

Complete Joy
Week 3 – Pain and Providence

Transition: In last week's text, Paul continued in prayer, pouring out his heart to God on behalf of the church at Philippi. He asked God to increase their love with knowledge and discernment, so that they may prove what is excellent.

Check Point: Would anyone like to share something they worked on from last week's discussion?

Context: In this week's text, Paul shares how his imprisonment is advancing the gospel among unbelievers. While Paul is on house arrest, he has a captive audience with the imperial guard as they take shifts guarding him. His imprisonment also emboldens other believers to proclaim the gospel without fear.

Opening Questions:

- Have you ever experienced a time when you felt like you did everything right but things didn't turn out quite like you hoped? What were you feeling in that moment?
- Describe a time in your life when courage replaced fear. What was going through your mind in that moment?

Scripture/Storying: Philippians 1:12-18

Discipleship Questions:

- What is the Holy Spirit teaching you through this story? How does it impact the way you think and live?
- Paul rejoiced that God was using his hardship to advance the gospel among unbelievers. When faced with difficult circumstances what is your typical response? What does it take to have Paul's perspective in trying circumstances?
- How does the fact that God's work is not hindered through hardships encourage you? How might you use this truth to encourage a disciple who is facing hardship?
- Paul's imprisonment emboldened fearful believers to proclaim the gospel. What fears overwhelm you when it comes to proclaiming the gospel? If you have one, share a story when someone's attitude through hardship emboldened you to live more courageously for Christ. What did you learn from their example?
- Some believers, who were envious of Paul, sought to afflict him in his imprisonment. Where do you see believers afflicting other believers today because of envy or rivalry? What negative impact does this have on the church? How can this be overcome?
- Acknowledging God's sovereignty over his situation, Paul says, "I am put here for the defense of the gospel" (v16). How does this challenge or comfort you personally?
- How does this text personally challenge you to make more of Christ and less of yourself?

Prayer time: - Emmanuel Church

- Praise God for their new and improved venue and the numerical growth they have experienced over the summer.
- Pray for their new preaching series in Proverbs that has begun this month, along with their Church History course. May these strengthen and deepen the understanding and faith of many.