

Daily Devotional, April 4, 2020

“Furtherance of the Gospel” (Philippians 1:12)

“But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel” (Philippians 1:12, NKJV).

The Apostle Paul wrote this letter “to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi” (Philippians 1:1) from prison. In this letter, Paul celebrates the fact that Christ is being preached in many places, shares his confidence in his heavenly hope, exhorts the church to recognize and emulate the humility of the Lord, encourages individual fellow Christian workers, and calls the saints to be thankful in prayer and to be godly in their thoughts and actions.

In our text, Paul is rejoicing in the fact that God has providentially used his circumstances to further the gospel of Jesus Christ. Although Paul was under house arrest in Rome for his faith, he did have access to many people. Some folks were getting saved in Rome and the gospel was multiplying there, and Paul’s writing ministry was proving very fruitful for the Kingdom of God. Seven of the twenty-seven New Testament Books were written by Paul from prison, and not only did they result in salvation and revival in diverse places in his day, but millions upon millions have read these preserved inspired works throughout the church age! Many people were looking at his situation thinking that it was an unfortunate turn of events, but Paul was willing to see and walk in God’s purpose, even in difficult circumstances.

Consider the applications for yourself today. Do you find your present circumstances uncomfortable in any way? Now I do not speak of experiencing consequences for your sinful behavior, but I speak of circumstances that are largely beyond your control. Perhaps someone else’s actions have contributed to your circumstance. You are not unique. Joseph was sold into Egypt as a slave, but God used him to deliver an entire nation. Therefore he was able to forgive his brothers, and say, *“But as for you, you meant evil against me; but God meant it for good, in order to bring it about as it is this day, to save many people alive”* (Genesis 50:20). So it was with Esther, who God also placed in a difficult spot *“for such a time as this”* (Esther 4:14). She risked death, and stepped up to save countless lives. So, friend, do not wallow in pity because of certain circumstances. Rather, seek how God may be able to use you in your particular circumstances *“for the furtherance of the gospel.”*