

Philippians 1:12-26

Paul gives insight into his circumstances in three areas:

1 – His Chains (13-14)

2 – His Critics (15-18)

3 – His Crisis (19-26)

Verse 12

Now I want you to know brethren - Paul now introduces a new and important subject: his present circumstances.

For the greater progress of the gospel – Paul views his present circumstances as God’s design for him to better further the gospel.

In Christ – Paul did not view his bondage because of men but because of his Savior.

“The same God who used Moses’ rod, Gideon’s pitchers, and David’s sling, used Paul’s chains.”

Warren Wiersbe

Paul’s Chains

Verses 13-14

Has become well known:

1 – *Throughout the whole praetorian guard.* These were Roman soldiers who were handpicked and had an elite status.

2 – *To everyone else.* This would include unsaved Jews and Gentiles and also Paul’s fellow Christians.

Courage to speak the word of God without fear - Paul’s testimony in chains inspired the Roman believers to be more outspoken in sharing the gospel. God often uses our “chains” as a means to encourage others in their faith.

Four reasons believers suffer:

1 – Because they have not dealt with sin in their lives (1 Cor. 11:31-32).

2 – Because God wants them to gain spiritual experience (Rom. 5:3-5).

3 – Because God want to prevent sin in their lives (2 Cor. 12:7-9).

4 – To increase their effective Christian testimony (Phil. 1:12-14)

Paul’s Critics (15-18)

Paul gives two motivations that cause people to preach Christ:

1 – *From envy and strife out of selfish ambition with impure motives.*

2 – *From good will out of love.*

I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice – Paul believed that it was better for people with impure motives to preach Christ than they not preach Him at all.

“The power of the gospel, therefore, does not depend on the character of the preacher.”

Gerald Hawthorne

Paul understood that circumstances are God given opportunities for spreading the gospel.

We need to learn to rejoice at what God *is doing* and *will do* instead of complaining about what God *did not do*.

Paul’s Crisis (19-26)

Verse 19

This shall turn out for my deliverance –

-Through your prayers

-Through the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ

(John 16:7-15)

Verses 20-21

Christ shall be exalted in my body –

By life

By death

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

Verses 22-24

The dilemma:

Paul desired to be with Christ yet he also understood the importance of his earthly ministry.

To live on = Fruitful labor for Paul and spiritual progress and joy for the Philippians.

To depart = To be with Christ.

Verses 25-26

Paul’s assurance – *I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith.*

Paul’s coming to them is the immediate reason for joy but the ultimate reason for their joy is their deepening relationship with Christ.