

Introduction: There is a horrible lie circulating in American churches today by which biblically illiterate Christians are being deceived. It is attractive to many people because it is what our weakened human nature desires. This lie says believers in Jesus Christ will not have to experience suffering. The lie is almost true. However, the truth is much more powerful, and it is how God actually builds His Church IN His Son. *** The truth is this: All believers in Jesus Christ should expect suffering because God has promised to be fully present WITH those suffering for their testimony to The Savior-King. He will bless them with His comfort SO others see the power of God as He sustains His suffering saints; and, He gives them inexplicable joy in the midst of their troubles. *** This truth is the theme of the entire letter the apostle Paul wrote to the saints in Philippi. On the surface the letter is about joy or unity of the saints in Gospel work. But, in addition to these two obvious themes, Paul is telling them that because he is chained twentyfour-seven in the governor's headquarters, many government officials have come to faith in Jesus Christ. *** Would any of us gladly assent to be prisoners for Jesus in Washington, DC or Boston? If not, why?

Salutation: Paul and Timothy (identifying themselves as servants of The Messiah-Savior) are addressing all the saints (believers being made holy) in Messiah-Savior being in Philippi, with bishops and deacons, 'Grace to you all and peace from God our Father and Lord Jesus Christ. (*Philippians 1:1-2*)

I. Through his prayer for local churches, the apostle Paul models holy prayer for God's people. (*Philippians 1:3-11*)

- A. He begins by thanking God in his every petition for them that they are united in the Gospel. (*Verses 3-6*)
1. I am thanking my God upon every remembrance of you all, always in every petition on behalf of all of you all. (*Verses 3-4a*)
Thanksgiving: It is always good to start our prayers with thanksgiving to God.
Every remembrance: Paul prays for the churches in Philippi every time God brings them to his memory.
This is a good example for us: whenever we may think of someone, or a ministry, or a church, we can say a short prayer to God on their behalf.
 2. With joy the petition making for the fellowship of you all in the Gospel from the first day until now; having been confident of this; that the one having begun in you all good work will perform it until the day of Christ Jesus. (*Verses 4b-6*)
Three part prayer: First, Paul is making his petition with joy for their continuous partnership with him in the Gospel; second, he has been confident up to this very minute; and, third, God, having begun a good work in them, will continue this work until Christ Jesus returns His second time.
- B. Even in bondage for the Gospel they are with him in his heart; and, he prays they abound in sincere knowledge, filled with righteous fruit to God's glory. (*Verses 7-11*)
1. Even as it is being proper to me to think this on behalf of you all because to have you all in my heart in BOTH my bondage AND the verbal defense and confirmation of the grace of the Gospel, you all are being. (*Verse 7*)
Proper: His supreme confidence on their behalf is proper because they are in his heart as he defends the Gospel verbally and confirms its grace in his bondage. In other words, all this is happening as he is continually chained to Roman army guards in three eight hour daily shifts. Being bound in chains is not a hindrance to God using His people powerfully!
 2. Because the witness of my God how I am longing for all you all in the inmost feelings of Christ Jesus. (*Verse 8*)
Longing in Christ: God is Paul's witness of how he is longing for all of them in the deepest feelings of Messiah-Savior. God knows that people in His Son, The Savior King, have been given His intense feelings for those about whom He cares deeply.
 3. This I am praying: That the love of you all yet more and more may be abounding in knowledge and all insight. (*Verse 9*)
First request: First, he is praying for all the people in all the local churches that his prayer results in continually abounding love that will yield to them both knowledge and insight.
 4. To the result to all (of them) to approve the things being superior that sincere and blameless things may be until the day of Christ. (*Verse 10*)
Result: The result that pleases God is when all His people approve as being superior all that is sincere (in the bright sun) and blameless until Jesus comes back.
 5. (You all) had been filled (with) fruit of righteousness, which (is) through Jesus, to the glory of God. (*Verse 11*)
Being filled: His prayer ends with the petition all saints in Philippi will be filled with the righteousness which is Jesus that they receive through being IN Him by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9). Putting it all together, when the people who are the fruit of Paul's church planting efforts are joining in his Gospel work by any and all means as one, people will see Christ and may be saved.

