



**Grace Life Church**  
*of Dallas*

The doctrines of grace, the life of the Spirit, to the glory of God

# Philippians 1:12-18

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# Philippians 1:12-18

*12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. 14 And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*

# Philippians 1:12-18

*15 Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. 16 The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. 17 The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.*

# God is Sovereign

Isn't it amazing that we can affirm God's sovereignty in our salvation, and then forget His sovereignty in our daily lives/trials?

Evidences we are not believing in God's sovereignty: Worry, Fear, Doubt, Self-pity, Lack of Joy

**Isaiah 46:9-10** *for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times things not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will accomplish all my purpose'*

**Proverbs 19:21** *Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.*

**Proverbs 16:9** *The heart of man plans his way, but the LORD establishes his steps*

# God is Sovereign

God is sovereign over all things in the universe. From the smallest details to the greatest.

- **Proverbs 16:33** *The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.*
- **Proverbs 21:1** *The king's heart is a stream of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He will.*
- **Isaiah 45:7** *I form light and create darkness, I make well-being and create calamity, I am the LORD, who does all these things.*

God is in control and sovereign over all things, including every event in your life. (Trials, Tribulations, Suffering)

# God is Sovereign

Why do we not believe (or live as though we believe) God is sovereign over our own personal lives (circumstances)?

- We see in scripture where it says God is sovereign
- We see in scripture where it says God is good and working all things together for good (Nahum 1:7, Romans 8:28)
- Then we look at our lives and they seem out of control, hopeless and it appears it couldn't possibly work out for good
  - We believe circumstance/feelings over truth (Bible)
  - The issue is we are not seeing properly (biblically)

We must fight to see (eyes of heart) and believe and we must want what God wants (Glory/furthering of the gospel)

**Evidence that these are happening in your life-Joy in all things**

*12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel*

What has happened to Paul?

- Paul is in prison (v7) (Acts 28)
- Church is concerned for his welfare (sent Epaphroditus)

Take note that Paul's update on his life (suffering/imprisonment) focuses on the two most important things to Paul (and the church)

- Gospel & the Church
- In other words, Paul sees his life through the lens of “How does it impact the gospel?” & “How does it impact the church?”
- Paul is eternally minded & glory of God focused
- How do we view our suffering?

*12 I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel*

Paul wants them to know that his circumstances (imprisonment) has really served to advance the gospel:

- Why does he need to write this?
- Because his circumstance (imprisonment), although at the surface seems like a hindrance to the gospel, it has really served to advance the gospel
- Can you think of any other circumstances in the bible that had the appearance of being a hindrance to the gospel, but was really advancing the gospel?
- **Matthew 16:21-23** *From that time Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. 22And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, “Far be it from You, Lord! This shall never happen to You.” 23But He turned and said to Peter, “Get behind Me, Satan! You are a hindrance to Me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”*
- We must make sure (like Paul) that our mind is on the things of God (furthering gospel/church) & not the things of man (comforts/conveniences)



# How has Paul's imprisonment advanced the gospel?

*V13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ*

- Paul is personally suffering/imprisoned but what is he doing?  
Evangelizing the guards
- Showing his mind is not on self but the glory of God (furthering of gospel/building up church)
- We struggle to share gospel & build up the church in good times, let alone when we are struggling/suffering
- Paul has seen a God worthy to give up everything for (give up with joy). He has seen the God of the gospel of Jesus Christ
- **Acts 20:24** *But I do not account my life of any value nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course and the ministry that I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God* (Battle to see)
- Trials and suffering in our lives reveal where our joy is (Jesus, gospel, church, faith or comfort, convenience, self)

# Furthering the gospel and encouraging the church

Paul's imprisonment was not only used to further the gospel but also to strengthen the body (church):

- *V14 And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear*
- Those around Paul saw God working sovereignly through imprisonment to further the gospel (guards), and they saw Paul's joyful, faith-filled hope in suffering and they were strengthened
- *Confident in the Lord*: They see Paul's faith/joy and believe God is working together for good (If God can use this in Paul's life, He can work in my struggles/suffering as well)
  - Does your faith and joy in suffering encourage others to find confidence in the Lord?
  - That's one reason God sovereignly puts us in trials/suffering (To learn God's comfort so we can comfort others with God's comfort 2 Cor 1)

# Advancing the gospel, encouraging the body, filled with joy in the midst of suffering

Paul's imprisonment has:

- Advanced the gospel (He preached the gospel)
  - Gospel Advanced through v15-17
  - Even in self-ambition & impure motives God can work to advance the gospel (hope)
- Encouraged the body (confidence/boldness)
- Has not robbed Paul of his joy in Christ

*V18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ I proclaimed, and in that I rejoice*

- Paul is not indifferent to impure motives in preaching the gospel
- Paul is confident in his God's sovereignty and ability to use evil for good (glory)
- Paul won't be robbed of Joy in Christ (Paul knows how it all ends)
- Have your circumstances robbed you of your joy?