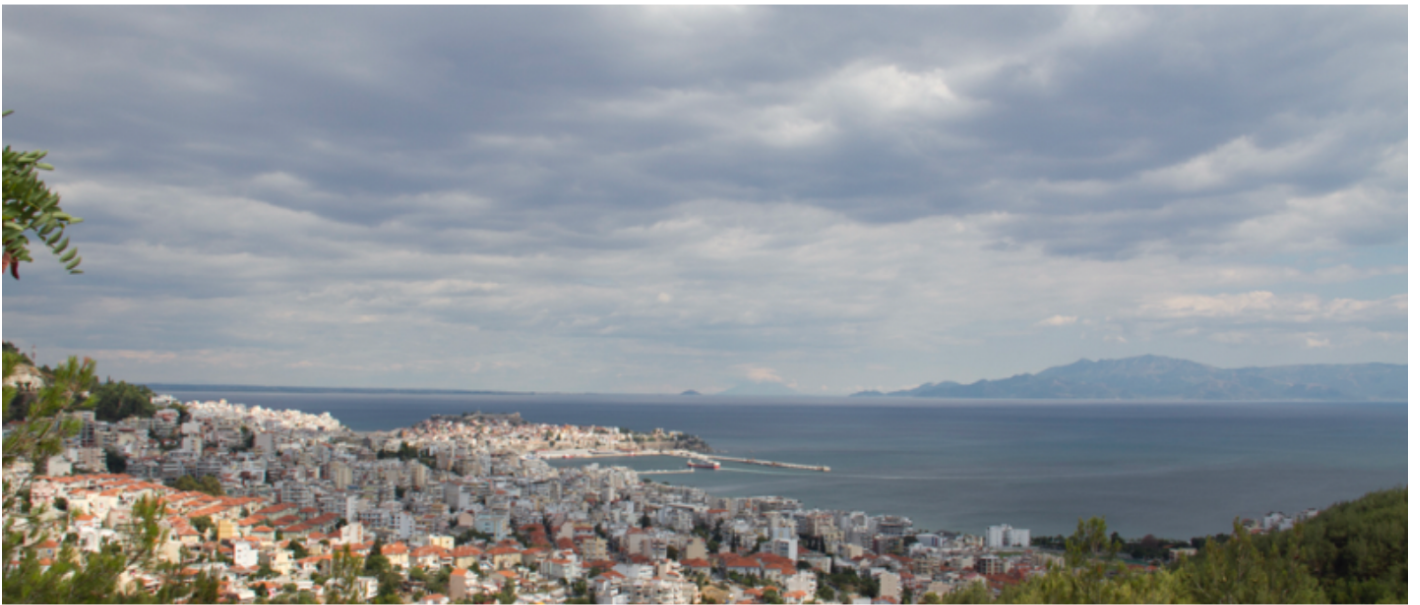


**THE JOY OF PROCLAIMING CHRIST:
A LETTER OF JOY SERIES**



**PHILIPPIANS 1:12-20
SERMON BY PASTOR ROMMEL INSIGNE**

The Joy of proclaiming the Gospel of Christ till He Returns
Philippians 1:12-20 / Sermon by Pastor Rommel Insigne

Introduction: How do we proclaim Christ? Does it give me joy to proclaim Christ? What is the benefit of proclaiming Christ? Can I really proclaim Christ as Christ did? Like Paul did? Like Timothy did? And all the apostles of Christ? Like the church in Philippi? What motivates our church to become healthier and more joyful in proclaiming Christ? What is our motivation as a church to proclaim the Gospel of Christ? **First**, let us begin our sermon by seeing how Paul was encouraged by God and the church in Philippi to become more confident in the Lord and continually rejoice in the Lord in proclaiming the Gospel. **Second**, how Paul and the church in Philippi became more courageous to speak the words of Christ. How did they progress under difficult circumstances and still have joy. **Third**, part of our discovery in our passage, by God's grace, is God's sovereignty in Paul's calling as an apostle and the church's calling to have joy and proclaim Christ. The sign of a healthy Gospel church that proclaims the truth of the Gospel is having a consistent joy in our hearts. I hope and pray that our faith will become stronger and deeper this year as we study this letter of Joy.

