**That Christ is Proclaimed**

[**Philippians 1:12-18A**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Philippians%201%3A12-18&version=ESV)

Main theme:

1. God’s sovereign work to preach the gospel even through our trials and sufferings. This is a profound mystery to human eyes. God can use even evils to accomplish his work of salvation. Joseph in Genesis says to his brothers “As for **you**, **you** **me**ant evil against **me**, but God **me**ant it for good, **to** bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are **to**day.” (Genesis 50:20)
2. Paul’s unselfish and Jesus-centered mindset in preaching Christ and his passion to preach the gospel. Jesus-centered mindset is important. However, passion to preach the gospel is also important. Without zeal Jesus-centered mindset can end in only desires.

**Key Verse 18: “ What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.”**

1. **Look at verses 12-13. What happened to Paul? (**[**Acts 21:27-34, 28:16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2021%3A27-34%2C%2028%3A16&version=ESV)**) What surprising impact did Paul’s imprisonment have? How might Paul’s imprisonment have served to advance the gospel? In what way does this show how God may use our trials or life detours to advance the gospel?**
2. **Look at verses 12-13**

**“**12I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, 13so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.”

1. **What happened to Paul? (**[**Acts 21:27-34, 28:16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2021%3A27-34%2C%2028%3A16&version=ESV)**)**

**(**[**Acts 21:27-34, 28:16**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2021%3A27-34%2C%2028%3A16&version=ESV)**)** **27When the seven days were almost completed, the Jews from Asia, seeing him in the temple, stirred up the whole crowd and laid hands on him, 28crying out, “Men of Israel, help! This is the man who is teaching everyone everywhere against the people and the law and this place. Moreover, he even brought Greeks into the temple and has defiled this holy place.” 29For they had previously seen Trophimus the Ephesian with him in the city, and they supposed that Paul had brought him into the temple. 30Then all the city was stirred up, and the people ran together. They seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple, and at once the gates were shut. 31And as they were seeking to kill him, word came to the tribune of the cohort that all Jerusalem was in confusion. 32He at once took soldiers and centurions and ran down to them. And when they saw the tribune and the soldiers, they stopped beating Paul. 33Then the tribune came up and arrested him and ordered him to be bound with two chains. He inquired who he was and what he had done. 34Some in the crowd were shouting one thing, some another. And as he could not learn the facts because of the uproar, he ordered him to be brought into the barracks.”**

**Acts 28:16 “And when we came into Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with the soldier who guarded him.”**

The persecution against Paul in Jerusalem happened led him to be arrested. Eventually Paul was transferred to Rome for his trial. In Rome, he stayed in house arrest.

Paul could have thought negatively in his imprisonment. He might have thought “Maybe I preached too much. I should do it at least in the manner that I should not alarm my enemies too much.” Outwardly his imprisonment was hinderance. But God used it to advance the gospel.

We should never be discouraged when we face trials and hardship in preaching the gospel. God can use it for greater opportunity to advance the gospel. For example, during pandemic many might have thought the work of God would be hindered much. But now through Zoom we can reach out to everyone globally, and the gospel was advanced so much. Another example is internet.

Internet can bring negative things. But God can use the internet to advance gospel. Through internet the gospel can reach even Muslim nations without hinderance. They can just go to YouTube and listen to the gospel message. That was why Paul wanted Philippians brothers to know God’s sovereign work by saying, “I want YOU to KNOW, brothers…” (v.12).

Still another example where God uses our trials and sufferings to advance the gospel. A woman suffering from Cerebral Palsy (whose name was Song-Myung-Hee) used by God to advance the gospel so much through her faith. Her trail was severe. But her faith became strong through such tribulation, and it was used to advance the gospel.

When we keep our faith and preach the gospel no matter what happens, eventually even our trials and tribulations can be used by God to advance the gospel greatly. Persecution from our enemies can be used by God to advance the gospel as long as we keep our faith in God.

Our sufferings may come from our unchanged bible students or our children. Although we want smooth life, we go through difficulties and challenges. However, even during trails and sufferings we should keep up praying by faith. The Lord can change anyone who are suffering from unbelief and incurable diseases. Suffering in a sense is not only the will of God but also the Lord’s disguised blessing. Through suffering we are sanctified and grow to be like Christ who suffered for our sins.

1. **What surprising impact did Paul’s imprisonment have?**

Surprisingly, it served to advance the gospel.

1. **How might Paul’s imprisonment have served to advance the gospel?**

Imperial guards and others began to know he was imprisoned for Christ. He was different from other criminals. This can cause the curiosity of other guards. They may want to know the cause of Paul’s suffering. Whenever they stand guarding Paul he could speak to them and get opportunity to preach the gospel. It was imperial guard’s duty to stay with Paul. It was a good chance for Paul to preach.

1. **In what way does this show how God may use our trials or life detours to advance the gospel?**

The sovereign Lord can use our sufferings to advance the gospel. When we are suffering for the gospel, we may unknowingly advance the gospel beyond our own understanding.

