

In Jail for Jesus!

by David Wilkerson

David Wilkerson teaches that our trials and afflictions can be used by God for His purpose, and we should rejoice in suffering for Christ's sake.

Scripture: Romans 5:3, Philippians 1:12

Topics: "Faith in Trials", "Suffering For Christ"

Description

David Wilkerson emphasizes the perspective of Paul during his imprisonment, illustrating how trials can serve to further the gospel rather than hinder it. Paul, despite facing severe afflictions, chose to rejoice and view his circumstances as an opportunity to witness for Christ. Wilkerson challenges believers to reflect on their own responses to suffering, urging them to recognize God's faithfulness and purpose in their trials. He encourages Christians to embrace their afflictions as a means of glorifying God and spreading His message, just as Paul did from his jail cell. Ultimately, the sermon calls for a faith-filled response to adversity, trusting in God's plan.

Transcript

"But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Philippians 1:12). When Paul wrote this, he was an older man with years of experience. In the midst of one of the worst trials of his life, he was speaking to his friends from his heart.

In the time you have been walking with Jesus, you surely have known pain, trials, afflictions. So, how have you behaved? What has been the outcome, the result of your experiences? Have your afflictions all been in vain? Or have you learned of God's love and faithfulness in the midst of them?

Let's say you are a dedicated believer who has laid down his life for Jesus. You have a burden for a dying world, you weep for the lost, and you have a clear command to win souls. So you tell all your friends you are going to a certain city to testify of God's grace.

Yet after you arrive, your friends back home receive word that you are not being used of God at all. Nothing has gone as planned; in fact, your ministry is dead. You have nothing to show for your efforts and rather than stirring up the city for Christ, you have landed in jail.

How would you react if all you had to show for your dedication, labors and sacrifice was utter failure?

Some Christians would pout. They would doubt God's word to them and question the Spirit's leading. Yet other Christians would respond as Paul did--rejoicing that they had been counted worthy to suffer for Christ's sake. Paul did not try to figure out his afflictions. He responded with joy, faith and hope because he knew he was in training as God's witness. He wrote to his friends from jail: "My situation is the topic of conversation in Caesar's palace. In fact, everyone in Rome is talking about what's happening to me. I'm in jail for Jesus!" He must have been quite a sight in that prison cell--a scrawny Jew encouraging everyone around him, "Rejoice in your afflictions. God is faithful!"

Paul did not waste any of his afflictions, because he knew that each of them had a divine purpose. Likewise, the Lord is watching us to see how we behave during our trials.

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