There are Three (3) Signs of a healthy Gospel Church:

- 1) It proclaims the Gospel (vss. 12-14);**
- 2) It defends the Truth (vss. 15-17);**
- 3) It exalts Christ (vss. 18-20)**

1) It proclaims the Gospel of Christ (Philippians 1:12-14):

12 Now I want you to know, brothers, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel, 13 so that my chains in Christ have become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else, 14 and that most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord because of my chains, have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.

Verse 12 Now I want you to know, brothers that my circumstances had turned out for the greater progress of the gospel. Paul was making an announcement of good news. Paul wants the church to understand his life and ministry and his spiritual and physical condition. And the result of his condition, whether bad or good. Paul was now letting them know what it meant by the death sentence, his sufferings and near-death experiences. Do you want to know the result of my worth and my spiritual condition and relationship with Christ? Do you want to know the results of my imprisonment? How it turned out? What was the result? Was it good or bad for the church? Does Paul and the disciples leave the church or abandon Christ? Did the proclamation of the Gospel stop or cease? Did the churches like the church in Rome and in Jerusalem close their churches? Or abandon their faith in Christ and His words? How did it turn out? What happens to Paul spiritually? How did the church become spiritually mature and immature? This is for your advantage and

advancement of the Gospel and growth of your church. Paul wanted the church to know everything so they would be more encouraged. This is about the proclamation of the Gospel and how to proclaim the Gospel of Christ from start to finish. The answer to all the questions was the result: the Gospel was spreading, and a greater number of influential people in the government, like kings and their wives and governors and their wives and the influential people, have been hearing the Gospel of Christ. In spite of his imprisonment and suffering for the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ, Paul was in prison and in chains. Not because he was a wicked criminal but an apostle of Christ. A bond slave of Christ. My circumstances actually made the Gospel more known. It's not an easy way job or ministry of reconciliation. It was a hard and big and never-ending proclamation of the gospel. Many concerns and issues. And the constraints that Paul was going through (from Rome, the world and satan).

Why did it progress? Why did the Gospel spread? Paul gave two examples of what it means to say "the greater progress of the Gospel." Let us read **verse 13 "so that my chains in Christ have become well known throughout the whole praetorian guard and to everyone else."** The phrase "well known" The gospel of Christ was well presented and widely proclaimed. Making the Chains in Christ clearly visible and known. Exposing everyone to the Gospel of Christ. What is this EVANGELION of Christ? Paul became popular not based on achievement, but his chains and imprisonment for the Gospel, the good news and suffering and the death and resurrection of Christ became popular. Many people were being exposed to the Gospel of Christ. What a joy. The Gospel spread in Rome because of Paul's commitment to Christ in chains and not in chains. Where was the Gospel spread and proclaimed? Throughout the whole praetorian guards. This means the whole Roman soldiers guarding him and the palace. Officers, high-ranking officers, ordinary Roman guards, and soldiers guarding the governor's home and place have heard the Gospel. But the Gospel of Christ didn't stop in the governor's palace; Paul continued by saying, **and to everyone else**. The whole people were curious about Paul's imprisonment and his message and teachings of the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. According to Acts 28, as the letter of Luke is about to finish, Luke said in verses 30-31, 30 And he stayed two full years in his own rented quarters and was welcoming all who came to him, 31 preaching the kingdom of God and teaching concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered.

The Gospel of Christ was spreading among the Roman soldiers and officers guarding the governor's palace and all Roman citizens who wanted to listen to Paul's preaching and teaching of the Gospel of Christ. The Gospel was openly preached and unhindered. No one stopped Paul. No one persecuted Paul for preaching the Gospel in his exiled room. In fact, they even went to his imprisonment and, most likely, a better room to accommodate people to listen to the Gospel of Christ. God was really amazing and good to Paul and to the church. That was an encouragement from Paul, not only to strengthen his faith and calling from God and from Christ. But also to strengthen the faith of the churches, especially the church in Philippi. The result of my suffering and

imprisonment for Christ (both literal chains and spiritually in Chains for Christ) was the greater progress of the Gospel. Paul was writing for the church to know God's faithfulness to him as a slave servant (Doulos) for Christ. Everyone was exposed to the Gospel of Christ in Rome.

