

SERMON: Finding Joy In Advancing the Gospel, No Matter the Cost
SERIES: Philippians: Living In Joy
SPEAKER: Pastor Mark

April 15, 2018

CONNECT (5-10 minutes): Help the members of the group grow in relationships with one another so all people in the group know they matter. Spend some time discovering what is happening in the lives of your group members. Share how God has been revealing himself in each other's lives.

REVIEW (15-20 minutes): Use this time to review the passage and the sermon outline (see below).

Note: this is a great opportunity to share leadership.

Use these simple questions to review the sermon/passage or for if you don't have much time:

1. What does this passage teach you about God? About us?
2. How does this passage point us to the gospel? How does it challenge you? Change you?

SCRIPTURE:

Philippians 1:12-30.

¹² I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, ¹³ so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. ¹⁴ And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

¹⁵ Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. ¹⁶ The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷ The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. ¹⁸ What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰ as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶ so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

²⁷ Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, ²⁸ and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. ²⁹ For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, ³⁰ engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

SERMON OUTLINE:

- I. Gospel Witness in Life's Setbacks.
- II. Exalting Christ in Life and Death.
- III. Living Worthy of the Gospel.

GROW (45-60 minutes): Use this time to go deeper with your group.

Use these questions to discuss the sermon/passage:

1. Paul was facing a setback in life as he was imprisoned in Rome. What setbacks have you faced recently, or, where have you felt restricted in life? Look at Philippians 1:12-18. God used Paul's situation as an opportunity for gospel advancement. How might he be doing the same in your situation?
2. Read Philippians 1:18b-19. What does Paul mean when he says "this will work out for my deliverance?" Relate it to 1:21 "to live is Christ, to die is gain." What does this teach us about faith and hope?
3. Read Philippians 1:21. Paul says "to live is Christ." Why is it both dangerous and disappointing when we make anything other than Christ our life? Can you identify what is at the center of your life?
4. We know that Christ gives us life, but what does it mean that he IS our life? Are you comfortable saying "to live is Christ" or "Christ is my life?" Why or why not? What makes it possible for every Christian to say this?
5. Paul also says, "to die is gain." How does knowing what will happen to us after we die bring joy to this life now?
6. Re-read Philippians 1:27-30. Paul admonishes us to "live a life worthy of the gospel." This includes a) standing together, b) striving together, and c) suffering together. Are you, as a group, encouraging each other to live lives that are worthy of the gospel (as if you treasure Christ the most)? Are you standing, striving, and suffering together? How would doing this allow your group to advance the gospel?