

Daily Bible Readings

Our Reading Prep For: 08 January 2023

Proclaiming Christ

Monday: Praising God in Word and Life (**Psalm 119:169–176**)

Tuesday: Giving Glory to God (**Matthew 5:13–16**)

Wednesday: Making the Word Fully Known (**Colossians 1:21–29**)

Thursday: Sharing in the Gospel (**Philippians 1:1–7**)

Friday: Speaking the Word with Boldness (**Philippians 1:8–14**)

Saturday: Toiling to Proclaim the Gospel (**1 Thessalonians 2:1–11**)

Sunday: Proclaiming Christ in Every Way (**Philippians 1:15–26**)

Text • **Philippians 1:15–26**
Bible Background • **Philippians 1:12–30**
Devotional Reading • **Psalm 119:169–176**

Keep in Mind: *“What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.” (Philippians 1:18)*

Aim for Change

By the end of the lesson, we will: **COMPREHEND** Paul’s message of joy in the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; **REFLECT** on the variety of motives for proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and **FASHION** a personal proclamation of the Gospel.

In Focus

Many things come into our lives that challenge our public witness. People are watching to see if we are for real. Paul teaches us how to walk with God through the fires of life.

Focal Verses

Philippians 1:15–26

15 Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:

16 The one preaches Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds:

17 But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defense of the gospel.

18 What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.

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.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labor: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having 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.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

The Lesson

I. The People, Places and Times

Prison. During the time the New Testament was written, people would be imprisoned for nonpayment of debt (**Matthew 5:25–26**), political insurrection, criminal acts (Luke 23:19, 25), and for certain religious practices (**Acts 8:3**). The Apostle Paul on several occasions was imprisoned. On one occasion, while in maximum security or solitary confinement; he and Silas feet were placed in stocks (**Acts 16:23–24**). Paul was detained in a Roman barracks (**Acts 23:11–18**). In Caesarea, Paul’s confinement allowed him some freedom, to have visitors (**Acts 23:33–35**). As he awaited trial in Rome, under house arrest, Paul was guarded constantly (**Acts 28:16–17, 30**). While there, he met his own expenses and was free to receive visitors and preach the Gospel.

Roman Empire. At the beginning of the Christian movement, several emperors ruled the Roman empire. Most of Paul’s ministry is believed to have occurred under the reign of Gaius (Caligula, A.D. 37–41) and his aging uncle Claudius (A.D. 41–54). Claudius reportedly expelled some Jews from Rome because they were allegedly creating trouble with their effort to spread the Gospel. It is believed both Paul and Peter were martyred during Nero’s reign (A.D. 54–68), perhaps in connection with the burning of Rome in A.D. 64, an event for which Nero blamed Christians.

Background: Some people can devote themselves to encouraging others during their own struggle. Many terminally-ill children, instead of feeling sorry for themselves, have been a source of encouragement for the families they leave behind. Paul was encouraging to his Christian family. Even as he sat in prison, his letter was full of love, inspiration, and instruction to those who were continuing the work. It is very likely that his co-laborers in Christ were feeling worse about Paul’s imprisonment than he was. Paul recognized that his release from prison was uncertain. However, as he contemplated his fate, Paul did not lose faith in God. He did not become bitter or angry about his

circumstances. He did not cease the work to which he had been called. Through good times and trials, Paul remained faithful to God and his task.

II. In Depth

1. A New Effort (Philippians 1:15–18) Paul’s confinement led to many new efforts to spread the Gospel.

2. A Certain Victory (Philippians 1:19–26) Paul was confident that his experience— of being both jailed and harassed by rival Christians—would lead to victory.

III. Take Aways

IV. Closing Prayer