The second result of his suffering and imprisonment and his faithfulness to the preaching of the Gospel as a slave of Christ is that most followers of Christ in Rome became more confident in the Lord, courageous and without fear to speak the word of God. Paul mentioned, **“and most of the brothers.”** This is say most of the followers and disciples of Christ is what Paul meant here. The church here is not only bench warmers or mediocre or lazy Christians who have no purpose and meaning. They were not mediocre and ordinary in their service to God. Paul said that most of the brothers with a greater number of church members have **become confident in the Lord**. A great number of church members have the confidence in the Lord to do more for Christ and His Gospel. When they saw Paul's imprisonment and how Paul went through all the bad, unfortunate circumstances in his life and mission and journeys. But still, Paul remained faithful and kept preaching the Gospel. It turned out or transformed the lives of many believers in Christ, and the Gospel spread to all Roman cities.

The word confidence in Greek means fully convinced and persuaded, fully converted to Christ and became available, faithful and teachable to the spreading of the Gospel. They have a whole heart and faith in God and in Christ and His Word. Fully trusted Christ as the Saviour of their souls. God and Christ are their joy, hope and peace. God loved them, saved them, and gave them joy and laughter in their present life and ministry and future life. Maybe not a complete joy and laughter in their present state of life and calling and in the past, but in their future life with God in heaven is the completion of joy.

We have the saying that when people see their divorce and separation, and death and failures, and mistakes from the past, we laugh and joke about it. right? But having confidence in the Lord is seeing the future, and our future is better than the past and present world. Our laughter and happiness are not based on what we achieved in the past and have in the present but on the future. Our confidence is Christ and the future promise of Christ. Not the promise of riches and wealth and good education and good marriage and family of our children, fame and popularity that present and future. But in the Lord is our confidence and the future blessing and spiritual inheritance we have in Christ.

My and our permanent residency and citizenship is in heaven. I and fellow believers in Christ will reign with Christ here on earth for 1,000 years. Meaning believers will rule with Christ. A perfect government, the prince of peace, the mighty God of the world. The wonderful counsellor and eternal Father. That is our future. That is why they have confidence in the Lord, past, present, and future. Their (believers in Rome) confidence and our confidence, trust, hope, strength, and motivation are in Christ our Lord alone and are not on what Donald Trump said in his many speeches last Monday and Tuesday and all the executive orders signed. America and Australia will

continue to fail us and frustrate us. They will continue to compromise against the Kingdom of Christ. The Kingdom of Christ is not in this world yet. This is the kingdom of the world system.

There is no perfect and peaceful government while we live here in this world. The kingdom of this world, even though they say, "In God We Trust," and it is honouring to God and Christ, this government will fail you and me. OUR CONFIDENCE IS NOT FOUND IN OUR LEADERS AND POLITICIANS. OUR CONFIDENCE SHOULD BE FOUND IN CHRIST ALONE. Our persuasion and influence to live is Christ. We prevail because of Christ. Our confidence to speak the word of Christ is having a relationship with Christ. He is our confidence in life and ministry, especially in proclaiming the Gospel. For Paul, his confidence and the church in Rome and in Philippi, and our confidence should be in Christ alone. Whether we are in chains, in trouble, and in hardship in our personal life, marriage, family and ministry. Believe in God's sovereignty. The Gospel will continue to spread whatever we are going through in the ministry. Just remain faithful.

What gives them and gives us confidence in the Lord? Because of my chains, Paul said. Paul's willingness to trust God and Christ, His words. In spite of Paul being in chains and prison and going through a lot of hardship and suffering in Rome, the church continues to grow in faith, trust and confidence in Christ. Their faith and confidence in the Lord Jesus Christ are becoming more and more visible, unashamed, without fear, strong, and courageous.

What kind of confidence in the Lord they have as a church? The church already has faith and courage to preach the Gospel of Christ. But Paul said that many church members **have far more courage to speak the word of God without fear.** The Greek word "**having far more**" means greater courage and greater confidence, not afraid anymore of imprisonment and suffering and dying for Christ. Having purpose and mission in life. Not afraid of being poor and nothing and being called rubbish in this world. Courage means in Greek TOLMAO. Being more and more bold. Becoming more and more daring and unafraid of anyone except Jesus Christ, their God. The church is becoming more and more devoted, committed and one mind and one heart for God. Becoming more and more holy and righteous and godly and pure in the eyes of men and to God. Willing to be persecuted and put themselves in danger. Willing to suffer like Paul as having chains in Christ.

