

Philippians 1

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Tape # 8176
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I want you to get the picture. I will try to give you the setting. Paul is in Rome, the capital of the world at that time. He is in a prison.

If you go to Rome today, they will show you the Mamartine Prison, which tradition says is the prison that Paul was in. They will take you down into that lower area where Paul was imprisoned according to tradition there in Rome.

But he is chained to a guard. And he is waiting for his appeal to Caesar. Now, it is thought that he has already had his first hearing, sort of the preliminary hearing, and his first opportunity to give a defense of the gospel. But he is waiting now for his appeal and his hearing before Caesar.

Timothy is there with him. Epaphroditus is there with him. And who else, we are not certain. Epaphroditus will be taking these letters that Paul is writing, to some of the churches. Timothy is probably taking dictation from Paul. Paul, as he is sitting there, chained to a Roman guard, is dictating to Timothy the letters that he is sending from the prison, the letter to the church in Ephesus, the letter, here, to the church in Philippi. Of course, Tychicus is there. He will be taking the letter to the church in Ephesus and also the letter to the church in Colosse.

But Paul is pouring out his heart to them and sharing with them the truths of the gospel. So, as he is talking or writing to the Philippians, it is interesting, realizing the background of being in prison, that the theme of this Book is joy and rejoicing!

So he opens the Book, *Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the bishops and deacons*: In many of his letters, he introduces himself as Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God. In this letter, he does not include, an apostle of Jesus Christ because he is received and accepted by the church in Philippi as an apostle. There were those who would follow Paul around and they would try to discredit Paul by declaring that he was not a true apostle. And so where there was a question of whether or not he was a true apostle, he would affirm his apostleship by the will of God. But where he was accepted as an apostle as in the church in Philippi, there was no necessity to affirm it now in his salutation. It is just Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ. Or the Greek is *doulos*. They are bondslaves of Jesus Christ.

To all the saints. Now this is quite obvious that the Catholic Church had not gotten a stronghold because he calls all of the believers, saints. It's sort of sad that the tradition has developed where only certain, special, people are elevated to sainthood by the church. If the church does or does not elevate you to sainthood, you don't have to worry, because the Lord has elevated you to sainthood! Now, you may not feel like it sometimes. And you may not act like it sometimes, but by the grace of God, we are saints through Jesus Christ. And that is called out ones and set apart ones. Saints in Christ Jesus, which are at Philippi.

Then he also includes the overseers, the *episkopos*, the bishops and the deacons. The bishops were the overseers of the church, the men who oversaw the functions of the church, the *episkopos*. There was also the word, *presbyteros*, which was an overseer also. But then, the deacons were those who served. It was those who were serving in the sort of what we would call, menial things. They were the ones that would clean the church. They were the ones that would take the goods to the poor. They were the ones that were doing many of the practical things that needed to be done around the church. So they were called deacons and of course, in the Scriptures, we also

read of deaconesses, women, who also were serving in these kinds of tasks.

Now I hesitated to say, menial, because nothing is menial that is done for Jesus Christ! And whatever we do for Him we ought to do heartily as unto the Lord, knowing that from the Lord we will receive a reward and if God has called you to be a deacon, then you better not attempt to be an elder or an *episkopos*. You see God has placed us all in the body. People talk about, ooh, the highest calling. The highest calling for you, is whatever God has called you to be! And you can't be more that what God has called you to be and what God enables you to be. And with God there is no such category as second rate Christians or second rate types of jobs. Whatever God has called you to be and to do, it is important that you be faithful unto that ministry. It is accounted of the stewards that they be faithful. That was the primary criteria—just faithfulness is what God will require of you. So, don't ever think of yourself as second class. You, all of you, are first class. The fact that God has called some to be bishops or deacons, doesn't mean that they are going to receive any greater reward or that they are more important.

Jesus, said, whoever would be the chief among you, let him be the servant of all! So God looks upon the service and the faithfulness of just being whatever it is that God wants me to be and has called me to be. We are all of us, equally important in the eyes and in the sight of God and the task that He has called us to do in God's sight is equally important. In fact, God has chosen the less comely members of the body to bestow the more abundant comeliness.

So you may think, well what I am doing is very insignificant. Nobody really knows what I am doing. I get into that pity party kind of a thing, where you are just feeling, well, I am insignificant. No you are not! It's important that we all be faithful to whatever God has called us. We can't do more than that!