When God's people work together Christ is seen by others

II. In spite of Paul's bondage, God brought Gospel fruit, others were bold to speak and Paul rejoiced even if their motives were mixed; Jesus would say Paul built on solid rock. (*Philippians 1:12-18; Luke 6:46-48*)

- A. Because the Gospel advanced due to Paul's bondage, brothers had confidence to dare to speak without fear. (*Philippians 1:12-14*)
1. But, to know you all, I am desiring, brethren, that the things to me, better to the progress of the Gospel, it had come; so that my bonds in Christ to be apparent in all the governor's palace and to all the rest. (*Verses 12-13*)
Gospel progress: The good news of the Cross that Jesus died on for the forgiveness of all sins is best communicated to unbelievers when those believing in Him suffer as He suffered.
Government workers: Paul says even government workers in the capital city of the empire are coming to faith in Jesus because he has been enabled to testify to The Truth even when he is bound in chains.

2. And more of the brothers in The Lord had confidence by my bonds all the more to dare without fear The Word to speak. (Verse 14)

Others speak word: Paul's testimony in chains has made others more bold to speak! May we be delivered from the fear of suffering by the assurance of God's comforting Presence as we all share Christ to advance His Gospel so more share in His joy. Paul later says brothers in Caesar's household join in greeting them (Philippians 4:22).

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- B. Whether through jealousy, rivalry and ambition; or, through goodwill and love, Paul is rejoicing Christ is being preached. (Philippians 1:15-18)

1. Some indeed also through jealousy and selfish rivalry ... (Verse 15a)

Jealousy: Paul begins a discussion of the motives with which Christians with more freedom than him are preaching the Gospel. He starts with wrong motives, namely those feeling they can do better than the apostle because he is in bondage and must be out of God's favor.

2. ... but some also through goodwill the Messiah they are preaching ... (Verse 15b)

Good will: Now he recognizes some who have good motives in their preaching. They have goodwill to Paul and those to whom they are preaching the Gospel.

- 2'. ... others indeed from love had known that to apology of the Gospel I am being destined ... (Verse 16)

Love: A better motive is love. Others are indeed motivated by God's love IN Christ and fully know God chose Paul to be an apologist to the Gospel's power to overcome all the trials in anyone's life. Let us all be filled with the fruit of Christ's righteousness to preach Him from proper motives.

- 1'. ... but some from selfish ambition the Messiah they are preaching not sincerely; supposing tribulation to stir up to my bonds. (Verse 17)

Heap suffering on apostle: The most negative motive to preach the 'good news' of God IN Messiah, is to seek to add trouble to the bondage of God's chosen servant to feed personal ambition and pride.

Bottom Line: What then? Yet that, in every manner, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is being preached; and, in this I am rejoicing, but also I will be rejoiced. (Verse 18) Paul sees God's hand in all this. He believes that God's people IN Christ will show Christ the King to others so they trust Him as their Savior! Let us all receive boldness to join together to share Christ, even in hostile places.

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- C. Jesus says those who hear His words and do them are like one building a house who digs deep and lays his foundation on rock. (Luke 6:46-48)

1. But why are you all calling Me, 'Lord! Lord!' and not you all are doing the things I am saying; each coming to Me and hearing My sayings and doing them, I will show to you all to whom he is being like. (Verses 46-47)

False profession: No one can call Jesus his 'lord' and then not do what He says. This is clearly a false profession of faith.

Deeds demonstrate words: Jesus says all true followers of Him will demonstrate their faith by deeds of obedience to Him, done in gratitude and love to Him.

2. Like he is being, a man building a house who dug and he went deep and he laid foundation on the rock; but, the flood having come, the river burst upon that house and not is was able to shake it because it well to have been built. (Verse 48)

Three steps to stand: A wise house-builder digs deep all the way to a solid rock for his foundation so it will be flood-proof. True faith results in established good works done by grace (Ephesians 2:10).

We must all be given faith to dig deep to build our lives on Christ, The Solid Rock.

Christ is the foundation of salvation

Conclusion: Through prayer and testimony, the apostle Paul shows the saints in Philippi that even though he is continually chained to Roman soldiers in the governor's palace, God is producing fruit through BOTH his Gospel witness supported by their fellowship with him AND the emboldened witness of others, even with mixed motives. Paul is a real life example of one who is not overwhelmed by the floods of life because Christ, The Solid Rock, is his foundation.

When God's people work together Christ is seen by others