippians, it's a great reminder that gratitude motivates our service. Paul was grateful to the Lord in his circumstances including prison. And this motivated his love and service. So we are grateful to Him in our circumstances – both individually and especially corporately as a local church – and this motivates our service.

As a child I remember being told that the word **JOY** is a good way to remember the priority of **J**esus, then **O**thers, and then **Y**ou. In a busy season full of many events, activities, commitments, and demands, we of course want to remember Jesus. But it's sometimes easier said than lived out. Just as "Black Thursday" can crowd out Thanksgiving, our winter activities can squeeze Christ out of Christmas.

This month, let's seize the rich opportunities to share the amazing grace of our precious Savior and Lord Jesus Christ. If you have a relationship with Him and He's done something for you, talk about it. That's a testimony and it's powerful. Share with an **O**ther you've known for awhile. Share with an **O**ther you've just met. We speak the Good News. And God saves people. Let's prayerfully live out our part this Christmas season relying on His strength in Spirit-led opportunities.

God wants to use the joy in your life to spread the Gospel. As you talk about **J**esus with **O**thers I can guarantee, based on God's Word, that **Y**ou yourself will be blessed this month. That's **JOY**. And we will likely find that our overflowing gratitude will motivate our richer service to Him in January and beyond as we serve Him together at Central Bible Church.