

Ministry of The Holy Spirit
Prison Letters
Philippians 1:15-30

Last time...the start of the Apostle Paul's 4th prison letter, the Epistle to the Philippians

- a joyful pouring out of Christian love and gratitude
 - the Sovereign, invisible God working in the circumstances in the lives of His people
- v12-14

This time...following Jesus in the face of trouble and persecution

- the passionate core of a truly devoted follower of Jesus Christ as the Apostle Paul lays bare his heart
- an important reminder

v15-17 Paul's presence in Rome and how he is conducting his life in prison before believers and unbelievers alike is working out for the furtherance of the Gospel of Grace, not the restriction of the Gospel as the devil had attempted

2 Tim 2:9 (the gospel) Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

Many believers are being emboldened to preach the Gospel without fear...they are not being silenced by the trouble and persecution that comes with the Gospel

Some are preaching Christ with

- envy and strife
- contention
- not sincerely/honestly...but with a personal agenda
- adding to Paul's affliction
 - taking "competitive" advantage of Paul's circumstances for their gain
 - paying "lip service" to the Apostle and the "his" doctrine

Who did this, who does this?

- a. Judaizers and other preachers of the "Jesus Plus" gospel, a false gospel

Acts 15:1-2, 5

The Apostle's doctrine

Eph 2:8-9

Rom 10:4

1 Cor 1:29-31 That no flesh should glory in his presence.

But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of

God is made unto us wisdom, and

righteousness, and sanctification, and

redemption: That, according as it is written,

He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

does not line up with their religious, self-righteous
convictions/opinions/traditions

- b. Pastors/shepherds building their own “brand” or “empire” in the name of Jesus

Acts 20:27-32

- c. “Label makers” who evangelize other Christians
Calvinism vs Arminianism

- d. Modern day denominations that, by in-fighting on pet doctrines, have divided and destroyed the unity of the Body of Christ

Ever since the devil came to church, he has sought to dominate and divide, with the intent to destroy

Church history is rife with fruit of the flesh, resulting in divisions
Not on Jesus Christ, but on lesser doctrines or methods

1 Cor 3:3 For ye are yet carnal: for whereas *there is* among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?

“I am a ____.”

- Methodist
- Lutheran
- Presbyterian
- Baptist
- Anglican
- Roman Catholic
- Church of Christ
- which kind of all of those?

Some are preaching Jesus with

- good will...for the Lord and others vs themselves
- in love...of the Lord and others before Self
- “have Paul’s back” in his eagerness to defend the Gospel before Caesar

Paul’s appeal/defense of the Gospel was the result of his uncompromising hope in the promise of God – resurrection from the dead, for which he was made a minister with a mission that landed him in jail:

Acts 26:18 To open their eyes, and to turn *them* from darkness to light, and *from* the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

Who did this, who does this?

Bible believing followers of Jesus Christ who worship the Lord in Spirit and in truth (John 4:23-24)

Paul's reaction to this discord and multiplicity of motives is...interesting

v18 No matter who is preaching Christ, Him crucified and risen,
No matter their motive, whether
pretense, a cloaked selfish motive or an outward show/façade
or
in truth, the Word of God being the Final Authority in all doctrinal matters
Christ is preached and Paul rejoices

That's interesting
That is NOT a carnal response, for sure
That is setting Self aside for the glory of Jesus Christ, keeping Jesus foremost

This is in keeping with what Jesus taught
Luke 9:49-50 And John answered and said, Master, we saw one casting
out devils in thy name; and we forbid him, because he
followeth not with us. And Jesus said unto him, *Forbid him
not: for he that is not against us is for us.*
Luke 11:23 *He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth
not with me scattereth.*

This is in keeping with the Apostle's doctrine thru Paul
Allowing the Head of the Body to do what He alone is qualified to do –
judge a person's heart and motive and convictions
Rom 14:1-6

This is Paul's heart
Acts 26:29 And Paul said, I would to God, that not only thou, but also
all that hear me this day, were both almost, and altogether
such as I am, except these bonds.

Within the Body of Christ, the Church, what are we to do with this instruction to rejoice?
If the right Christ is preached but the Gospel is wrong
(salvation by works/self-righteousness), rebuke and correct it

The substance of who we are ("in Christ") is totally dependent upon the
grace of God.
It is NOT our righteousness (Is 64:6) but Christ's righteousness that
affects our reconciliation with the Holy God.

