

I. Open Doors - Phil. 1:12-14

1. He tells them of his life circumstances early in the letter (**verse 12**)
 - as opposed to the end in other letters
2. I want you to know - brothers
3. Though bound the gospel had actually advanced
 - Rea -circumstances did not stop the gospel - circumstances often stop us in whatever we're involved in
4. A specific example of how the gospel had "advanced" is the palace guard (**verse 13**)
 - they all know he is imprisoned for the gospel
 - Rea -it is very common for prisoners to talk about "what you in for?" - an open door to share Jesus
 - his field was these soldiers
5. His chains had also "advanced" the gospel - **verse 14**
 - brothers and sisters have been emboldened - "without fear"
- Rea 6. Persecution actually makes the gospel grow
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
 1. Why do you think the gospel "advanced?"
 2. We avoid persecution like the plague and think - well if our circumstances were only better then I could do something for Jesus
 3. These are circumstances that Paul did not "plan"
 - they were not on his mission statement*
 4. He was in more churches because of his imprisonment - than he would've been out
 5. Obviously, you don't have to be in the pulpit to "preach"

II. Mission Accomplished - Phil. 1:15-18

1. Pure and impure motives (**verse 15**)
 - Rea -good church/ bad church? - good pastor/ bad pastor?
 - Rea -Paul did not sugar coat this - these men were bad
 - Rea -discuss... if you dare, how many preachers are into "envy and rivalry" - the Pharisees were "envious" of Jesus
2. The message was right even if the motives were wrong
 - Rea -discuss, do people in the pew know the preacher's motive? Today, some preach for money, some for applause (ego), some building their own kingdom vs God's
3. The love motive is the right motive (**verse 16**)
 - Rea -I believe that people in the pew know if their pastor truly loves them
 - Rea -it's not about the "show" it's about the people in the pew. This is a "people" business
4. There is a group who realize that Paul is in prison for the defense of the gospel
 - Rea -the writer says that these detractors were not distorting the message. However,... if you are not persecuted, as was Paul, isn't it likely that you have changed the message - to make it "go along?" Jesus told us - they have persecuted me and they will persecute you.
5. Some preach out of: (**verse 17**)
 - selfish ambition

- gain
- not sincerely
- to cause trouble

6. Paul has a firm conviction that he is in the right... even though he has been put into prison - there is a mind set that believes that if we do the right thing, then God will “bless” and things will run smoothly, with many there on Sunday morning
 - he did not ask - why is this happening to me? - he knew

7. What does it matter - the gospel is preached (**verse 18**)
 - Rea -my father in law found that his pastor (who led him to the Lord) was not “saved” and wanted to know if that meant he was not saved. The gospel is true even if it comes through the mouth of a mule.

Rea **Ideas and Questions:**

1. So why you preach is not important? - discuss
2. Take away the preacher’s salary and most preachers would leave the ministry - does that speak to motive - maybe and maybe not.
3. Is it true that “everybody” has an agenda?

III. God Honored - Phil. 1:19-21

1. He expects deliverance through the prayers of his Philippian friends (**verse 19**)
 - Rea -read Acts 12 where Peter and James are in prison -needing “deliverance”

2. I hope not to be ashamed of the gospel (**verse 20**)
 - to have courage in this dire circumstance
 - Rea -it would be terribly intimidating to be in a Roman prison

3. Considers in this verse the possibility that he not be delivered but die in prison

4. If I die then Christ will be exalted - as well (**verse 21**)
 - to die is gain - eternity
 - Rea -his readers had also (probably) considered the possibility that he die in prison

5. Which would be better? - to die or to remain? (**Verse 22**)
 - to remain means fruitful labor for you and me
 - he plainly says he doesn’t know which is better

6. He is betwixt and between (**verse 23**)
 - to depart - better
 - to remain - more necessary

7. He knows he will remain (**verse 24**)
 - will continue with you
 - Rea -he knows he will not die - in the short haul (all in the long haul)
 - three other letters let us know that he was released - 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus

8. He wants to see their “faith” and “progress” in the gospel (**verse 25**)

9. Your boasting in Jesus will abound if I remain (**verse 26**)
 - Rea **Ideas and Questions:**

1. In Philippians Paul repeated shows immense love and care for his “sheep” - he does so in most letters... he sincerely loves people not just the “job”
2. When we face our death, then we are able to truly live -this is a value in “near death” experiences
3. He is in prison yet he is the one doing the encouraging
4. Paul has a huge vision - that includes eternity

- he truly “lays up treasures” in heaven
- 5. By facing the issue of his possible death -he helps his Philippian readers
- 6. How do we “honor” or “exalt” God? - by having a good attitude in bad circumstances and in the midst of bad persons
- 7. Satan cannot take your life until God says it’s okay

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