So, he addresses the bishops and the deacons and typical for Paul, that ²*Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ*. That is Paul's opening salutation. It is his desire for everyone, each church and each person. Grace and peace from God our Father! Then Paul declares, ³*I thank my God upon every remembrance of you*, The memories that Paul had of those believers there in Philippi, was precious. They were good people. Paul, every time he thought of them, was thanking God for them.

⁴*Always in every prayer of mine for you all making request with joy*, Joyful memories—I thank God every time I think about you. And I pray for you always, and just with such great joy!

⁵*For your fellowship* (and these are the things that he is remembering) *in the gospel* The word, fellowship, in the Greek is *koinonia*. It means, just the communion that we had together, the sweet fellowship that we experienced, that oneness that we felt in Christ. And he was just thinking about the bond of Christ's love that had brought them together and had cemented them together.

The fellowship in the gospel *from the first day until now*; The church in Philippi had been very faithful in helping to support Paul's ministry. They sent him support on a regular basis, in order that he might continue his ministry in areas where Christ had not been preached. And so a part of that fellowship that Paul is referring to is their sharing with him.

In the Book of Acts, it talks about in the early church, how that they pooled and shared their resources. It said they had all things in *koinonia*, or in fellowship, in common. So this word fellowship, includes more than just getting together and shaking hands and praying together and sharing the things of God together, but it went on to the sharing of their worldly goods, which they did, faithfully to Paul.

⁶*Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ*: That I love! God is faithful in having begun a good work in you,

He is not going to give up! He is not going to stop! The Lord will perform His perfect work in us. I am confident that He who has begun that good work will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. This is until the day that Jesus Christ comes for us or He comes for His church itself, but the Spirit of God and the work of God in your hearts and lives, God will be faithful to complete the work that He began in you. God didn't bring you this far to dump you now! And He is going to complete the work. The Lord will perfect that which concerns you, the Scripture said. And it's glorious and to have that kind of confidence that I know that God is going to perform the work that He has begun in you. He is going to complete it.

⁷*Even as it is meet for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart;* Paul's love. I have you in my heart.

Because *inasmuch as both in my bonds, and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, ye all are partakers of my grace.* Paul was there defending the gospel before the Roman judges and ultimately before Caesar and the confirmation of the gospel, confirming the truth. They are partakers of his grace. God was giving Paul some tremendous opportunities of sharing the gospel there even unto Caesar Nero, the emperor of Rome. And Paul is actually saying the fellowship you have with me, the gifts you have sent to me are enabling me, thus you are partakers with me in this glorious project and in the fruit that will come from the sharing of the gospel here in the emperor's palace.

In the fourth chapter, he is going to thank them for the gifts that they have sent to him. And he is going to declare, not that I had a particular great need that I'm so thankful, but I desire that fruit might abound to your account. What Paul is saying is the fruit that is coming from the ministry that God has given to me, you are sharing in it because you are partakers with me. You have supported. You have helped. And thus you've become a partaker with me in the grace that God has given unto me in the opportunity of sharing the gospel of Jesus, the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

⁸*For God is my record* (Paul said. It's interesting how that Paul often called upon God to bear witness to, God is my record, of his prayer life. And he, Paul, had a tremendous prayer life. Of course, God knew it.)

So God is my record *how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.* Or that is what the Greek says but most of your translations now are in the "kindness" of Jesus Christ. In those days, they had the belief that the greatest emotions that you had were not in your brain, but in your stomach. And there are Scriptures that speak about, why do I see men who are holding their stomachs because of the tremendous grief that you feel it in the pit of your stomach. Or the greatest grief or the greatest joys are felt in the pit of your stomach rather than some tingling in your head.

So because they looked upon the stomach as the area of greatest emotion, the deepest emotion. They used the phrase, "the bowels" of mercy or "the bowels" of compassion. And it's referring to that, what we would call, gut level, type of feeling. And so God is my record, how greatly I long after you. Oh, how I desire to be with you. And I long after you in just the depths of my inner being in Christ Jesus.

⁹*And this I pray,* (and now Paul is going to tell us the things that he is praying for them.)

Number one, *that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment;* Oh, Lord, help them, that the love that they have might just increase! That it might abound more and more in knowledge and in all judgment.