1. **V14. What is another way that God used Paul’s imprisonment for good? How did Paul’s imprisonment cause the others to speak the word much more boldly, without fear? (**[**Acts 28:30-31**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2028%3A30-31&version=ESV)**) How can we speak the word boldly and without fear?**
   1. **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.”**
   2. **What is another way that God used Paul’s imprisonment for good?**

Paul indirectly encouraged other gospel workers. Other servants’ suffering can encourage us to serve the gospel more powerfully without fear. We feel we are not lonely but we are other members of Christ who share our sufferings. We can be comforted.

“Most of the brothers” in v.14 are those who are with Paul and others. Interestingly, through Paul’s suffering most of the brothers could see the power of the gospel. They could see the gospel has such power to overcome fear from the example of Paul.

Verse 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.”)** shows in the past, brothers preached the gospel out of fear. They had less confident in the Lord. But now they preached it without fear. They have become confident in the Lord. In the past, maybe only Paul had confidence in the Lord and without fear. But now mysteriously many brothers have confidence in the Lord and were not fearful. They became active in preaching the gospel. This is an amazing work of God.

When believers and see a person who is truly committed to Christ and suffer for Christ they are encouraged. That was why martyrs advanced the gospel more. That was one of the reasons why Romans stopped killing Christians. Killing Christians was not effective to subdue the gospel. Mysteriously many martyrs became seed for more advanced gospel.

Dr. Abraham Kim was both a professor in Korean Military Academy and director of Dong-Gye chapter. One day he fell down out of exhaustion after delivering the Sunday worship message. His martyr’s spirit inspired many members of the chapter to be fully active in advancing the gospel.

A Survey from second gen shepherds/ missionaries shows a good example too. “What encourages you to participate in campus pioneering the most?” The most popular answer was “the examples of their parents.”

* 1. **How did Paul’s imprisonment cause the others to speak the word much more boldly, without fear? (**[**Acts 28:30-31**](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Acts%2028%3A30-31&version=ESV)**)**

Paul became a good example that the Lord can use suffering such as house arrest or imprisonment to advance the gospel. Paul did not need to worry about his safety or provision. It was given by Roman government.

* 1. **How can we speak the word boldly and without fear?**

By looking at example of others who suffer to preach the gospel. Seeing our difficult circumstances as God-given opportunity to advance the gospel.

1. **V15-18. What are some of the motivations people have for proclaiming the gospel? What does Paul conclude about these different motivations? Why does Paul rejoice? Why is it important that Christ is proclaimed?**
   1. **V15-18.**

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

* 1. **What are some of the motivations people have for proclaiming the gospel?**

Envy & rivalry or good will. Good intention and evil intention. Some of Paul’s enemies rejoiced when they heard Paul was imprisoned. Some of denominations preach the gospel out of envy of other denominations.

Those who preach the gospel out of good will for Paul do out of love.

Those who preach the gospel out of envy and rivalry do so out of “selfish ambition.” They thought they could afflict Paul in his imprisonment. One example of “selfish ambition” can be “powerful or influential position” among their churches or ministries.

The good Christians should preach the gospel out of love and good will. If true Christians are quiet and not preach the gospel diligently other cult members can preach the wrong things. Cult means those who do not preach Christ as God but something else or some else.

But still preaching the gospel out of envy, rivalry, and selfish ambition and it still works shows the gospel has power itself.

* 1. **What does Paul conclude about these different motivations?**

They do not matter.

* 1. **Why does Paul rejoice?**

Because Christ is preached. God is so pleased when Christ is preached. The sound of preaching the gospel/Christ is such pleasing sound to God.

* 1. **Why is it important that Christ is proclaimed?**

He is the only Savior. So preaching Christ has ultimate value. To Paul as long as Christ is preached nothing matters. Christ has power to save.

1. **Application: If you were imprisoned unjustly how might you feel, and what would you desire most while in prison? How do you think Paul was able to have such a positive outlook on his imprisonment? How might we be able to have this kind of focus and outlook even when trials and tribulations happen in our lives? What was Paul's focus and concern while he was imprisoned?**
   1. **Application: If you were imprisoned unjustly how might you feel, and what would you desire most while in prison?**

Feel bad and can be bitter against God. And Just want to get out of the prison and avoid suffering as fast as possible.

* 1. **How do you think Paul was able to have such a positive outlook on his imprisonment?**

Because his goal was preaching Christ. He did not concern himself but Christ.

* 1. **How might we be able to have this kind of focus and outlook even when trials and tribulations happen in our lives?**

By meditating the word of God day and night. And the word of God can open our eyes to see God’s sovereign will and he can use our sufferings and difficult situation to advance the gospel.

* 1. **What was Paul's focus and concern while he was imprisoned?**

To preach the gospel and defend it.

1. **What did you learn from today’s passage or what stuck out to you?**

Suffering for Christ encourages others, and I can be a blessing when I suffer for Christ. When Christians live comfortable life other true Christians are not encouraged. But when we suffer for Christ others are encouraged. In this fall semester we should preach the Christ out of good will and love diligently.