

Winter Park Christian Church: Pastor Samuel Ruiz
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The Progress of the Gospel

April 8th & 9th, 2017

Philippians 1:12-14

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

Paul did not see himself as a captive man who had no freedom, on the contrary, those around Paul were captive to hearing the gospel about Jesus. It was necessary for these men to hear the gospel because Paul had, by the grace of God, the freedom that these men needed in their own life.

The circumstances didn't matter; Paul was committed to one thing only – proclaiming Jesus and the gospel with those that God put in his life.

Paul testifies to the progress of the Gospel.

- ❖ The progress of the Gospel through Paul's imprisonment is an encouragement to the church.
 - Paul is always willing to share what God is doing in his life to encourage others.
 - ◆ Paul is very encouraged by the situation that he is facing, and he is encouraging his readers to see that God is bringing people to His kingdom and fulfilling His purpose. *Philippians 1:6*
Psalm 138:8 “The Lord will fulfill His purpose for me; Your steadfast love, O Lord, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of Your hands.”
 - ◆ The ways in which the enemy intends to bring defeat, God, in his sovereign power, works out to bring victory.
- ❖ The progress of the Gospel through Paul's imprisonment is a teaching opportunity.
 - Often, God's ways are a mystery and He works in ways that we don't expect.
 - ◆ The purpose of the Lord will always encounter opposition.
Ephesians 6:12 “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.”
 - ◆ We as Christians will always face challenges.
2 Timothy 3:10-12 “You, however, have followed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions and sufferings that happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, and at Lystra – which persecutions I endured; yet from them all the Lord rescued me. Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted,”
 - ◆ God's ways are higher than our ways.

Isaiah 55:8-9 “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”

- ◆ As God is using us to proclaim His name and present the ministry of reconciliation, He is also shaping us to the image of His Son Jesus Christ.

In God’s Sovereignty, Paul’s imprisonment became an opportunity for the progress of the Gospel.

- ❖ Paul impresses on the church that, in God’s sovereignty, what seems to be a challenge or even defeat is the way of God to make His kingdom known.
 - ◆ The Word of God cannot be imprisoned and His kingdom cannot be stopped.
 - ◆ The purpose of the Lord cannot be frustrated.
 - ◆ God, in His sovereignty, is too wise to make a mistake regarding where or how He sends us.
 - ◆ From the moment Paul was arrested in Jerusalem, to the many years he spent imprisoned in Caesarea and now in Rome, everything seems like a defeat to the progress of the Gospel, but “[It] has really served to advance the Gospel”!

Philippians 1:13 “so that [the gospel] has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.”

Acts 28:30-31 “[Paul] lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.”

Endnotes:

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