

October 13, 2019 19081-A #3

Philippians 1:19-26

The Source of Joy

I. Matt.11:28-30. Jesus promises rest for our souls, but we must give them to Him.

- A. Paul's letter to the Philippians is counterintuitively joyful because when he came to Christ (Christ came to him, actually) Jesus took his life away from him and gave Paul His own life. **Gal.2:20.**
- B. What would it take to turn a self-righteous pharisee who enjoyed high social standing into a man who *rejoiced* while in prison, hated and misunderstood by most people, threatened with execution? Saul of Tarsus was the poster child for everything that is wrong about humanized religion. He was angry, self-righteous, legalistic, and proud of his goodness. What happened to him? *Jesus happened.* The risen Lord knocked Saul off his own righteousness and filled him with God's personal goodness by the Spirit. (Phil.3)

II. The combination of Paul's *stressful circumstances* (house arrest awaiting trial and possible execution) and his *confidence in the Lord*, produced a kind of joy that the world cannot fabricate (Jas.1:1-4). 1:1-20

A. Confidence that the Lord was at work in the Philippians' lives. 1:6

- 1. Paul really understood that salvation was in God's hands.
- 2. Yet, he also knew that human response is part of the dynamic (2:12-13)

B. Confidence in the progress of the gospel. 12-18. My circumstances turned out for the *greater progress of the gospel.* 12

1. He saw his circumstances as useful to God. In two ways:

- a) My "imprisonment in Christ" has become well known. 13
 - (1) Personal testimony is central witness.
- b) My brothers have become more courageous. 14
 - (1) Opposition doesn't stop real Christians -- it galvanizes them

2. He saw his critics as useful. The spiteful people

- a) What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, the gospel is proclaimed. In this I rejoice, and I will rejoice.

3. Interesting that he did not fall into...

- a) Self-pity.
- b) Self-recrimination for deciding to go to Jerusalem 5 years ago.
- c) Suspicion that God had abandoned him. Why...?

C. Confidence that the Lord was *for him in it* and *with him through it*. In 3 ways. 19-26. Yes, and I will rejoice...

1. The Lord was doing something good in him and through him. 19 (Rom. 8:28-35)

- a) Through your prayers.
 - (1) prayer = root meaning is to be in need, even desperate need. Hence prayer is asking, seeking, begging for something you need.
- b) And the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ
 - (1) provision = support, supply (Eph. 4:16)
 - (a) The Spirit's presence in Paul to speak and represent Christ.

2. The Lord would supply courage to him as needed. 20

- a) Full courage. *Pase parrasia* = freedom in speaking, unreservedness in speech, openly, frankly, without concealment, without ambiguity or confusion—with regard to Christ.
- b) Not be put to shame. Reference to standing firm in the faith
 - (1) Shamed, but not *ashamed*.
 - (a) Jews shamed Paul for trusting Jesus as the Christ and justification by grace through faith apart from works.
 - (b) Pagans shamed Paul for trusting Jesus as the risen Lord, the resurrected human Lord of the universe.
 - (c) Paul was not so concerned about these "shaming's" but was very concerned that he not be *Ashamed* of the gospel and therefore not communicate the gospel courageously.
- c) *Note -- His hope is not anchored to his release from prison, but to the fact that the Lord will be glorified.*

3. **The Lord would be there no matter what happened. 21-26. Paul's joyful dilemma.**

a) Living is good because I can help others know the Lord.

(1) Fruitful labor. The goal of our life. (1 Thess.4:9-11)

(a) We were created for fruitful labor—meaningful, productive work. Note what he does not say:

(b) Your work is fruitful, if you do it as unto the Lord. **Col. 3:23-24**

(i) *The key is not what you do, but how you do it.*

(2) Your progress and joy in the faith?

(a) Increased wisdom in gospel thinking and feeling.

(b) Joy results when faith is progressing.

b) Dying is better because I will be personally with the Lord. (lit. very much better)

(1) *When a Christian dies, they go immediately to the Lord.*

(a) Absent from the body is present with the Lord. **II Cor. 5:8**

(b) No soul-sleep. Immediate presence with the Lord.

(2) *When a Christian dies it is infinitely better than anything they have known on earth. They don't miss us.*

III. **How did Paul remain joyful in this dark age? He lived at the foot of the Cross. Gal.2:20**

A. **He knew that since Jesus died and rose for us, every circumstance in our lives has been redeemed. Jas.1:1-4. Even in jail, out of control of his future.**

1. Sins completely forgiven, failures used for something good, eternal life the possession and the promise in Christ.

2. Joy in trial? Yes. But not because of the trial, but because of God's grace and provision.

B. **He knew that since Jesus died and rose for us, we are never separated from God's love. Rom.8:28-39. Even being criticized, persecuted, facing execution.**

1. We are in Christ and Christ is in Trinity, so we cannot, literally cannot, be separated from the Father's love.

C. **He knew that since Jesus died and rose for us, we have also died and our lives have been hidden in Him. Col.3:1-4. No fear of death. In fact looking forward with great anticipation.**

1. There is no safer place for your life than hidden in God, secure in his grace and love.

IV. **The Cross of Christ is the place where justice and mercy meet, where eternal life is available to all, where there is a portal into the next age, the New Creation.**

A. **Come to the Cross and Stay Here...**