

Paul's Jail Song



September 30, 2018
Philippians 1:12-20

Introduction and the beginning of Paul's letter to the Philippians.

The thread of joy and unity.

Paul spoke to the women who had gathered at the river there, including a woman named Lydia who was a dealer in purple cloth. (Acts 16:14). She had probably converted to Judaism (since her name is a Gentile name) when living in Thyatira and brought her faith with her to Philippi. As she listened to Paul speak, the Lord opened her heart to respond. Evidently her entire household responded as well, since all of them were baptized together (Acts 16:14-15). This, then, is the rather auspicious beginnings of the Philippian church.

Troubling facts:

- ✓ Paul is in prison for the Gospel- not attending church regularly!
- ✓ Paul had fellow preacher enemies- This is a very troubling situation and can easily produce cynicism.

Why does the life changing Gospel which produces unity with God and fellow Christians allow for ungodly behavior?

1 Thessalonians 2:2-4

A.W. Tozer wrote this powerful piece rebuking the attitude of competition that is common among those in the ministry: "Dear Lord, I refuse henceforth to compete with any of Thy servants. They have congregations larger than mine. So be it. I rejoice in their success. They have greater gifts. Very well. That is not in their power nor in mine. I am humbly grateful for their greater gifts and my smaller ones. I only pray that I may use to Thy glory such modest gifts as I possess. I will not compare myself with any, nor try to build up my self-esteem by noting where I may excel one or another in Thy holy work. I herewith make a blanket disavowal of all intrinsic worth. I am but an unprofitable servant. I gladly go to the foot of the cross and own myself the least of Thy people. If I err in my self-judgment and actually underestimate myself I do not want to know it. I purpose to pray for others and to rejoice in their prosperity as if it were my own. And indeed it is my own if it is Thine own, for what is Thine is mine, and while one plants and another waters it is Thou alone that giveth the increase." (from *The Price of Neglect*, 104-105)

5 Take-aways from Paul's Roman imprisonment

- **1. Paul loved the Gospel**- verse 12, 18

Romans 1:15, 16; 10:15; 1 Corinthians 15:1; Philippians 1:7, 27; Acts 20:24

What's the greatest cause in life?

Who or what are you most thankful for?

1 Timothy 1:11

III.- 2 guys I know that share the Gospel but don't live close to Jesus.

➤ **2. Paul loved the saints-** verse 12, 14

Paul was happy that his life impacted the lives of others in light of the Gospel.

Adam Clarke paraphrased Paul's idea here: "I call God to witness that I have the strongest affection for you, and that I love you with that same kind of tender concern with which Christ loved the world when he gave himself for it. (1:7,8)

Enthusiasm for Christ is contagious.

Has anyone caught it from you?

The philosophy of the world says it's all about you and forget everyone else unless you can use them for your own benefit.

An example of the believers- 1 Timothy 4:12

➤ **3. Paul chose joy-** verse 18

In a sense Paul changed one letter in the word "**Disappointment**" and came to recognize his imprisonment as "**His Appointment!**" Instead of focusing on what looked like **disappointment** to the saints at Philippi, he set his mind on the things above and was enabled by the Spirit to recognize His **appointment!** Paul's Christ centered, Gospel centered mindset allowed him to turn lemons into lemonade!

God can turn obstacles into opportunities.

You can determine on a daily basis to be joyful.

Corrie Ten Boom said it this way "Look around and be distressed. Look inside and be depressed. Look at Jesus and be at rest."

"One of the surest measures of a Christian's spiritual maturity is what it takes to rob him of his Spirit-bestowed joy

Deuteronomy 6:24- your good always

God can do mighty things in you even when life slows down! It's not about being busy! Not involved with doing.

- **4. Paul was dependent on prayer and the supply of the Holy Spirit- verse 19**

How powerful is a group that gathers together for prayer? How can you measure it?

Acts 16:13

James 5:16, Mark 1:35- a great while before day, Luke 6:12- all night

Prayerless pews make Powerless pulpits

What about marriages? What about relationships in general?

Well, which of those is right? I would say that the truth is in all of those, and let me show you what I mean. It is in my judgment fair to include in one way or another the whole of all of those things which I mentioned to you in this sense. Paul believes - and here's the key thought; you need to get it - Paul believes that his current distress is only temporary. That's really what he's saying. It's temporary; that's the point. It isn't going to last. "I will be delivered from it. Maybe I'll be vindicated at my second phase of the trial. Maybe I will be released from prison. Maybe I will go to heaven to be with Jesus Christ, and therefore be delivered in the sense of ultimate salvation. Maybe my well-being will be at last the issue." I don't think he knows. But what he is saying is, "I do know this that what I'm going through now is temporary, and the future holds my deliverance, whether it's vindication in court, release from prison, well-being, or eternal heaven - I'll be delivered out of this."

➤ **5. Paul lived daily for Christ**- verse 20

Jesus was not an afterthought. Jesus wasn't about doing an act of service. Jesus was his life. It impacted everything!

- **Goals,**
- **finances,**
- **time,**
- **relationships,**
- **marriage,**
- **future,**
- **etc.**

¹² I want you to know, brothers,^[e] that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard^[f] and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. ¹⁴ And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word^[g] without fear.

¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. ¹⁶ The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰ as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.

One minute take-away