Then he will pray for them, ¹⁰*That ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ;* The word sincere, our English word comes

from the Latin word, *sinicerus*. *Sini* means without and *cerus* is wax. And there are those who say that the word, *sinicerus*, from the Latin, referred to honey that had been strained. Now you know that when you first get the honey out of the cone, you often times get bee's wax in the honey, so they strained the honey in order to remove the bee's wax. So it's without wax. It's been strained. And thus, it's sort of a purifying. It is without the wax.

There is another explanation given for the Latin word, *sinicerus*, without wax, and it comes from the fact that in the days of Rome they were many people who worked as artisans and sculptures were extremely popular. If you go to the museums in Rome today, you will see how popular sculptures really were. And there were kinds of marble statues and sculptures. And as I look at the statues, I always marvel and I wonder, how did they get them so smooth? And how did they get such great expressions? And you know, have you ever to use a chisel and a hammer to form a rock or something? I marvel at the skills and the abilities that they had in making these statues and the ornate, ornate kind of works that was around the various buildings.

Now, obviously, when you are making a statue, it could be when you are trying to shape the lobe of the ear, you missed and you pop it off. Well, with marble what are you going to do? Either make a guy with a cauliflower ear or I mean, but who is going to buy that? So, they say that they became extremely skillful in taking wax and taking marble powder and mixing it with the wax. If they happened to whack off a part of the nose, they could take this wax, mix it with the marble powder, and they could fix it so that you wouldn't notice it or you couldn't see it. It's sort of like the wax museum. And so people would buy this beautiful bust of Caesar and put it in the atrium there in their home. And it would look great! But on those hot days in Rome, the wax would sometimes melt and just run down the face of the statue. So "without wax", means that it's genuine. It's not been altered. It's not been changed.

Now the Greek word, that is translated sincere, and that's a good translation, but it is *eilikrines*. *Eili* means in the brightness of the sun. *Krines* means to be judged. So it is something that can be examined in the brightness of the sun to reveal the flaws. And so Paul prays that your faith might be sincere, that it might be examined in the brightness of the sun, and found to be without flaw, that you might approve the things that are excellent, that you might be sincere and without offense until the day of Christ.

And then he prayed for them, ¹¹*Being filled with the fruits of righteousness*, Now what is fruit of righteousness? Of course we know that love is the fruit of the Spirit. And all of the characteristics that come from love, the patience, the long suffering, the gentleness, the goodness and the joy and all, these are the things that Paul is praying for them, that they might experience being filled with the fruits of righteousness, *which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God*. What God does in our lives and through our lives for His glory and praise.

¹²*But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel*; Now these things that have happened to Paul were not pleasant or desirable things. He was roughed up in Jerusalem by the mob. He was rescued by the Roman guard. He was falsely accused by the Jews and used as a political pawn by the Roman governors of that area and at that time. He finally had to exercise his prerogative as a Roman citizen and appeal his case to Caesar.

On his way to meet with Caesar, he was in that horrible storm, *El Nino*, in the Mediterranean. For fourteen days they were tossed in that storm until they had despaired of even surviving at all. And they did survive, but the ship was wrecked. He had to grab a plank and float through the surf to the shore.

Then of course as he was helping to build a fire so they could dry out and get warm, a poisonous

viper fastened itself on Paul as he was putting the wood in. The natives of that area thought this fellow really must be murderer or something because even though he escaped the storm and the shipwreck, the gods are not going to let him live. Paul shook the viper off into the fire and went on piling more wood on. The people were watching him, expecting to just see him keel over dead at any moment. After a while when he didn't keel over dead, they thought, ooh, this guy must a god! But he went through all of this and now he is in Rome.

Now he is in jail and he's chained to a Roman guard on either side, but he said to them I want you to know that all of these things that have happened to me have fallen out rather to the furtherance of the gospel.

He wrote to the church in Rome, all things work together for good to those who love God.

Now, as we are going through the circumstances and the difficulties, we often cannot see the good. It is only after we progress into the whole situation and we have the opportunity now, to look back with a broader perspective. Then we can see how God's hand was there, how God was guiding and how God was working out His purposes, His good purposes through these experiences. So the things that have happened to me, I want you to understand this, that they happened for the furtherance of the gospel. God has used this to further the gospel message.

¹³*So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace* (that would be the palace of Caesar Nero), *and in all other places*; There is a stir that is happening in Rome. The gospel is being preached throughout the palace. Throughout the Roman Senate, they are hearing about Jesus Christ! Of course Paul had to make his defense of the gospel. That's what he was in Rome to do. And so he no doubt, was using that opportunity, coming before the court, of sharing the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

Jesus had said to His disciples, you are going to be brought before the magistrates and before the rulers, but don't take any forethought of what you are going to say, for in that hour the Holy Spirit will give you the words to say. And it shall turn to you, he said, for a witness. Or it will give you an opportunity to witness.

