

Philippians 1:12-18 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually **turned out for the furtherance of the gospel**,<sup>13</sup> so that **it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ**,<sup>14</sup> and **most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word** without fear.

<sup>15</sup> Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: <sup>16</sup> The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; <sup>17</sup> but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. <sup>18</sup> What then? **Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached**; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

I) **turned out for the furtherance of the gospel**

A) The ultimate purposes of God

1) Our good

(a) **Romans 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

(b) **2 Thessalonians 2:13-15** But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth,<sup>14</sup> to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, brethren, stand fast and hold the traditions which you were taught, whether by word or our epistle.

2) His Glory

(a) **2 Thessalonians 1:11-12** Therefore we also pray always for you that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power,<sup>12</sup> that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(b) **Romans 14:11** For it is written: "As I live, says the Lord, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God."

(c) **Isaiah 45:23** I have sworn by Myself; The word has gone out of My mouth in righteousness, And shall not return, That to Me every knee shall bow, Every tongue shall take an oath.

II) **it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ**

A) What do people see about you??

1) What drives you will be evident. Your priorities will be plain for everyone around you to see

2) For Paul the kurios/doulos relationship, master/servant, is the predominant metaphor for his relationship to Jesus

(a) The servant takes his greatest pleasure in accomplishing the will of the master

B) Is Jesus just a name you say at mealtime or is he the master of your life

1) Paul speaks of his CHAINS- associated with prisoners and slaves

(a) Restrict the individual to a location or task

(b) For Paul his existence revolved around being useful to Christ, even if he was to be imprisoned for the kingdom

C) Side note- Paul's eternal perspective- Paul saw everything in light of eternity and was the first to write about the citizenship of the kingdom.

1) Paul saw himself as already in heaven and free so no earthly chain could hold him. He was more than free even in prison

(a) How much better would life be if we took on this same viewpoint?? How critical would our prisons, the issues of our lives be if we first held to our citizenship in Heaven??

III) **most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word**

- A) Those who watched Paul came to know the truth of the Gospel through his conviction
- 1) Who would go to prison for a lie?? Who would die for a lie??
    - (a) Paul was in prison and his message never changed. If he was preaching Jesus from a cell then that same message could result in the imprisonment of others.
    - 2) Prison is not just to be punitive, it is also to be a preventative.
      - (a) If consequences are uncomfortable enough then they will make people think about what they do
  - B) But as Christians we have a citizenship that exceeds the temporal authority of government.
    - 1) Let me be clear, we are to submit to our government as they are appointed for God's purpose
    - 2) But we also are to resist that government when it seeks to inhibit our responsibility to serve God first.
      - (a) **1 Peter 3:15** But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear;
      - (b) **Matthew 6:33** But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness...

IV) **Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached**

- A) Purpose of Paul's life was in seeing people come to know Jesus intimately
- 1) Paul did not care about the motivation of people for preaching Jesus. All that mattered was the name was spoken.
  - 2) Paul did take serious issue with false teaching within the church itself but when it came to the public all that mattered was that people heard about Jesus.
    - (a) This caused interest and made people look further.
    - (b) Opened the door for the gospel to be specifically declared and a response to be pursued
- B) How sad is it today that the Christian faith is denigrated??
- 1) Believers are vilified and maligned, beliefs are misconstrued and are made to appear without value
  - 2) Did you ever wonder why the two most divisive topics are religion and politics?? Simple, our faith will naturally guide us to a political view.
    - (a) What we believe about where life came from will lead us to see life as critical and God given or as accidental and disposable.
    - (b) Abortion is a product of the evolutionary mindset. If life is accidental, even at its beginning then there is no moral or ethical issue with ending that life.

V) Conclusion

- A) Folks, what we say, how we think, how we act, it all matters.
- 1) Either we are pointing people to Jesus or away from Him with who we are.
  - 2) Look hard at your life this morning and ask yourself which direction you would go if you could see yourself.
    - (a) Paul frequently talks about how we look in a mirror. Spend some time looking into your spiritual mirror
    - (b) Spend time in prayer with God about the image you present. And then heed the changes he desires.