

LIFE DURING LOCKDOWN #3
“The Gospel Can’t Be Chained”
Philippians 1:12-26

Paul is reporting back to the Philippians about the progress of his ministry. They have supported Paul financially, so he is updating them on his ministry, while thanking them for their generous support. Even though Paul was in chains as a prisoner of the Roman government, the gospel was free as a bird. Significant progress was being made, the gospel was being preached and people were getting saved. The gospel is unstoppable! Even facing the possibility of execution Paul remained encouraged because of the strength he found in the gospel.

#1. THE GOSPEL EXPANDS REGARDLESS OF CIRCUMSTANCES, vv. 12-13

- A. Paul is reporting to his supporters--the Philippians, v. 12
- B. Paul’s ministry is still bearing fruit, v. 12
- C. Paul shared the gospel with the praetorians & others, v. 13
- D. Paul was in chains because of his stand for Christ, v. 13

#2. THE GOSPEL EXPANDS REGARDLESS OF IMPURE MOTIVES OF GOD’S PEOPLE, vv. 14-17

- A. Paul’s example motivated the believers at Rome to preach up a storm, v. 14
- B. They spoke the word more courageously & fearlessly v. 14
- C. Improper motives in preaching the gospel:
 - 1. Some preach Christ out of envy, v. 15
 - 2. Some preach Christ out of rivalry, v. 15
 - 3. Some preach Christ out of selfish ambition,
 - 4. Some preach Christ insincerely, v. 17
 - 5. Supposing they can stir up trouble for Paul, v. 17
 - 6. Some preach Christ out of false motives, v. 18
- D. Proper Motives in preaching the gospel:
 - 1. Preach Christ out of good will, v. 15
 - 2. Preach Christ out of love, v. 16
 - 3. Preach Christ supporting Paul’s defense of the gospel, v. 16
 - 4. Preach Christ out of true motives, v. 18

#3. THE GOSPEL’S EXPANSION IS CAUSE FOR REJOICING REGARDLESS OF THE CHARACTER OF THE PREACHERS, v. 18

- A. Paul didn’t take the attacks on him personally
- B. Paul focused on the good—Christ is preached
- C. Paul rejoiced in people being saved
- D. Paul chooses to rejoice instead of being angry

#4. THE GOSPEL’S EXPANSION REQUIRES A COURAGEOUS STAND FOR JESUS, vv. 18b-20

- A. Paul is joyful contemplating his release, v. 18b
- B. Paul is optimistic he will be freed because of your prayers, v. 19
- C. Paul is optimistic he will be freed due to the Spirit’s help, v. 19
- D. Paul needs courage to exalt Christ—by life or death, v. 20
- E. Paul doesn’t want to be ashamed of standing up for Jesus, v. 20

#5. THE GOSPEL EXPANDS OUR PERSPECTIVE OF LIFE AND DEATH. vv. 21-26

- A. Paul’s view: Living is Christ, dying is gain, v. 21
 - B. Living means Paul continues his fruitful ministry, v. 22
 - C. Paul is conflicted, vv. 22-23
 - D. Dying is Paul’s preferred option—to be with Christ, v. 23
 - E. Remaining with the Philippians is more necessary, v. 24
 - F. Paul didn’t want to take the easy way out, v. 24
 - G. Paul will continue building up the Philippians, v. 25
 - H. Paul looks forward to being with them again, v. 26
 - I. It will be mutual joy, vv. 25-26
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TODAY’S SCRIPTURE
PHILIPPIANS 1:12-26

Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. ¹³As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. ¹⁴Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly. ¹⁵It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. ¹⁶The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for

me while I am in chains. ¹⁸But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, ¹⁹for I know that through your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. ²⁰I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.

²¹For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. ²²If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! ²³I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; ²⁴but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. ²⁵Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶so that through my being with you again your joy in Christ Jesus will overflow on account of me.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

#1. What are your thoughts about the Philippians continuing their financial support of Paul even while in prison? Would most churches do this today?

#2. Discuss the opportunities Paul had to share the gospel while in Rome?

#3. In what way(s) did those who were preaching Christ with improper motives try to make trouble for Paul? (1:17)

#4. What are your observations about Paul being able to keep a positive outlook even in the face of other Christians giving him a hard time? (1:17-18)

#5. Think of some examples of preachers today that proclaim the gospel with improper motives.

#6. What effect did Paul's imprisonment have on the believers in Rome, and why? (1:14)

#7. What was the basis of Paul hope for deliverance from prison? (1:19)

#8. Paul didn't know whether he would be released or executed. What was his concern about how he would present himself when he had his day in court? (1:20)

#9. Why does Paul say it is better to die and be with Christ? (1:23)

#10. Why does Paul say it is necessary for him to continue living in the body? (1:24-26)

#11. What is your big takeaway from this teaching?