

**Series: Hebrews**

**Lesson #: 61**

**Title: Remembering the Bound and Afflicted**

**Scripture: Hebrews 13: 3**

**Date: Jan 11, 2009**

**Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Princeton, New Jersey**

**Hebrews 13: 1: Let brotherly love continue...3: Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; *and* them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.**

Remember them that are in bonds.

The immediate reference is unto our brethren who have been cast into prison for the sake of the gospel. We read of it throughout the scriptures. **Hebrews 11:36: And others had trial of *cruel* mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: 37: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; 38: (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and *in* mountains, and *in* dens and caves of the earth.**

Were it not for man's captivity in sin there would be no need of prisons in the first place. It is a testimony to the absolute depravity of man's nature that men would imprison those who bear witness of the only Redeemer who is able to set sinner's free. But the hatred men have for Christ, which has caused so many of God's saints to be cast into prison, is due to man's own captivity in sin.

The reason every believer has been put into prison or afflicted in the past is because the gospel of Christ declares men to be sin. Most of those who imprisoned the saints were religious men and women. Man loves religion. We are religious by nature. It is impossible to find a place where men do not worship some kind of god. But the difference between all religion and the truth is that the TRUE AND LIVING GOD RECEIVES ALL THE GLORY IN THE SALVATION OF HIS PEOPLE.

**Illustration:** A friend asked me recently what is the difference between my gospel and the rest of the world. Simply put: My gospel declares that salvation is of the Lord. Therefore, all whom my God saves contribute absolutely nothing to their salvation because they are nothing but sin.

The Lord Jesus Christ came to this earth to deliver those given to him by the Father out of the prison of sin and death into his presence in final glory. The whole work is his and he receives all the glory for it.

The Lord said that in his first recorded sermon, **Luke 4: 18: The Spirit of the Lord *is* upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to**

**heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19: To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.**

And how was Christ our Deliverer treated when he came preaching this gospel? When the hour was come that the Lord should lay down his life, the Lord Jesus Christ took the restraints off the religious leaders of the day, allowing them to vent the wrath of their heart and we read: **John 18: 12: Then the band and the captain and officers of the Jews took Jesus, and bound him.**

But being religious they justified themselves for doing so. This shows us what we are by nature. We see the self-justifying, self-righteous blindness from which Christ saves his people in the fact that while sinners refuse to hear one portion of God's word, we will latch on to another portion of God's work to justify our rejection of Christ.

That is what happened with our Lord. He told his apostles before he went to the cross, **John 15: 25: But *this cometh to pass*, that the word might be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause.** They had the word of God which said that men would crucify Christ without a cause.

Yet, man used the word of God to justify our rejection of the Prince of Life. Listen to this **John 19: 4: Pilate therefore went forth again, and saith unto them, Behold, I bring him forth to you, that ye may know that I find no fault in him. 5: Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of thorns, and the purple robe. And *Pilate* saith unto them, Behold the man! 6: When the chief priests therefore and officers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify *him*, crucify *him*. Pilate saith unto them, Take ye him, and crucify *him*: for I find no fault in him. 7: The Jews answered him, We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.**

The reason you and I spent so many years rejecting Christ is because we were too righteous to need him. We had a law. The very law he gave us. And by that law, when we declared ourselves righteous...we were really saying, "He ought to die."

Christ was put into prison and afflicted because the chief priests and the religious rulers would sooner see the Son of God die than to confess that they were sin and in no way could save themselves. And for the same reason you and I rejected him, using his own word to justify our rejection.

The Lord said, **John 15: 22 If I had not come and spoken unto them, they had not had sin: but now they have no cloke for their sin...24: If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father.**

Any of us who he has delivered from the prison knows how strong the bars were from which he freed us.

The Lord Jesus Christ, bore the very sin that I am in his own body on the tree and with his own life-blood he purchased me from the law and from death.