Now Paul had already had appeared before the magistrates in Caesarea. He had appeared before the magistrates, Felix, Festus, King Agrippa. Paul used that as an opportunity to witness of his conversion. He gave a strong witness to each of the judges and to King Agrippa of why he was a believer of Jesus Christ. He was speaking of his own conversion and what Jesus Christ had done for him. How that Jesus had appeared to him and the work that Christ had done in his life. He used every opportunity to share the gospel.

Now he is in Rome. He has longed to be in Rome. When he wrote the letter to the church in Rome, he had not yet been there, but he spoke of his desire to come to Rome, that he might share with them some Spiritual gift and that he might bring the gospel to Rome. He said I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It is the power of God unto salvation. Now when Paul wrote that to the Romans, I'm sure that he didn't envision himself being in Rome chained between two guards. That would be the way that God would give him the opportunity to share the gospel in Rome, but so it was. And so God brought him to Rome and now he is having the opportunity. But not just to share to little groups in homes, but he is sharing it to the magistrates and will be sharing it with Caesar Nero before long.

So the things that have happened, have happened for the furtherance of the gospel so that in my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace and in all other places.

¹⁴*And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.* They are getting courage. A lot of the believers, sort of secret believers, are now, because of my bonds, they see that I am having an opportunity to share and

all, they are speaking up. And they are much more in bold in speaking out.

Now he said,¹⁵*Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:* There were in Rome those same judaizers. They were Christians, but they believed that to be a Christian, you had to be circumcised and you had to keep the Mosaic Law. They were at odds with Paul. But they were sharing Jesus Christ. They did believe in Jesus Christ. They believe that faith in Jesus Christ was necessary for salvation, but they also believed it was necessary to be circumcised and to keep the law of Moses to be saved. But they were preaching that Jesus was the Messiah. Now there were others who were with Paul, as far as these who were teaching that you had to be circumcised, they really were against Paul. They were trying to sort of be in competition and out of envy and strife, they were sharing. But then there were others who just out of the sincerity and genuineness of their heart were sharing. Some preached Christ out of envy and strife, some also good will.

¹⁶*The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:* they are just trying to make it harder on me, taking you know, advantage of the fact that I'm in bonds.

Yet, Paul said, notwithstanding, they knew that Paul, ¹⁷*But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.* The others are teaching out of love, knowing that I'm set for the defense of the gospel. So you have the two crowds.

But Paul said, ¹⁸*What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.* What a tremendous lesson for us here! To rejoice where Jesus is being preached.

Now there are some who have some cute ideas concerning Jesus Christ and salvation. There are some who believe that just faith in Jesus Christ isn't sufficient and that there are certain other requirements in order to be saved. People usually sort of get in their little boxes and we gather with those who see it as we see it and are like-minded to us. The problem is that oftentimes we see the others as in contention with us. And we begin to get into in-fighting within the body of Christ because they don't see the way I see it. They don't believe it the way I believe it. And, you know, their practices are different from what I am comfortable with. But rather than just being able to say, well, they are preaching Jesus Christ! Yeah, they are weird and they have some crazy ideas, but they are preaching Jesus Christ, praise the Lord! And thinking that we have got to, you know, persuade them to see things the way we see it. It's better that we just rejoice in the simple fact that Christ is being preached, as did Paul! I rejoice that Christ is being preached! I mean what their motives are, God will take care of that in the end.

And I have to confess that I have great difficulty in dealing with motives because I realize that there are people today who are preaching Christ with wrong motives. These people that are sending out these mailers constantly, begging for funds. I realize that there is wrong motivation as they are following all of these gimmicks and psychological ploys in order to elicit the gifts of the people. And their motive is totally wrong. Boy, I'll tell you I have difficulty when I get these letters, that I realize the guys are absolute charlatans.

And Paul said, they are not sincere. They are doing it out of contention or they are doing it with wrong motivation, but I rejoice that Christ is being preached! Now I have difficulty with that myself when I realize that these guys are just ripping off the body of Christ. I have great difficulty, but God, help me. I need to come to the place where Paul was at. Where I can say, well, praise God, they are sharing Jesus Christ. I hope they are. Christ is being preached and therein do rejoice, yes and I will rejoice! I'm determined to rejoice in this.