This means their courage, boldness, and daringness, and to subject themselves to shame and humiliation, imprisonment is more and more evident. Their motivation is their confidence in the Lord. They knew the Lord had called them; they knew God would give them wisdom and strength; they knew the Lord would protect them and provide for their needs and the needs of their families. They knew they would suffer and die in chains and imprisonment in their faith in Christ; they knew the Lord would bring them to His eternal Kingdom. A better place, a better life. No more sin, tears, suffering, separation and evil where eternal love, joy, and peace are found.

I always have my prayer walk daily as much as possible with Marjorie or alone before studying. But there is one house that I normally pass by every morning. While I was walking on the right jogging path, two big dogs came out of the house without leashes. Both dogs approached me

and were ready to attack me and hurt me. I backed off and took a long stick but a weak stick. The owner lady said to me, don't hurt my dogs. And I said to myself. Your dogs are ready to kill me. Obviously, I was afraid of those dogs and ready to defend myself. Either they kill me, or I kill them. According to Paul, the church was becoming more courageous and fearless in presenting Christ and speaking the words of God. Ready to defend and guard the Gospel. Ready to spread the Good News of Christ. But willing to suffer and die. They were not willing to revolt with their arms, swords, knives and guns. But by the word of God, most members are ready. The church members got the point. The church saw Paul's testimony, they saw the spread of the Gospel and saw how many got converted to the Gospel. Their confidence in the Lord becomes strong.

Christ alone is only our weapon of defence and offence. Speaking the word of God means teaching God and His creation and His wonderful plan for the world. Christ has come by a virgin birth. The pure son of David. The Son of God. He is the Messiah mentioned by Isaiah, Jeremiah, David, Daniel, Micah, Zachariah. John the Baptist. The Saviour of the world who will take away the sins, your sins, and the world. But they are more and more courageous to speak the word of God. Their confidence in God and Christ. And now, no one could ever stop them from proclaiming Christ. This is now their purpose and meaning and mission and their Joy! To Speak the word of God. This is what it means to speak with courage the word of God without fear.

To speak God's word with confidence, courage and without fear is to believe Christ is the only way to salvation. His Word is reliable and trustworthy. The word of God is our wisdom and strength. To speak the word of God is to speak on a regular basis. When there is an opportunity, you open your mouth and, in prayer proclaim the truth and the Gospel. Having confidence in the Lord, having more courage to speak and being willing to face persecution without fear and trembling. This is the joy of Paul, and this is why Paul was rejoicing and full of joy. The Gospel is spreading in Rome in spite of his imprisonment and chains, and the church is growing in confidence in the Lord.

The sign of a healthy Gospel church is **it proclaims the Gospel everywhere**. Again, what does it mean to proclaim the Gospel church? First, our faithfulness to Christ and consistency in Christ, whether in riches or in need (Paul demonstrated it), we are faithful. We do not compromise our faith in God to the world system. Our trust and confidence in Christ our Lord alone and no one else (He is our Saviour and our help in times of need). Having a growing and active faith, courage and boldness to speak the word of God. We directly teach God's word (the Gospel and His sovereign plan in this world and in the future). Lastly, for this point, speaking the word of God without fear. You and I have no fear. You are willing to suffer and be disliked and abandoned by your friends and even family members. My family members are the church, the people of God, not my relatives. Those who put their trust, faith, and confidence in the Lord are true believers of Christ.

Let us read Psalm 19:7-10 says, 7 The law of Yahweh is perfect, restoring the soul; The testimony of Yahweh is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The precepts of Yahweh are right, rejoicing

the heart; The commandment of Yahweh is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of Yahweh is clean, enduring forever; The judgments of Yahweh are true; they are righteous altogether. 10 They are more desirable than gold, even more than much fine gold; Sweeter also than honey and the drippings of the honeycomb.

2) It defends the Truth (Philippians 1:15-18)

15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; 16 the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; 17 the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me affliction in my chains.

The next point we want to know about this text from verses 15-17 (3 verses) is that the church should and must love the truth of Christ and His Gospel. They need to be holy and pure. Paul introduced this next point: there is a division in the church. There is an issue and problem in the church. What kind of division? There are two camps. The first camp is the camp that hated and envied Paul and other faithful men and women in the church. They disliked Paul's teachings, theology, doctrine, and leadership. They have envy, and they spread strife. The other camp is the camp of Paul. Paul said they are pleasing and doing good pleasure to Paul, especially to the Kingdom of God. They do it in love. Doing it for Christ and in defence of Paul as the true apostle of Christ. Who was appointed and called by God to reach the gentile world with the Gospel. But they are causing pain and hardship to Paul and the cause of the Gospel. Actually, that was their motive to inflict pain and discouragement on Paul. That is why they think to hurt Paul. But Paul won't be hurt. Why?

