

Philippians

DEVOTIONAL SERIES

PAUL'S GREATEST JOY IN TROUBLED TIMES

Tuesday, April 21st 2020

Philippians 1:18-20

“But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice. Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and God’s provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death.”

We see in these verses how much Paul longs for gospel to reach everyone, and how much it fills him with joy when it is preached to nonbelievers. It doesn’t matter to him whether there are ulterior motives involved or not; whenever the gospel is preached, with the unaltered message of Jesus Christ, Paul rejoices (1.18).

Like many of us in our situation, Paul lived in uncertainty; uncertainty as to what his future would look like and even perhaps whether there would be a future for him at all. Nevertheless, no matter what would happen to him, whether he would live or die, his greatest wish despite the uncertainty was that the situation would make Jesus visible to more people (1.20). In times like these, it's easy to slip into a self-centered mode of life where you only have eyes for your own problems and well-being. But as Paul shows us here, we should not lose sight of our goal, namely, to try to see and seize the opportunities we have to make Jesus visible to everyone.

Perhaps this crisis is what it took for some of us to see just how little control we have over our lives, and how much we truly need salvation. Perhaps the increased leisure time creates in some of us a longing for a more significant and meaningful life.

Or maybe some people are seeing the love of Jesus through helping hands and through the joy of others around them. It is certainly not an easy time for most, but it is also certainly full of opportunities to make Jesus visible to others through our actions and words.

Prayer: *Lord we thank you that even in uncertain times like these, we may know that you can use everything for your purposes. We ask you to help us seize the opportunities we have in front of us to make you visible to the people around us. Lord please give us the strength and courage to make use of these opportunities. Thank you for your kindness, your support and that you are in control. Amen.*

-Maurice Schärer-

