



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - Philippians Study

Week 2 - Day 1

Approaching God

Read Psalm 42:1-2 - **1** As the deer pants for streams of water, so my soul pants for you, my God. **2** My soul thirsts for God, for the living God. When can I go and meet with God?

Quiet times are dedicated times each day set aside to connect with God — to adore Him, to behold Him, to hear what He has to say to us through scripture, and to respond in prayer as God renews and transforms us. “Quiet” means simply finding a place and time where you can be still. Do you have a place like that today? Where could you find it? “Time” is a regular and consistent time each day set aside to read and pray. Using that time for knowing and loving God is what this time is all about. Re-read Psalm 42 and make that your prayer this morning as enter into some quiet time with him.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Philippians 1:12-18

One of the more memorable faith statements in the Old Testament occurs when Joseph says to his brothers who sold him into slavery, “What you meant for evil, God meant it for good.” (Gen. 50:20) In Philippians 1, Paul seems to have something of the same robust confidence in God’s overruling power, even when everything seems to be going wrong. Where do you see that in this passage today?

Use this space to write out some key words that jump out to you as you read.

Philippians 1:12-18 - **12** I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel, **13** so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. **14** And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. **15** Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. **16** The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. **17** The former proclaim Christ out of rivalry, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. **18** What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words. Which words or phrases stand out to you as significant, important? Is anything repeated or emphasized?

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

- How would you describe Paul’s mood throughout this passage? What is priority number one for him in his life mission? What’s his focus?
- How would the Phillipians felt about Paul being in a Roman prison cell? How would Paul’s words have brought comfort and encouragement to the Phillipians?
- What can we learn about God’s sovereignty from the reality that Paul’s imprisonment advanced the Gospel?

Meditation & Reflection Questions

- How is Jesus and my need for him seen in this passage? Where do you feel need or weakness today as you read this text? How can you pray for that?
- How does Paul’s perspective amidst trials along with his heart for the advancement of the Gospel encourage you? How does it challenge you?

Close in Prayer:

Start by entering into a spirit of praise and thanksgiving. Think about a time when you have been faced with seemingly insurmountable problems, and seen God work good things out of them? How did the experience affect your faith? Thank him for that, then bring to him the places in your life where the deck feels stacked against you right now. Present them, or “cast them” to God knowing he cares for you.

Commentary on Philippians 1:12-18

As he writes the letter to the Philippians, Paul is faced with two problems, one on top of the other. In both cases he declares that what looks like a major difficulty is being turned by God into an opportunity for the gospel. The first part of the problem is that he's in prison. For a traveling apostle to be put in prison must have seemed like a concern pianist having his hands tied behind his back. The second problem is that there are people going around talking about King Jesus who don't really mean it. They don't believe the message; they merely want to make more trouble for Paul and his imprisonment. Paul, with his strong belief in the way God works through unlikely circumstances, is ready with an answer.

vs 13 - The imperial or palace guard is literally the "praetorium," that is, the praetorian guard, the emperor's bodyguard. The word "praetorium" has a variety of meanings according to the context. (Mk. 15:16, Matt. 27:27, John 18:28) Having made his appeal to the Roman emperor, Paul was now the emperor's prisoner (although he thought of himself as a prisoner of Christ Jesus.) It was natural that the imperial soldier guarding Paul would be relieved by a comrade every four hours or so. News about this extraordinary prisoner would naturally spread through the praetorian barracks. In addition to the soldiers, there were others who were interested in Paul and his story. His gospel had become a topic of conversation in the capital, at the very heart of the empire. Thus Paul is filled with encouragement.

vs. 14 - One of the greatest results is that most of the other believers who heard of Paul's situation were more encouraged, confident, courageous (the word is the same as confident in 1:6) to speak about Jesus. Seeing Paul's boldness and confidence in the face of persecution and prison emboldened them to preach more fearlessly. Most people in general have some fear to speak of Christ. If they could see God using hard things to advance the gospel, it made sense that they could move forward in preaching even in fear of persecution and trust God to use them as well. One man's courage put away the fear of many. This should move us to be courageous for the sake of others. This also shows the importance of a team. We need each other, we need heroes and examples. When many are weak, we need one to step out and be strong and lead the way.

Another thing to note is that while the phrase "most of the brothers in the Lord," could refer only to professional ministers, it more likely refers to all Christians everywhere. This can be used to encourage believers in all different callings and vocations to speak of Christ to the lost in hopes that God might use them to save some.

vs. 15 - We are not exactly sure who Paul meant by those who preached Christ out of selfish ambition, without meaning it, trying to stir up trouble for him. Some think these people were a rival Christian group. While that's possible, it seems more likely they were ordinary pagans who are talking about the latest piece of community news. "Have you heard?" they'd say to each other. "They've caught that strange fellow Paul who's been going around saying there's a new king - a new emperor! And you won't believe it - this new king turns out to be a Jew they crucified a few years ago, and this jailbird is saying he's alive again and he's the real Lord of the world! What a dangerous lunatic this Paul character is!" Talk like that would be guaranteed to make people feel like Paul was a dangerous lunatic who should be kept locked up. But Paul's reaction is to celebrate. That's fine by me, he says. As long as people are going around saying that Jesus is the world's true Lord, I shall be happy.