**1 Corinthians 15: 56: The sting of death is sin;**

- The wages I earned by my sin was death.

**and the strength of sin is the law.**

- God my Savior gave a law which said of me, “He indeed has worked hard and has every right to the wages he alone has earned for himself—death.”
- The law said of me, “He is exceedingly sinful.” The soul that sinneth it must die.

But in my spiritual death, I was deaf to what the law said and blind to my own sin, so that I thought the law was saying, “He is righteous and deserves to live.” I was legally bound in the prison of sin and death and did not even know it.

- If you wanted to talk about the Jesus who is nothing more than a good example of morality, I would accept him.
- If you wanted to talk about the Jesus who would give me whatever help I needed to make up for places where I lacked a little, I would accept him.”
- But anyone who came around speaking about THE Christ, who is indeed the Son of God.
- Who alone is the Life whereby his people are regenerated.
- Who alone is the Light whereby he gives sight to the blind and hearing to the deaf
- Who by himself established the law of God for his people
- Who by himself justifies his people from all things from which we could not be justified by the law of Moses.
- Who by himself perfected forever those who the Spirit of God separates by washing of regeneration and brings irresistibly to faith in Christ
- Who alone receives ALL the glory in salvation
- FOR THE WORK WHICH HE ALONE IS ABLE TO PERFORM

Then that Christ infringed too much upon the rights that I thought belonged to me.

- That Christ jeopardized the profession of faith that I myself had made
- That Christ receives the glory for being even the Wisdom that I thought I had attained when I, by searching, came to the doctrines of grace!
- Therefore I made sure to tell all who preached that Jesus that, “I have a law!”

**1 Corinthians 15: 57: But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.**

**Romans 6:23: For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

But THE Jesus—who is the Son of God my Savior—wouldn't take no for an answer. He had paid the price of his own blood. He had delivered me from the law by obeying the law on my behalf and by putting away my sin forever. So he would not take no for answer.

He led this captive, captive. He set me free from the law of sin and death. Now I'm his.

So the Lord Jesus warned us with these words, **John 15: 18: If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before *it hated* you.** (You were once of this world, so ye know. But now are ye delivered.) **19: If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you....**

The apostle Paul was put in prison for preaching Christ. But listen to what he said to Timothy. **2 Timothy 1: 7: For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. 8: Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God; 9: Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, 10: But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel: 11: Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles. 12: For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.**

So he says to us here in Hebrews: **3: Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; *and* them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.**

**Do unto others as you would have them do unto you.**

Suffer with them as though you were the one in chains yourself, as though the pain inflicted on those who are mistreated was done in your own bodies.

**Remember:** in prayer, in providing for their necessities, in visiting them. In other words, treat them like you would treat a brother or sister for whom Christ died.

I am paraphrasing John Owen: While some brethren are tried by being in bonds, the brethren who are free are tried as to the sincerity of their faith by the opportunity we have to provide for our brethren.

This was one of those things the Lord Jesus said we do unto him when we do it to our brethren. **Matthew 25:36: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.**

The rule of faith, the rule of Christ by which our Savior leads us is this: "Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ" Gal 6: 2.

Let me close with an 2 examples given by the apostle Paul.

**2 Timothy 1:16: The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain: 17: But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found *me*. 18: The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day: and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.**

**Philippians 4:14: Notwithstanding ye have well done, that ye did communicate with my affliction. 15: Now ye Philippians know also, that in the beginning of the gospel, when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. 16: For even in Thessalonica ye sent once and again unto my necessity. 17: Not because I desire a gift: but I desire fruit that may abound to your account. 18: But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things *which were sent* from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God. 19: But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.**

"Blest be the tie that binds  
Our hearts in Christian love;  
The fellowship of kindred minds  
Is like to that above.  
We share our mutual woes,  
Our mutual burdens bear,  
And often for each other flows  
The sympathizing tear."

"Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (**#Ro 12:15**).