

Preaching the Gospel to Yourself - Week 8

Case Study: The Gospel & the Apostle Paul

How did the Gospel and preaching the Gospel to himself influence the Apostle Paul's life?

Reconstructing Paul's Testimony:

Before Christ (Acts 7:54-8:3) → Conversion (Acts 9:1-19) → After Christ (Acts 9:20-31)

Paul's Life Before Christ

- Ravaging the Church (Acts 8:3)
- Throwing men & women into prison (Acts 8:3)
- Zealously living out the law (Phil. 3:5-6)

Paul's Life After Christ

- Building the Church (Acts 9:20-22; Acts 11:25-26)
- Imprisoned for the Gospel (Acts 16:19-34)
- Zealously living out the Gospel (Phil. 3:7-9)

The Gospel has a drastic impact on the direction of Paul's life! He is no longer living to destroy the church, now he is living to build the church! The Gospel enabled radical change in this man's life.

STOP & THINK: How has the Gospel radically changed my life?

Practical Application: Write out my testimony and reflect on the power of the Gospel to save

What can I learn from Paul's example in his letter to the Philippians?

1. Paul's primary purpose - Advancing the Gospel
 - a. The basis for their relationship (1:5)
 - b. The reason for his present circumstances (1:7, 16)
 - c. His exhortation to the Philippians (1:27)
 - d. The examples of Jesus, Timothy, Epaphroditus and Paul (Chps 2-3)
2. Paul's attitude
 - a. Of rejoicing (Chp 1, 2 & 4)
 - b. Of contentment (Chp 1 & 4)
 - c. Of pressing on (Chp 3)
3. Paul's teaching
 - a. Partnership (1:5, 1:7, 2:1, 3:10, 4:14-15)
 - i. Thematically, the term also shows up as Paul describes the level of unity they are to have as they go about the work of the progress of the Gospel. (1:7, 2:1, 3:10, 4:14-15)
 - b. Right thinking ("reckoning" – all over every chapter!)
 - i. For Paul a person's manner of thinking ought to influence their manner of acting. The process of advancing the Gospel didn't stop with right thinking, it continued on into right actions. Paul demonstrates this from his own life in chapter three.
 - c. Jesus Christ
 - i. The Gospel message is Christ's message and it is this message that they are to be promoting with their lives.
 - ii. Because of Christ's work in his life (and by implication, our lives) he now lives for a new purpose, to "press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
 - iii. This purpose finds its fulfillment in joining Christ in heaven, but its implications for Paul's time on earth coincides with advancing the Gospel.
 - d. The 'already, but not yet' (Primarily Chp 3)
 - i. Paul reminds them that they are not simply citizens of this earth, but citizens of heaven who have an inheritance with Jesus Christ (3:20-21).
 - ii. His hope was in the eternity he knew he would spend with Christ; therefore, he was freed up in this life to fulfill his calling of advancing the Gospel, no matter what his circumstances may be.
4. Paul's focus – On Eternity (1:6, 10; 2:16; 3:10-21)

Three Takeaways from Paul's letter to the Philippians:

1. I am able (and called!) to advance the Gospel; no matter what my circumstances are (Paul was in prison!)
2. One of the ways I advance the Gospel is by doing my part to build unity in the body of Christ (**How can I do this?**)
3. As I focus on eternity with Christ, I am challenged to press on in advancing the Gospel, with an attitude of joy (**Where is my focus each day? Would others describe me as a 'joyful' person?**)

PHILIPPIANS

Chapter 1

Thanksgiving

- 1 ^aPaul and ^bTimothy, ^cbond-servants of ^dChrist Jesus,
To ^eall the ^fsaints in Christ Jesus who are in ^gPhilippi,
²including the ^hoverseers and ⁱdeacons:
- 2 ^aGrace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3 ^aI thank my God in all my remembrance of you,
4 always offering prayer with joy in ^amy every prayer for you all,
5 in view of your ^{1a}participation in the ^bgospel ^cfrom the first day until now.
- 6 For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until ^athe day of Christ Jesus.
- 7 ¹For ^ait is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I ^bhave you in my heart, since both in my ^{2c}imprisonment and in the ^ddefense and confirmation of the ^egospel, you all are partakers of grace with me.
- 8 For ^aGod is my witness, how I long for you all with the ¹affection of ^bChrist Jesus.
- 9 And this I pray, that ^ayour love may abound still more and more in ^breal knowledge and all discernment,
10 so that you may ^{1a}approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless ²until ^bthe day of Christ;
11 having been filled with the ^afruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

The Gospel Is Preached

- 12 Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances ^ahave turned out for the greater progress of the ^bgospel,

- 13 so that my ^{1a}imprisonment in the cause of Christ has become well known throughout the whole ²praetorian guard and to ^beveryone else,
14 and that most of the ¹brethren, trusting in the Lord because of my ^{2a}imprisonment, have ^bfar more courage to speak the word of God without fear.
- 15 ^aSome, to be sure, are preaching Christ even ¹from envy and strife, but some also ¹from good will;
16 the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the ^agospel;
17 the former proclaim Christ ^aout of selfish ambition ¹rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my ^{2b}imprisonment.
- 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice.
Yes, and I will rejoice,
19 for I know that this will turn out for my ¹deliverance ^athrough your ²prayers and the provision of ^bthe Spirit of Jesus Christ,
20 according to my ^aearnest expectation and ^bhope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with ^call boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be ^dexalted in my body, ^ewhether by life or by death.

