

12/04/10 - A Pout-Free Zone

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Philippians 4:1-9

My aunt would never let us have a "pity party." While at her house, we were never allowed to feel sorry for ourselves for too long. She wanted her house to be a pout-free zone.

My aunt could have indulged in self-pity, and few would have blamed her. She was born with a congenital heart defect that left her "the runt of the litter," in her own words. Her father disappeared, a presumed homicide, leaving her mother with six girls to raise. My aunt's first marriage ended in divorce, and her only child was stillborn. With an elementary education, she worked at factory jobs. She was one of the first persons in her region to have open-heart surgery. Yet, she beat the odds.

The apostle Paul must have seemed like the cheerleader Paul to the Philippians. The words "joy" and "rejoice" are used 14 times in this short letter. Paul wasn't about to let them have a pity party even if they were a small, persecuted, and powerless minority.

Why would we throw a pity party when we can "rejoice in the Lord always"?