Gal 1:6-10 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called
you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is
not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would
pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel

from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any *man* preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ.

Gal 2:16 Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ (Heb 12:2), even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

Gal 2:21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness *come* by the law (works, self-righteousness), then Christ is dead in vain.

If a pastor is preaching Christ while building his self-centered brand,
If a denominational believer is preaching Christ **and** their pet doctrine/division,
If a “label maker” is preaching Christ while justifying/pushing his adopted label,
rejoice!

Do not contend with empire builders or denominational dividers or label makers
about things that, at the end of the day, do not matter
Leave them and those things to the Head of the Body and rejoice Christ is
preached

Just as we should not get into arguments with unbelievers, we should not get into
“sword fights” with other believers
Arguments and sword fights are fruitful in the works of the flesh but are rarely
fruitful with the spiritual fruit that is pleasing to the Father

v19-20 All this emboldened preaching of Christ, whether in pretense or in truth,
All this speaking the Word without fear, which will go forth and not return void,
coupled with prayer and the Spirit of Christ,
will work toward Paul’s release from prison

He expects and hopes that he will not at all be ashamed by his bold appeal to Caesar.
He is not ashamed of the Gospel, the power of God unto salvation for those who believe,
the Gospel of Grace he has boldly preached in every place the Lord has sent him.
Whether his appeal to Caesar ends in life (being set free) or death (executed as an enemy
of the State), Jesus Christ will be magnified in his person

Such was the heart and faith of the Servant of God

Ps 40:16 Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as
love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified.

At all times, even in times of trouble

All Paul seeks is that His Lord be magnified, whether he personally lives or dies.

He has some practical experience in this level of love and devotion and faith

Luke 23:34 heard during 3 years in Arabia with risen Lord

Acts 7:55-60

Rom 14:7-9

And now, facing possible execution for Jesus Christ and the Gospel, he is standing on it!

v21 The bottom line, the very core, of this devoted follower of Jesus Christ facing a
life-or-death situation: This is a “win win” deal! I cannot lose, no matter what

To live is Christ...as he taught in word and deed

Gal 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but
Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the
flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me,
and gave himself for me.

To die is gain...as he taught in word and deed

2 Cor 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house of *this* tabernacle
were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not
made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

2 Cor 5:8 We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent
from the body, and to be present with the Lord.

Acts 21:10-14

v22-24 If I live, I will unashamedly continue to abide in the True Vine and bear more fruit
pleasing to the Father, but...idk what I want (as if it were even up to me, which it
is not seeing that I am purchased with the blood of God and I am not my own).

I have mixed emotions about this whole thing, about what is going to happen to me.

On the one hand, I desire to depart, to move out of these temporary living quarters,
to get off this God-cursed planet ruled by demons and tyrants and
to be with my Lord and Savior, which is the very best thing for me.

2 Cor 12:4 How that he was caught up into paradise (third heaven),
and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a
man to utter.

But on the other hand, for me to live and remain in this world is best for you
(the mind of Christ).

Like his well-intentioned friends, Paul proclaimed, “The will of the Lord be done.”

v25-26 Paul is convinced that he will be freed, that he will live and remain on earth for the good of others,
i.e. the advancement/strengthening of their joy and faith in Jesus Christ

v27 But, regardless of what does happen,

- life or death...which is in God's hands, not Caesar's, because Jesus is Lord and Caesar is not
- comes to them again or he doesn't...God's will be done

Paul reminds the Philippian church continue a manner of living that is worthy of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

- standing fast...firm, unmovable, knowing that they know what they know
- in one spirit...in one accord with each other and God, no carnal divisions
- with one mind...the mind of Christ
- striving together...rowing the same direction, not striving against each other
- for the faith...without which it is impossible to please God, the Author and Finisher of faith
- of the gospel...the Gospel of Grace, the only Good News in the world

Ryrie: The Apostle Paul entered heaven to the cheers of those he martyred because that is how the Gospel works.