Let us see now what is going on in the church in the church. Let us read verse **15 Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife**. Obviously, this group of people (but not many) are heralding the Good News of Christ as the Messiah it seems like they are preaching the right Gospel and about Christ. Persuading and proclaiming about the life of Christ and the ministry of Christ. Preaching about the Gospel of Christ. But Paul said, yes, they are preaching Christ the Messiah, the risen Saviour and Lord, but they have envy and strife. To be sure they preach and their teaching and doctrine regarding the Gospel message is right and on the spot by the grace of God.

What is envy? In Greek (PHTHONOS / Python), it means resentment and jealousy toward the success or possession of another. You are feeling bad and insecure and having ill will, so you want what he or she possesses. You want to get it by hook or by crook. It is wickedness like a snake, diabolical; it is evil and sinful; it is a fire that goes wayward and soars high. Proverbs 14:30 says, Envy is the rottenness of the bones. Envy will not inherit the Kingdom of God.

For example, the reason why the chief priests and all the religious people wanted to put Jesus to death was because of envy. They knew Jesus was better in everything compared to them. Jesus possessed the righteousness of God, but the religious leaders were self-righteous. They envied

Him because Jesus was truthful, sincere, and loving. He was an amazing teacher. All of Israel was amazed by His teachings. He performed signs and wonders and miracles and healing. But the religious leaders had none or nothing to perform. Jesus had more crowds and followers, and the religious leaders feared losing their positions, jobs, influence, and money.

Some envied Paul, they envied Jesus, and these people envied successful Christians. So they tried to steal the influence of Paul and Timothy, so the focus would be on them, not Paul. They obviously bring ungodliness and unrighteousness. It displeases and dishonours God. How can you preach and lead the church and serve in the church with people who have envy, jealousy and strife or division? For the church or congregation to have these things, this is immaturity. What is the result of envy or the application of envy? STRIFE.

What is strife? In Greek **ERIS**. They produce conflict and heated debate that is non-sense and unedifying and unholy, and it disgraced God's name and His work. Strife creates division, quarrels, discord, disunity, and contention that is not beneficial, worthless and unprofitable spiritually and relationally to the church and destroys the Christian witness in the community. The church becomes an immature church. Jonathan Edwards said, I quote: "Christianity cannot flourish in a time of strife and contention among its fellow believers." (end of quote)

Some people in the church are creating trouble, difficulties, and disunity. They bring joyless life to the church. But on the righteous side, some people in the church were really faithful to the call of God from faith, salvation and sanctification, and theology and doctrine. Paul said, **but some also from good will**. What is good will? These people who we can classify are faithful to Christ and to His Word. Faithful to the call. They have a saving and sustaining faith in Christ. They knew Christ and salvation alone only through Christ. They lived out sanctification. They have not exercised envy and created strife and instigators of strife, division and false teaching. They showed a pleasing life of service to God. They are not a burden, but they are faithful to the call of God. God delights in them, and they are well-tested and approved followers of Christ. They are faithful in chains for Christ, defenders of the Gospel, they are steadfast and firm in their faith and theology, and they are committed to being part of the fellowship of Christ and the church by the grace of God (Philippians 1:7).

Now let us read verse 16 because Paul will compare and judge what is the right kind of church or congregation that the Lord and Paul support. Not envy and not strife but doing things that please God. They are delightful to be with because they are godly and righteous. They are faithful in preaching the Gospel and faithful in their godly character and fruit of righteousness (good works). This is what Paul assessed as the best church life and ministry; in **verse 16, the latter do it out of love**. Some members of the church had abandoned envy and strife. What they did to serve Christ and Paul, **The latter do it out of love**. The word latter in the original writing is not included but to make the sentence more clear or clarity based on the context. The group who honours God and gives pleasure to God they do it out of God's love. They have true and sincere love for God and for

the church. Love for righteousness and integrity, sincerity and truthfulness. They have the fruit of righteousness. They have the love of God in their hearts, love for people in the church, and compassion for the immature faith. Because they fear God and want to honour God and not their own bodies and self-interest, that group is more pleasing to God and not the group who have envy and strife in their hearts and behaviour.

