

Through It All

by David Wilkerson

Paul's attitude in the midst of suffering demonstrates the key to being emancipated from unhappiness and worry: focusing on magnifying Christ and being a testimony to the world.

Scripture: Philippians 1:12-13

Topics: "Faith in Trials", "Glorifying God in Suffering"

Description

David Wilkerson emphasizes the resilience of Paul during his imprisonment in Rome, where he faced harsh conditions and constant scrutiny from the Praetorian guard. Instead of succumbing to despair, Paul chose to focus on how his situation could glorify Christ and further the gospel, demonstrating a powerful attitude of faith and purpose. He rejected self-pity and instead viewed his chains as an opportunity to witness, stating that his suffering was contributing to the advancement of the gospel. Wilkerson encourages believers to adopt a similar mindset, recognizing that trials can lead to greater good and spiritual growth. Ultimately, Paul's example teaches us to find joy and purpose even in our darkest moments.

Transcript

As Paul faced his court trial in Rome, he was held under horrible conditions (see Philippians 1:13-14). He was guarded around the clock by soldiers of the Praetorian guard, his feet chained to a soldier on either side. These men were crude, hardened, cursing frequently. They'd seen it all, and to them in their line of work, every jailed man was a guilty criminal, including Paul.

Imagine the indignities Paul suffered in that situation. He had no time alone, not a single moment of freedom. Every visit from friends was closely monitored, with the guards probably ridiculing Paul's conversations. It would have been so easy for that godly man's dignity to be totally stripped away under that kind of treatment.

Think about it: Here was a man who had been very active, loving to travel the open road and high seas to meet and fellowship with God's people. Paul drew his greatest joy from visiting the churches he had established throughout that region of the world. But now he was chained down, literally bound to the hardest, most profane men alive.

Paul had two options in his situation. He could spin out into a morbid, sour mood, asking the same self-centered question over and over: "Why me?" He could crawl into a pit of despair, reasoning himself

into a hopeless depression, completely consumed with the thought, "Here I am bound up, with my ministry shut down, while others out there enjoy a harvest of souls. Why?"

Instead, Paul chose to ask, "How is my present situation going to bring glory to Christ? How can great good come out of my trial?" This servant of God made up his mind: "I can't change my condition. I could very well die in this state. Yet, I know my steps are ordered by the Lord. Therefore I'm going to magnify Christ and be a testimony to the world while I'm in these chains." "Now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death" (Philippians 1:20).

Paul's attitude demonstrates the only way we can be emancipated from our dark pit of unhappiness and worry. You see, it's possible to waste all our tomorrows anxiously waiting to be delivered out of our suffering. If that becomes our focus, we'll totally miss the miracle and joy of being emancipated in our trial.

Consider Paul's statement: "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). Paul is saying, "Don't pity me or think I'm discouraged over my future. And please don't say my work is finished. Yes, I'm in chains and suffering, but the gospel is being preached through it all."

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