¹⁹*For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit*

of Jesus Christ, ²⁰*According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.* This is my desire, that with all boldness, I'll not back down. I'll share the testimony of Jesus Christ. Again he said to the Romans, I'm not ashamed of the gospel of Christ. It is the power of God to salvation. And so my expectation and my hope is that I won't back down and in nothing will I be ashamed, but my desire is that Christ be magnified in my body.

In the Psalms it says, let all who love His salvation, say continually, the Lord be magnified.

Paul's desire in prayer was not for glory for himself, not to be magnified in self, but to bring glory to Jesus Christ and that God would be magnified in his body.

Now Paul doesn't know yet what the outcome is going to be when he faces Caesar. He could lose his head if Caesar doesn't like the things that Paul is saying. Or he could be set free. At this juncture, Paul doesn't know what will happen. Now ultimately Paul was ordered to be beheaded by Caesar Nero. Whether or not at this time it took place, is not certain as far as the historic records that have been uncovered. There is some indication that this first hearing that Caesar Nero set him free. And Paul returned to the church in Ephesus. But then Caesar had a change of heart. He brought him back to Rome and executed him. That is a tradition from the early church. But Paul's future was uncertain at this point, but his desire was, I want Christ to be magnified in my body. If He can be magnified by my life, great! If He can be magnified by my death, great! It doesn't matter to me if He is magnified in my life or in my death. My desire is just that the Lord be magnified.

²¹*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* I am in a "win, win" situation. If Caesar sets me free, I have more time to live for Jesus Christ here on earth. If he takes my life, hey, I'm going to be with the Lord in heaven! It's "win, win."

²²*But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour:* That is, I'll have greater opportunity to bring more fruit, if I live in the flesh, to bear more fruit for the gospel and for Jesus Christ. *yet what I shall choose I wont not.* What I choose, I really don't know! I have mixed emotions over this.

²³*For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:* Now, notice he didn't say I have a desire to depart and be asleep until the Lord comes for the church. You see, if to die was to go into a place of soul-sleep, then you would want to forestall death as long as possible. But because to die is to be present with the Lord, Paul finds himself with this mixed emotion. I have a desire to depart to be with Christ, which is far better.

Writing to the Corinthians in his second letter (2 Corinthians 5:1-9), Paul said we know that with these earthly bodies, the tents in which we presently live are dissolved. When this body goes back to dust. We have a building made of God that's not made with hands. It's eternal in the heavens. So then we who are in these bodies do often groan earnestly desiring to be free, not to be an unembodied spirit, but I desire to be clothed upon with a body which is from heaven. For I know that as long as I am living in this tent, this body, I'm absent from the Lord! But I would choose rather to be absent from this body that I might be present with the Lord.

So Paul taught that to be absent from this body is to be present with the Lord. So I am in the strait between two. I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ; which is far better.

Again in Paul's second letter to the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 12:2), he said, I knew a man in Christ, about fourteen years ago, and whether in the body or out of the body, I don't know. What I do know is that I was caught up into the third heaven. And there I heard things that were so astounding, magnificent, glorious, that there are no words in human language that can describe

them. Any endeavor or attempt to do so would be a crime. It goes so far beyond anything that can be described in human language, that any endeavor to do so would be criminal--the glories of the heavenly scene. Now Paul was there. Now Paul said, in the body or out of the body, I don't know. In other words, he was saying, I don't know if I was dead or alive. I don't know if I was actually dead or if I was just having a vision. But I had an out of body experience in which I was taken up into the third heaven.

Now if soul sleep were true, then Paul would know that just had a vision. But the fact that he didn't know whether he actually dead or alive, he just believed that the moment of death brings me into this conscienceness of the presence of the Lord in glory, into the beautiful, glorious heavenly scene. To be absent from this body, to be present with the Lord. So Paul's desire now is to go back. I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better.

²⁴*Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.* Not for me. I would like to get out of here! But it's needful for you. So Paul's concern for others and it was only that concern for those others that he was ministering to. He still felt that there was yet more that could be done in strengthening them and in helping them to understand the glorious grace that was bestowed upon him and upon us.

²⁵*And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;* I'm confident that things are going to work out. I will be with you still. It does seem that did happen for a couple of years more.