To Live Is Christ

- 21 For to me, ^ato live is Christ and to die is gain.
22 ¹But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean ^afruitful labor for me; and I do not know ²which to choose.
23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the ^adesire to depart and ^bbe with Christ, for that is very much better;
24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.
25 ^aConvinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy ¹in the faith,

- 26 so that your ^aproud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.
- 27 Only **conduct yourselves in a manner ^aworthy of the ^bgospel of Christ**, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are ^cstanding firm in ^done spirit, with one ¹mind ^estriving together for the faith of the gospel;
- 28 in no way alarmed by *your* opponents—which is a ^asign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that *too*, from God.
- 29 For to you ^ait has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to ^bsuffer for His sake,
- 30 experiencing the same ^aconflict which ^byou saw in me, and now hear *to be* in me.

- 9 ^aFor this reason also, God ^bhighly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him ^cthe name which is above every name,
- 10 so that at the name of Jesus ^aEVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of ^bthose who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
- 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is ^aLord, to the glory of God the Father.
- 12 So then, my beloved, ^ajust as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your ^bsalvation with ^cfear and trembling;
- 13 for it is ^aGod who is at work in you, both to will and to work ^bfor His good pleasure.

Exhortation to live it out (12-18)

Chapter 2 - Examples of living/advancing the Gospel.

Be Like Christ

Exhortation to unity + humility (1-4)

- 1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any ^afellowship of the Spirit, if any ^{1b}affection and compassion,
- 2 **make my joy complete** ¹by ^bbeing of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, **intent** on one purpose.
- 3 Do nothing ¹from ^{2a}selfishness or ^bempty conceit, but with humility of mind ^cregard one another as more important than yourselves;
- 4 ^ado not **merely look** out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.
- 5 **Have** this attitude ¹in yourselves which was also in ^bChrist Jesus,
- 6 who, although He ^aexisted in the ^bform of God, ^cdid not regard equality with God a thing to be ¹grasped,
- 7 but ^{1a}emptied Himself, taking the form of a ^bbond-servant, **and** ^cbeing made in the likeness of men.
- 8 Being found in appearance as a man, ^aHe humbled Himself by becoming ^bobedient to the point of death, even ^cdeath ¹on a cross.

Jesus example (5-11)

- 14 Do all things without ^agrumbling or disputing;
- 15 so that you will ¹prove yourselves to be ^ablameless and innocent, ^bchildren of God above reproach in the midst of a ^ccrooked and perverse generation, among whom you ^{2d}appear as ³lights in the world,
- 16 holding ¹fast the word of life, so that in ^athe day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not ^brun in vain nor ^ctoil in vain.
- 17 But even if I am being ^apoured out as a drink offering upon ^bthe sacrifice and service of your faith, **rejoice and share my joy with you all.**
- 18 You too, *I urge you*, **rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me.**

Timothy and Epaphroditus' Example (19-30)

- 19 But I hope ¹in the Lord Jesus to ^asend ^bTimothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.
- 20 For I have no one *else* ^aof kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.
- 21 For they all ^aseek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus.
- 22 But you know ^aof his proven worth, that ^bhe served with me in the furtherance of the gospel ^clike a child serving his father.

23 ^aTherefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things *go* with me;

24 and ^aI trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly.

25 But I thought it necessary to send to you ^aEpaphroditus, my brother and ^bfellow worker and ^cfellow soldier, who is also your ^{1d}messenger and ^aminister to my need;

26 because he was longing ¹for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.

27 For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow.

28 Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again **you may rejoice** and I may be less concerned *about you*.

29 ^aReceive him then in the Lord **with all joy**, and ^bhold men like him in high regard;

30 because **he came close to death** ^{1a}for the work of **Christ**, risking his life to ^bcomplete ²what was deficient in your service to me.

Chapter 3

The Goal of Life

1 Finally, my brethren, ^arejoice in the Lord. To write the same things *again* is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you.

2 Beware of the ^adogs, beware of the ^bevil workers, beware of the ¹false circumcision;

3 for ^awe are the *true* ¹circumcision, who ^bworship in the Spirit of God and ^cglory in ^dChrist Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh,

4 although ^aI myself might have confidence even in the flesh. If anyone else has a mind to put confidence in the flesh, I far more:

5 ^acircumcised the eighth day, of the ^bnation of Israel, of the ^ctribe of Benjamin, a ^bHebrew of Hebrews; as to the Law, ^da Pharisee;

6 as to zeal, ^aa persecutor of the church; as to the ^brighteousness which is in the Law, found ^cblameless.