Why did Paul support the group that did not promote strife and not enviers? First, they have love. The group is mature and growing in faith in the Lord. Second, they supported the calling of Paul as the true apostle and servant of Christ. So, this group doesn't envy Paul's calling, preachings, and writings. They knew Paul was appointed by God to spread the Gospel to the Gentile world, to disciple them and to teach the words of God to them. They knew his calling is God's sovereign work and we cannot question God anymore. This is what Paul wrote to the church who supported and believed in the calling of Paul as an apostle of Jesus Christ. As Paul said, **"knowing that I am appointed for the defence of the gospel,"** Paul knows that the church who follows Christ knows in their hearts and minds the love and care of Paul to them, to the church in Philippi and other churches. They knew Paul was a sincere and truthful man of God. They knew God called Paul to be an apostle of Jesus Christ. He was appointed to be an apostle of Christ. We can see it in his works, achievements and hardships. His faithfulness his teachings, doctrines, and love for God and for Christ.

But most important of all, we know today, and all of them know in Rome and in Philippi, that Paul was not a perfect apostle and a good communicator of the Gospel. But when he teaches, it is perfect theology and teaching the word of God right, dividing the word of truth for the glory of God and of Christ. Paul here needed to defend his calling as a defender of the Gospel of Christ. Paul knew he was called to reach out to the gentile world. Called to suffer and even die for the sake of the Gospel. God called him to preach and defend the Good News (APOLOGIA).

His calling, his appointment and his presence in the office of apostleship are from God and specifically was called for the defence of the Gospel truth. His calling is from Jesus Christ Himself. When Paul met Jesus on the road to Damascus, his calling from Christ was to preach the Gospel message to the gentile world, to kings and governors, and to the people of Israel. Jesus even prophesied Paul's suffering for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 9:1-17). His message is only Jesus Christ, the power, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Nothing more and nothing less. Paul demonstrated love and pure love for the Gospel message and preaching not envy and strife. But only the truth of God's salvation and living the Christian life according to the word of God.

Paul continues to correct the wrong attitude and behaviour of people who are envious of him and, as a result, creating strife in the church. In **verse 17 "the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives."** In spite of their evil bad attitude and behaviour towards Paul and the church, they still preach Christ. However, you are the one to judge. These

people are envious and create strife and division. And at the same time, they preach Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives. What is selfish ambition? It looks like envying as well by definition and implication. But it is a lustful desire to possess what you already have, and they do not care how you feel, the hurt and the consequences of their actions. These people are doing it for Christ's glory but at the same time for their own selfish interests. Their ambition was most likely to take over the congregation and sidestepped Paul as an apostle. Lead the church without under the influence of Paul. They wanted position, influence and money. Fame and recognition. They do not care what the church and the community will feel. They will get what they want for their own pleasure and selfish ambition. Paul recognises their motives.

Paul was expecting that the church should be and must be teaching and proclaiming the Gospel truth with the right and **“rather than from pure motive.”** What is the right and pure motive? Having a righteous, holy, and sanctified life separated life from the worldly culture.: A selfless life, a righteous life, having a content life. A secure and fulfilled life and ministry. Forgiving and not creating division but unity and pursuing edification. Building the church for growth. A loving congregation who loves God and knows how to love one another. Those who preach the Gospel with the right motive and right heart, sincere and genuine and truthful heart, love the church because they want them to have salvation in Christ and enjoy their relationship with Christ until He comes back. That the people who believe Jesus Christ is the Messiah and Lord and God will be transformed into the image and likeness of Jesus Christ. Not to take advantage of them but to live their lives according to the will of God, confession of their sins, and repentance from their sins. And living a sanctified life.

The evil presence in the congregation does contribute to the joy and growth of the church. They divide the church and destroy the church's life and growth. That is why Paul said, **“thinking to cause me affliction in my chains.”** Instead of thinking about what is good, noble, and right. What is loving and kind and pleasing to God. Instead of thinking about how to preach the Gospel and expand the Gospel around the world, it gives me more pain, hardship and distress in the church. Some people are preventing us from growing and having peace and unity. Joy in the ministry. But they think they can give me more harm and depression and pain and hardship in my affliction. They will not succeed in destroying me. But also in my imprisonment, and now I am in chains, but according to Paul, that is what they think brings more afflictions, pains, and suffering, so I will be discouraged and leave the church. Paul knew his Lord and his calling and the sovereign work of God in his life. His pain and affliction actually brought more salvation and the spread of the Gospel. Many of the brothers even now standing for Christ with courage, without fear in speaking the word of God.

