

LIFE GROUP notes

19 November

Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: Joy in Christ – week 2



Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you had to explain to a friend or family member how God used Paul's chains to advance the Gospel of Jesus Christ?
2. What is the testimony of Paul's chains in v.12? (**I want you to know brothers that what has happened to me has really served to advance the Gospel.**)
3. How did Paul's chains encourage believers in v.14? (**Most of the brothers... in the Lord... are much more bold to speak the word without fear.**)
4. What does Paul rejoice in according to v.18? (... **That Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.**)



Let's go deeper

5. What was one of the ways Paul wanted to honour Christ in v.20? (**To honour Christ with his body, whether by life or death.**)
6. What is Paul's desire according to v.23b? (**My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.**)
7. What happens to a believer after they die according to v.23? (**They depart and will be with Christ, for that is far better.**)
8. What is Paul's encouragement to the church in v.27? (**Only let your manner of life be worthy of the Gospel of Christ.**)



Let's apply this

9. **Philippians 1:12 – 13**; I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me **has really served to advance the gospel**, so that it has become known throughout the **whole imperial guard** and to **all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ**.

Why did Paul have joy in Christ? By his chains, Christ was made known. By his critics Christ was preached, and by his crisis Christ was honoured & magnified.

- How can you use your "chains" or any restrictions to advance the Gospel?
- How can you look at your critics as an opportunity to advance the Gospel?
- How can you use your current crisis to honour / magnify Jesus in your body?

SUMMARY:

Joy in Christ: Week 2

Read: Philippians 1:12 – 30 and Acts 16

Paul's desire was to preach the gospel in Rome (see Acts 19:21 and Rom.1:15). Rome was a key city in its day. Paul wanted to go to Rome as a preacher, but instead he went as a prisoner (see Acts 21:17—28:31). God wants us to take the gospel into new areas. God uses strange ways to help us pioneer the gospel to new areas.

v.12 – 14; God used Paul's chains to advance the Gospel instead of binding him. Paul's chains gave him contact with the lost. He was chained to a Roman soldier 24-hours a day, and the shifts changed every six hours. Paul could witness to least four men each day. God used Paul's chains to share the Gospel with the elite Praetorian guard (troops who served as the emperor's bodyguards).

God used Paul's chains to reach the officials in Ceasar's court. Paul was in Rome as an official prisoner, and his case was important. The court officials were forced to study the doctrines of the Christian faith to determine the status of Christianity.

Paul's chains also gave courage to the believers in Rome. **v.14**; tells us that the believers were bold to speak (everyday conversations), the Word without fear.

v.15 – 19; Paul's aim was to glorify Christ and get people to follow Him; but he's critics' aim was to promote themselves and win followers for them. Paul looked on his critics as an opportunity for the gospel to advance. He was able to rejoice, not in the selfishness of his critics, but in the fact that Christ was being preached!

v.20 – 22; Paul's body was not his own, and his only desire was to honour and magnify Jesus Christ in his body. How can a human being ever honour and magnify the Son of God? **Example of a telescope**. The stars are much bigger than a telescope, and yet the telescope magnifies them and brings them closer. As the unbeliever watch the believer go through a crisis, they can see Jesus magnified and brought much closer by the way they honour God and continue to rejoice in Him.

Example of a microscope. A microscope makes tiny things look big. Jesus is not very big to an unbeliever. But as the unbeliever watches the believer go through a crisis, unbelievers can see how big Jesus really is. The believer's body is a "lens" that makes a "little Christ" look very big, and a "distant Christ" come very close.

v.23 – 26; What happens to a believer after we die? v.23; we depart to be with Christ. For Paul death simply meant "to depart." This word was used by **soldiers**; it meant "to take down your tent and move on." The "tent" we live in is taken down at death, and the spirit goes home to be with Christ in heaven.

Why did Paul have joy in Christ? Because by his chains, Christ was made known. By his critics Christ was preached, and by his crisis Christ was honoured and magnified.