

Conclusion

- A. There are two related things necessary in order that suffering becomes advancement.
 - i. Your prayers.

 - ii. God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

➤ Philippians 2:13

When we recognize as churches that the greatest need we have is God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, we will be a praying people.

- B. The way that God works in this world is not according to our expectations.

LIVE THE STORY

The Gospel is intended to be learned and lived in community. The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- What concerns might some in the church in Philippi have because they knew Paul was in prison? How does Paul address the concerns?
- Paul is joyful in prison. Why? How does Paul's thinking reveal that he too has "this mind" in him "which was also in Christ Jesus"?
- Why is the mention of the praetorian guard (palace/imperial guard) significant to mention when talking about gospel advancement?
- Why might Paul's comments about some preaching Christ out of questionable motives be significant in this letter in particular? (Is there any evidence in this letter that some of the Philippians were questioning one another's motives?)
- What two things are necessary for imprisonment or suffering to result in deliverance? (See v19.) Why are they intertwined?

Slaves of Christ: The Message of Philippians (Part 2)

Surprising God – Surprising Paul

Jerry Cisar — September 30, 2018

Text: Philippians 1:12-26

Introduction: Why is Paul Joyful? (1:12)

Marcus Bockmuehl: "Some... may have regarded Paul's imprisonment as invalidating his ministry, or at least as rendering him *passe*."

Karl Barth: "To the question of how it is with *him* an apostle must react with information as to how it is with the *Gospel*."

I. The Gospel is reaching the heart of the Empire (1:13).

A. The Palace Guard

B. Paul was right in the middle of *the hornets nest*.

C. How is the gospel conquering this capitol?

i. Through my chains...

➤ It was working: Philippians 4:22

- ii. Through the church and how it is affecting them.

II. Many others have begun preaching Christ (1:14-18c).

- A. Paul's imprisonment mobilized people to speak the gospel that had been caught up in divisions rather than in Gospel advance.

- B. John 12:24-25

- C. Paul is not focused on their motives but on their content.

III. Paul knows how God works in salvation (1:18d-26)!

- A. *Imprisonment* results in *deliverance*.

- i. How does Paul **know** that his imprisonment will turn out for him to be deliverance? (Philippians 2:5-11)

- ii. What is the way of thinking that was in Christ Jesus?

It is *as if* through the gospel Jesus is saying, "Even though **I am God**, and your idea of what God does is trump everyone with His awesome power and might, **I will not live by your idea of who God is**, but will show you who God is by humbling Myself, taking the form of a slave (as a human)... **for that is what God is truly like**. *Surprising God!*

- iii. Regarding **how** deliverance will happen, Paul is not sure. But deliverance or salvation is sure (1:20-26).

- a) Compare with 3:8-11.

- b) Note the use of some of the same *words* (Christ, gain, death) and *ideas*.

- iv. Paul determines that the need of the church supersedes everything else (1:24-25)

- a) That is a worthy motivation.

- b) For Paul ministry was about the needs of others.

- B. By today's standards, Paul's ministry would be judged unsuccessful. But when understood through the lens of the cross, Paul's ministry was a colossal success.