²⁶*That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.* Oh, the glorious fellowship and the rejoicing when we can, you know, be with one another again and see one another and open our hearts to one another again.

²⁷*Only (in the meantime) let your conversation (manner of living. The word conversation is more that just your words. It's you whole tenor of life, your manner of living.)*

Let it *be as it becometh the gospel of Christ*: Live in harmony and in accordance with the gospel of Christ. What does that mean? It means to live in purity, in holiness. That becomes the gospel of Christ. To put away the things of the flesh. To live after the things of the Spirit, a life of consecration, a life of commitment. Not dabbling with the things of the world, the corruption of the world, but living a life of full commitment to Jesus Christ. Things that become the gospel of Christ.

that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, (And this is what he wants to hear about them.)

that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; That is beautiful harmony, that there are no divisions, that this carnality which brings divisions within the body because we are insisting or wanting our ways to be done. I want to hear that you are walking with one spirit and one mind, as you are striving together, not striving with each other.

And tragically, look at the church today, how much striving there is with each other, rather than striving together. If we would put all of the energies that we are putting to striving against each other, to striving for the gospel. How great it would be and how much further the gospel would be spread.

There are, you know, those people that are always striving against things within the body. It seems like they are always fighting against things that are in the body. Some you know, they get on the Internet and that's sort of a tragic thing because you can put any kind of junk on the Internet. You can put all kinds of lies and everything else on the Internet. People are using that to tear down and to seek to tear down confidence in various ministries. There is some nut on the Internet who is determined to tear me down. Well, if he can, more power to him. I've chosen not

to defend myself. If I do, then the Lord won't defend me. So the Lord is my defense. You know, it doesn't bother me.

²⁸*And in nothing terrified by your adversaries:* And that is just what were taking about. There are adversaries out there who were striving against others within the body.

But not terrified by your adversaries, *which is to them an evident token of perdition*, He is saying that those that are your adversaries are doomed to perdition. And it's an evident token that perdition is there and await those who are your adversaries.

but to you of salvation, (over against the adversaries will be facing perdition, but you, salvation) *and that of God*.

²⁹*For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake;* Paul said (Romans 8:18) that the present suffering is not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed. Paul said (2 Corinthians 4:17) our light affliction which is but for a moment, worketh an exceeding eternal weight of glory.

Blessed are ye, Jesus said (Matthew 5:10-11), who are persecuted for righteousness sake. Blessed are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you and say all manner of evil against you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad because great is your reward in heaven.

By faith (Hebrews 11:24-29), Moses, when he came of age, chose not to be known as the son of pharaoh, for he was adopted by pharaoh's daughter, but he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt. He chose the path that brought suffering but he had respect unto the eternal aspect of the path that he chose.

So it's been given to you not only to believe in Jesus, but to suffer for the sake of Christ, the reproach, the ridicule of the world.

³⁰*Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me.* The same conflict which you saw in me, when Paul was in Philippi, when he first went there, he was beaten and thrown in prison.

Now one of the chief leaders in Philippi was the guard of that prison who was converted to Paul's being in prison there. But you saw the conflict that was in me. You saw the suffering for the gospel's sake.

And it may be that you will experience that same kind of suffering. And true when the Romans, of course Nero, when they determined the Christians were subversive and were not going to be subservient to Rome as far as the Christians would refuse to say Caesar is Lord. And that became a requirement of the Roman Government to acknowledge Caesar as Lord, that is the government ruled.

There seems to be that endeavor today to cause us to say that Caesar is Lord as the government seeks to bring us more and more under its power and authority and edicts. But the early believers would not declare that Caesar is Lord, and as the result they were imprisoned and many of them were martyred.

So Paul speaks about having the same conflict, which you saw in me and now hear to be in me. You hear what I am going through. I'm back in prison again. I've been in prison many times for the gospel's sake. And so you know, we have been called to believe and to suffer, if necessary, for the cause of Christ.

Father, we thank You for the tremendous example that Paul set, a man of full commitment. A man who would not back down in the face of adversity. A man who would stand the ground for the gospel's sake. A man whose heart reached so far to so many different fellowships and those believers within the various fellowships. A man who lived a life so totally committed to Jesus

Christ. Lord, help us that we also might make that kind of a commitment of our lives to serve Jesus Christ and to follow Him, renouncing, Lord, the world, the flesh, and the things of this world. May we live a life that is committed to You, serving You, Lord, with all of our hearts. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.