

## The Book of Philippians

### Lesson 3

#### Study Notes

#### The Joy of Adversity

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Text: Philippians 1:12-27.

*Introduction: In the previous verses of this chapter, we have studied the joy of \_\_\_\_\_ that Paul had with the Philippian believers. Now we will examine the joy and adversity that comes for the furtherance of the gospel. The Apostle Paul had one supreme purpose in life and that was to \_\_\_\_\_. Paul's sole goal in life was to make Christ known. As we shall see in this lesson the adversity that he faced by being in prison did not deter him from his mission but became the platform to further the gospel even in Rome. In this lesson we will consider some principles that adversity brings and helps further the gospel.*

***Philippians 1:12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;***

#### I. Adversity Promotes the Progress of the Gospel.

Here Paul states that he did not want them to think that the things that had happened to him were \_\_\_\_\_; but rather they were part of the divine providential plan of God. He viewed these things as happening to him as a positive purpose in his life for the cause of Christ.

When he described the advance of the Gospel, he used the word 'furtherance.' This is a \_\_\_\_\_ term used by engineers who would prepare a road for an advancing army by removing obstructions such as rocks and trees. Paul viewed his imprisonment as the removal of \_\_\_\_\_ to the Gospel in Rome. Paul wants the Philippian believers to be informed that his bonds led to a wider witness. He turned his prison cell into a \_\_\_\_\_ and a pulpit to preach the gospel.

The things which happened to him refers to being mobbed in Jerusalem, unjustly imprisoned, shipwrecked, chained to guards, etc. These happened to him not for \_\_\_\_\_ he had committed, but rather for the cause of Christ.

***Philippians 1:13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;***

#### II. Adversity Provides Opportunities to Witness.

Paul's bonds were in connection with Christ and His cause. Paul is imprisoned for Christ's sake; his chains are seen in \_\_\_\_\_ to Christ and his \_\_\_\_\_ for Christ.

When the apostle spoke of his bonds being manifested in all the palace, he was referring to the Praetorian Guard which was a chosen division of crack imperial troops. The imperial guard was made up of \_\_\_\_\_ appointed to keep guard over the emperor and the palace. These men had been reached with the gospel. For twenty-four hours a day he was chained to a Roman soldier. Every \_\_\_\_\_ the shift changed, so Paul had four prospects for salvation every day of the week. During his two-year

imprisonment, he would have been able to engage in almost \_\_\_\_\_ witnessing opportunities with Rome's top military personnel. We know he had fruits from his witness by what he tells later in this book.

**Philippians 4:22** *All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household.*

The gospel had penetrated Caesar's household (palace staff), later it is said that Tertullian wrote that the Roman Government became disturbed when it was discovered that \_\_\_\_\_ were in positions of authority.

**Philippians 1:14** *And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*

### III. Adversity Produces Courage in Fellow-believers.

Courage can certainly be costly; but courage is also contagious. A Christianity that always plays it safe will not accomplish anything. A ministry that costs nothing, accomplishes \_\_\_\_\_.

Bravery is contagious! Persecution can be productive! One has to wonder what would have become of the Gospel, had it not been for \_\_\_\_\_.

The brethren drew confidence from the sight of Paul carrying on with his evangelistic efforts in spite of his chains. Paul was unafraid of the Roman authorities, unintimidated by the charges lodged against him, and completely uninhibited by the presence of a soldier who might also be a \_\_\_\_\_.

**Philippians 1:15-18** *Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will: 16 The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds: 17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. 18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*

### IV. Adversity Proves the Character of Friends and Foes.

Envy and strife certainly are very low \_\_\_\_\_ for preaching the gospel. Some were jealous of Paul, they sought to undermine his influence. They were motivated by \_\_\_\_\_. They had the right message but had the wrong motive.

Some preach Christ of contention. The word "contention" means self-seeking, the desire to put one's self forward, selfish ambition. By not sincerely; means not purely, not chaste, not modest, not immaculate. They were not preaching Christ with pure motives. Their purpose was to stir up vexation for Paul and to aggravate his \_\_\_\_\_.

Some preach out of love; for Paul as well as for Christ. With their love came the understanding that what had happened to Paul was set of the \_\_\_\_\_ of the gospel.

The word "set" means appointed, placed, destined. Paul knew he was not there by some accident, but he was there by the will of God.

There are two types of preachers mentioned here; they differ in their \_\_\_\_\_: one contention rules, and the other love reigns. They differ in \_\_\_\_\_: one there is envy and strife; in the other good will. They differ in \_\_\_\_\_: one aims to add affliction to Paul; the other knows that Paul is set for the defense of the gospel. As long as Christ was preached Paul had reason to rejoice. He rejoiced because Christ was openly proclaimed; not because of the wrong motive of some, but in spite of the wrong motive.

**Philippians 1:19** For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, **20** According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

#### **V. Adversity Provokes Growth in our Lives.**

Paul is teaching us that character cannot be developed in ease and quiet. Only through experiences of trial and suffering can the soul be strengthened. Adoniram Judson, famous missionary to Burma for 40 years, is an illustration of this attitude. After fourteen years on the mission field, what did he have to show for his labors? The graves of his wife and all of his children, imprisonments and diseases so awful that once he wrote, 'If I had not felt certain that every additional trial was ordered by infinite love and mercy, I could not have survived my accumulated sufferings!' But he never thought of quitting. At the very lowest ebb of his career, he prayed that 'he might live to translate the entire Bible into the native language, and to preside over a native church of at least one hundred members.

Paul speaks of his deliverance and his preservation. He was being delivered from discouragement and spurred on to greater endeavors for Christ. By using the word "this" he means it was like tonic to his soul, saving him from discouragement, and leading him on to greater endeavors. It was through their prayers and the Spirit of Jesus Christ that he would be able to hold his head high and press forward.

The word translated "earnest expectation" means to watch with the \_\_\_\_\_ erect and outstretched, to direct attention to anything, to wait for in suspense, intense desire, persistent expectation. This word is also referenced in Romans 8:19.

**Romans 8:18** For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. **19** For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

Paul wanted his life to be a magnifying glass through whom others could more clearly see Christ in all His glory. Christ to be seen either by his life or his death; the Holy Spirit will determine which means best suits His purpose.

**Philippians 1:21** For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

#### **VI. Adversity Purifies our Motives.**

For him, to live was Christ and to die was gain. He knew what he was all about. The suffering of his present situation was not intolerable, because he saw it as a part of God's plan and his own stated purpose. Living for Paul was Christ: Christ in his thinking, Christ in his speaking, Christ in his acting, Christ in his everything.

#### **VII. Adversity Prepares Us to See Life and Death in Perspective.**

"To die is gain" The Greek aorist tense implies the \_\_\_\_\_ after death; not the \_\_\_\_\_ of dying, but the consequences of dying. Death does not take away our conscious fellowship with Christ; to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. One of the martyrs said to his persecutors as they led him to death, "You take a life from me that I cannot keep, and bestow a life upon me that I cannot lose." We gain in death in that we lose the sinful body and all that goes with it, and we gain a glorified body with all its benefits.