

January 8<sup>th</sup>, 2023- PM

Safe Harbor Baptist Church

Pastor Josh Montgomery

## **“Living for God in a difficult place”**

Philippians 1:12-30

### **Introduction:**

Philippians was written toward the close of the apostle's two-year Roman imprisonment (ca. A.D. 61)

The prisons were filthy, poorly ventilated, and were underground.[9] The prisons would be divided into outer and inner areas. The inner parts of the prison were more secure and darker. Prison would not have had individual cells. They would have had groups of prisoners chained together in different rooms. Prisons would often times be very crowded.[7] The prisons were designed to psychologically and physically torture a prisoner into confessing. Emperor Valens drafted a law which required the confession to be submitted in written form. The prisons would also be designed to strip the prisoner of dignity. There was very little rations in the prison, because friends and family were expected to supply the prisoners needs. (Wikipedia).

Even though Paul was in a disgusting, difficult, dark, demonic and dangerous place, he was still faithful to live for God.

How much more should you and I with all the blessings and convinces God has given us be dedicated to living for the LORD!

Paul is a great example to us, of how to live for God in a difficult place!

### **End of Introduction:**

- I. The *Spiritual Perspective*. Vs 12-18

*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;*

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

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

*15 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.*

### **1. The Reality of Pain.** Vs 12a

*“But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me”*

One man stated that Paul probably never had one good day physically in the ministry.

Considering II Corinthians 11:23-28 we could certainly see that Paul suffered a great deal.

Shipwrecks, beatings, imprisonment, betrayal, possibly even thrown to lions (II Tim 4)

### **2. The Revealed Purpose.** Vs 12b-14

*“have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel;”*

Vs 12- Paul states that all these things that “happened” to him was for the furtherance of the Gospel of the LORD Jesus Christ.

Furtherance- progression, advancement.

The message that Paul once tried to destroy, now he is declaring and he is suffering like he caused others to suffer for the cause of the Gospel.

Paul is saying, I have no regrets!!

The fact that there was a local church in the city of Philippi was a directly coloration to the sufferings of Paul.

He and Silas were arrested, and beaten in Acts 16 but through that the Philippian jailor was converted.

That beaten, imprisonment was for the salvation of the jailor and his family!

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

Vs 13- Paul did not allow his bonds, his chains to hinder him from continuing in the work of the ministry.

Everyone knew why Paul had been arrested and imprisoned, for the preaching of the Gospel!

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

These “saints” are a direct reference to those who had been born again under Paul’s ministry in the prison.

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

Many of the brethren found encouragement and comfort in Paul’s suffering, simply because Paul did not quit!

Paul believed in what he was preaching!!

**3. The Response to Preaching.** Vs 15-18

*15 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.*

These verses are interesting and can be a little confusing but here is what Paul is stating.

There were a group of Preachers that were preaching the Gospel with Envy, Strife and Contention.

This was directed at Paul according to Vs 16

Then there were some who were preaching the Gospel with a pure heart.

Paul didn't care, he was just glad that the Gospel was being preached.

These men that had the wrong motives were certainly not right. No doubt they will have to face that at the Judgement seat.

But Paul was not concerned with what they thought about him, he was just wanted to make sure that the Gospel message was being declared!

This is truly a man with a Spiritual Perspective!!

## II. The ***Settled Persuasion***. Vs 19-22

*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.*

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

*22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.*

### 1. The **Evident Confidence**. Vs 19

*For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,*

Paul had no doubt that God was going to take care of him though all the suffering and pain that he had to endure.

#### A. The **Supplication** of the **Saints**.

*“through your prayer”*

Pray for your Pastor and pray for one another!

#### B. The **Supply** of the **Spirit**.

*“and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,”*

The Spirit of God will give you and I exactly what we need during the difficult times!

## 2. The **Embraced Contentment**. Vs 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.*

Paul wants to get out of prison no doubt. But he is also contented with whatever God has for him.

Paul's main purpose and goal in his life is that Christ would be magnified!

Magnified- to make great.

Psalm 34:3 *O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together.*

When you magnify something, you are not making it bigger. Your view of it just becomes bigger.

How do we make Christ greater?

John 3:30 *He must increase, but I must decrease.*

We must get small, so that we will see him for who he is!

Paul was willing to do whatever in life or death to magnify Jesus Christ!

Illustration:

John Phillips tells of The logo of one missionary organization. It is a picture of an ox with a plow on one side, and an altar on the other.

Underneath the picture are the words "Ready for either" Sacrifice or Service.

## 3. The **Encouraging Consideration**. Vs 21-22

*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

One man said that if Paul was to sign your Bible he would sign Philippians 1:21 as his life verse.

To some people life is Pleasure, Possessions, Parities, People but to Paul life was Christ!

Revelation 4:11 *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.*

**Since God is the Giver of life, then we should give our lives back to him!**

Truly Paul exemplified a life dedicated and committed to God!

John Phillips said: *The reason Paul could say to die is gain, is because he said for me to live is Christ!*

*22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.*

Paul states that if he does continue to live that meant that he would have more opportunities to work for Jesus Christ, and gain rewards for the judgement seat to be given back to Christ!

Leonard Ravenhill's tombstone has this inscription:

**"Are the things you are living for, worth what Jesus died for?"**

III. The *Sincere Passion*. Vs 23-30

*23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:*

*24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*

*25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;*

*26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.*

*27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;*

*28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.*

*29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

*30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.*

**1. The Personal Desire.** Vs 23

*For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:*

Paul was ready to go!

He had been ready since the Damascus Road!

A. Notice his **Entanglement**. *“For I am in a strait betwixt two”*

B. Notice his **Explanation**. *“having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ”*

Paul mentions no mansions, no street of gold, no wall of jasper, no white throne. Heaven to Paul was being with Jesus!

Home is not a place, Home is a Person!!!

C. Notice his **Estimation**. *“which is far better”*

I promise that Heaven is far better than anything down here!

**2. The Practical Duty.** Vs 24

*Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.*

Paul gets that Heavenly desire, but then he is reminded of his earthly duty.

Heaven is really real, and I really get to go, but until then I have responsibilities. I have a calling of God and a purpose in my life to fulfill the Will of God.

**3. The Persistent Dedication.** Vs 25-26

*And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;*

*26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.*

Paul is stating in these verses that his plan and purpose is to continue to be a blessing, help and encouragement to the saints of God.

Thank God for those who invest their lives in others for the cause of the Gospel.

#### 4. The **Pastoral Direction**. Vs 27-30

*27 Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;*

Paul wanted their lives to be conducted in a manner that reflected the Gospel.

In other words, he wanted them to have a good testimony!

There are to Stand and strive together (labor together) for the Gospel cause.

*28 And in nothing terrified by your adversaries: which is to them an evident token of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that of God.*

He reminds them that not everyone is going to appreciate their stand and testimony, but just continue to do right and God will bless it!

This conflict reminds us that we are not of this world, but we are of the Glory world.

*29 For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;*

*30 Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.*

Paul warns and informs them of suffering that would come to them in this Gospel ministry.

Even though you and I do not know much of persecution of our faith, there may come a day when we face it.

II Timothy 2:11-13 *It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:*

*12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:*



*13 If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.*

On that day may God help us to keep living for God in a difficult day!