As the Holy Spirit thru Paul has taught

1 Cor 16:13-14 Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong.
Let all your things be done with charity.

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

v28 And with boldness

- not being obnoxious or arrogant, but frank and matter-of-fact-as-if-everyone-knows-it-to-be-true
- speaking the Word without fear, with gentleness and meekness
- that Christ will be magnified, whether you live or die for following Him

do not fear your adversaries

As Jesus taught

Matt 10:28 *And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*

As the Holy Spirit thru Paul taught

1 Cor 16:9 For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and *there are* many adversaries.

2 Tim 1:7

Hostility toward Jesus Christ and the Gospel of Grace is an indication of

- perdition/ruin/destruction to the enemies of the cross
- salvation of God to the followers of Jesus Christ

v29-30 Speaking directly to the followers of Jesus Christ living in perilous times, unto you it is given...from God Himself, the Giver of every good and perfect gift in the behalf of Christ...for the glory and honor of Jesus Christ not only to believe on Him...trust Him, lean on Him, love Him, obey Him but also to suffer for His sake...as He suffered for ours

As Jesus taught

- Matt 5:10-12 *Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you.*
- Matt 10:24-25 *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his lord. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?*
- John 15:20 *Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also.*
- John 16:33 *These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.*

As the Holy Spirit has taught

- Acts 5:41-42 *And they departed from the presence of the council, rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ.*
- Acts 14:22 *(after being stoned and left for dead) Confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.*
- Rom 8:18 *For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*
- Rom 8:28

- Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.
- 2 Cor 4:17-18 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.
- Heb 11:24-27 By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible.
- 2 Thes 1:4-5 So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure: *Which is* a manifest token of the righteous judgment of God, that ye may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which ye also suffer:
- James 1:12 Blessed *is* the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him.
- 2 Tim 4:6-8 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

As it is still seen to this day in the world

Nigerian Christians attacked by Radical Islamist groups

- unspeakable crimes against Christian women on a daily basis
- 8,000 Christians massacred in 2023
- 62,000 Christian's massacred since 2000
- 8,400 Christian's abducted between 2022-2023
- 18,000 churches attacked

Are European Christians next?

Are American Christians next?

having the same conflict which you saw in me...persecution in Philippi, where he was publicly humiliated and beaten and then unjustly jailed and now hear in me...in prison again, this time in Rome

Might some of them be next?

1 Cor 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*.

We need the wisdom of God on which to cling in these perilous times when foundations of this nation are being shaken

2 Chron 20:6 And said, O LORD God of our fathers, *art* not thou God in heaven? and rulest *not* thou over all the kingdoms of the heathen? and in thine hand *is there not* power and might, so that none is able to withstand thee?

Dan 2:20-21 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding:

God lifted up and then removed

- Babylonian Empire
- Medo-Persia Empire
- Greek Empire
- Roman Empire
- Ottoman Empire
- British Empire
- American Empire

In process of being removed due to

- abortion...murdering defenseless babies in mother's womb
- gross sexual perversion...being celebrated, esp this month
- betrayal of Israel

America, at the highest level of Government is ruled by traitors
America is being invaded by radical Islam, merchants of death
America is plagued with lawlessness, violence, and strife
America's liberal humanism, which stands against God's rule, has a natural ending – utter collapse

Politics is a filthy, worldly game driven by power and money
Politics has no answers upon which we can safely lean and stand
Christian Nationalism is a worldly political movement,
NOT a movement of the Holy Spirit

Jesus Christ is the only answer for this and every other nation
He must be boldly preached by His followers...
who are citizens of the Kingdom of God

To the Church at Philippi and to all citizens of the Kingdom of God,
The Holy Spirit thru the Apostle Paul is exhorting us to

- examine what is at the very core of our lives...is Jesus Christ?
- count the cost of following Jesus;
if it brings suffering, PTL that you have been counted worthy to suffer for
His name's sake
- make life-or-death decisions before they must be made on the spot
- live separate from the world and separate unto God,
committed, uncompromising lives before God and man,
being Christ-like and not man-like...Jesus-kind and not man-kind
- continually put off the old man and put on the new man
- hold tightly to Jesus Christ and hold loosely all things of the world
- do not entertain or compromise with darkness
- fear not, do not back down, be bold/frank – know Jesus and make Him known

2 Chron 15:1-7

2 Chron 20:17 Ye shall not *need* to fight in this *battle*: set yourselves, stand ye *still*, and see the salvation of the LORD with you, O Judah and Jerusalem: fear not, nor be dismayed; to morrow go out against them: for the LORD *will be* with you.