7 But ^awhatever things were gain to me, those things I have counted as loss for the sake of Christ.

8 More than that, I **count** all things to be loss ¹in view of the surpassing value of ^{2a}knowing ^bChrist Jesus my Lord, ¹for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and **count** them but rubbish so that I may gain Christ,

9 and may be found in Him, not having ^aa righteousness of my own derived from *the* Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, ^bthe righteousness which *comes* from God on the basis of faith,

10 that I may ^aknow Him and ^bthe power of His resurrection and ^{1c}the fellowship of His sufferings, being ^dconformed to His death;

11 ¹in order that I may ^aattain to the resurrection from the dead.

12 Not that I have already ^aobtained *it* or have already ^bbecome perfect, but I press on ¹so that I may ^clay hold of that ²for which also I ^dwas laid hold of by ^eChrist Jesus.

13 Brethren, I do not **regard** myself as having laid hold of *it* yet; but one thing *I do*: ^aforgetting what *lies* behind and reaching forward to what *lies* ahead,

14 I ^apress on toward the goal for the prize of the ^bupward call of God in ^cChrist Jesus.

15 Let us therefore, as many as are ^{1a}perfect, **have this attitude**; and if in anything you have a ^bdifferent **attitude**, ^cGod will reveal that also to you;

16 however, let us keep ^{1a}living by that same *standard* to which we have attained.

17 Brethren, ^ajoin in following my example, and **observe** those who walk according to the ^bpattern you have in us.

18 For ^amany walk, of whom I often told you, and now tell you even ^bweeping, *that they are* enemies of ^cthe cross of Christ,

19 whose end is destruction, whose god is *their* ^{1a}appetite, and *whose* ^bglory is in their shame, who ^c**set** their minds on earthly things.

Opponents at Philippi
(1-2)

Paul's Example
(3-21)

- 20 For ^aour ¹citizenship is in heaven, from which also we eagerly ^bwait for a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ;
- 21 who will ^atransform ¹the body of our humble state into ^bconformity with ²the ^cbody of His glory, ^dby the exertion of the power that He has even to ^esubject all things to Himself.

Chapter 4

Think of Excellence

- 1 Therefore, my beloved brethren ¹whom I ^along to see, **my joy** and crown, in this way ^bstand firm in the Lord, my beloved.
- 2 I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to ^{1a}live in harmony in the Lord.
- 3 Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in *the cause of the gospel*, together with Clement also and the rest of my ^afellow workers, whose ^bnames are in the book of life.
- 4 ^aRejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, **rejoice!**
- 5 Let your gentle *spirit* be known to all men. ^aThe Lord is ¹near.
- 6 ^aBe anxious for nothing, but in everything by ^bprayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.
- 7 And ^athe peace of God, which surpasses all ¹comprehension, will ^bguard your hearts and your ^cminds in ^dChrist Jesus.
- 8 Finally, brethren, ^awhatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is ¹lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, ²dwell on these things.
- 9 The things you have learned and received and heard and seen ^ain me, practice these things, and ^bthe God of peace will be with you.

God's Provisions

Paul's attitude - Content
(10-13)

- 10 But I **rejoiced** in the Lord greatly, that now at last ^ayou have revived your **concern** for me; indeed, you were **concerned before**, but you lacked opportunity.
- 11 Not that I speak ¹from want, for I have learned to be ^{2a}content in whatever circumstances I am.
- 12 I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going ^ahungry, both of having abundance and ^bsuffering need.
- 13 I can do all things ¹through Him who ^astrengthens me.
- 14 Nevertheless, you have done well to ^ashare *with me* in my affliction.
- 15 You yourselves also know, Philippians, that at the ^{1a}first preaching of the gospel, after I left ^bMacedonia, no church ^cshared with me in the matter of giving and receiving but you alone;
- 16 for even in ^aThessalonica you sent *a gift* more than once for my needs.
- 17 ^aNot that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the ¹profit which increases to your account.
- 18 But I have received everything in full and have an abundance; I am ¹amply supplied, having received from ^aEpaphroditus ²what you have sent, ^{3b}a fragrant aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God.
- 19 And ^amy God will supply ¹all your needs according to His ^briches in glory in Christ Jesus.
- 20 Now to ^aour God and Father ^bbe the glory ¹forever and ever. Amen.
- 21 Greet every ¹saint in Christ Jesus. ^aThe brethren who are with me greet you.
- 22 ^aAll the ^{1b}saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household.
- 23 ^aThe grace of the Lord Jesus Christ ^bbe with your spirit.

Philippians' partnership in the Gospel (14-19)

The need for unity (2-3)

How to be unified (4-9)