Churches are not exempted from sinful people. All of us have the capacity to hurt one another. However, a truly transformed and sincerely wanting to know Christ, love Christ and serve Christ will create peace, joy, unity and growth. They edify the church, and they love the church.

They do not bring trouble and scandal, but they bring sincere love and truth to the church. Paul chose the truth, the Gospel truth. Having the Truth will bear fruit of righteousness. Good works. Right theology and right doctrine. Right love (active, selfless, and sacrificial love to the church). The true sign of a healthy gospel church is it proclaims Christ alone, they love the truth of God's word. They trust the Lord more. Their confidence is in the Lord, and they have courage and without fear in speaking the word of God. For Paul, if we know Christ and preach Christ, we preach with the right and pure motive. We serve and proclaim Christ with sincerity and truthfulness. We discern what is right and truthful. We defend the truth, and we bring righteousness and godliness to the church. Not envy, strife, wrong and selfish motives. We do not bring pain, agony, division, hardship, trouble, and distress to the church.

A true gospel church and a faithful organic growing and bear fruit of righteousness church is a loving church. A loving church loves Christ and loves the people in the church. They do not create trouble but edify the church and build up the church for the glory of Christ. We will not be hurt by whatever affliction they give and throw at us. If we got hurt only momentarily. Short-lived of depression and anger. We forgive, and we continue to rejoice, knowing that God is sovereign and all things work together for good to those who love God and to those who are called according to His purpose.

3) It exalts Christ (Philippians 1:18-20)

18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice,

19 for I know that THIS WILL TURN OUT FOR MY SALVATION through your prayers and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to shame in anything, but that with all boldness, Christ will even now, as always, be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.

Our last point is that for a healthy church to be healthy, it must not only proclaim and preach the Gospel but also defend the truth and love the church. Our last point, it exalts Christ (magnifies Christ). Let us read verse **18 What then?** This is obviously an interrogative question and a rhetorical question. What then? How can we live in the truth? How can we exalt Christ and His Gospel and become a healthy church? Paul said Christ must be proclaimed and preached. The Gospel must spread and preach to everyone. Paul answered this rhetorical question, **“Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed.”** What does this mean to the faithful Gospel church and healthy and joyful church? Only that in every way implies if some people proclaim Christ with wrong motives like they are envious and creating strife and division or in pretence if Christ is being preached and proclaimed, I rejoice, and I will continue to rejoice. It means whether they are envious of Paul and spread lies of division, and their motives are not right

and operating with selfish ambition, as long they preach Christ, it is alright. Paul blessed them still in spite of their immaturities, Christ is preached, **“In this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice.”**

The word pretence means in Greek “to pretend,” “to excuse”, or “to claim” (having a valid excuse). Like seemingly there is an allegation that he might be a good person or a bad person. Pretence can mean to be like trying their best to be the best preachers and servant leaders, elders and deacons, but they create division and disunity. They envy and create strife. Their Christian life is inconsistent. They are doing this with the wrong motive: to gain something for themselves. They want to hurt Paul and disregard him as the best apostle of Jesus Christ. They wanted him out, and they wanted the people to know that Paul was gone and he was unreliable. Paul was not a good preacher. We are better than Paul. Believe us, and do not believe Paul. They are destroying Paul’s good reputation and calling as an apostle. They might have genuine compassion and care for the lost and the church despite their pretence. That is why, for Paul, I rejoice, and yes, I will even rejoice again and even more and more. As long the Gospel of Christ is preached, and Christ the Messiah is preached, I rejoice. What more if the Gospel of Christ is preached and the life and character and Sonship of Christ is preached, much more I rejoice, and I will rejoice more and more. and continue to rejoice.

Paul also said, **“or in truth.”** In Greek ALETHEIA. A sincere student of God’s Word. Who have a whole heart for God and for the commands of Christ to go and make disciples. A truthful Christian decided not to gain from anything or not for sordid gain. But rather willing to suffer for Christ. This believer is truthful in doctrine and sanctification. He knows the truth and lives in the truth of the Gospel and the truth of the word of God. Christ is the Truth, and living in the truth of Christ is our mission in life. To preach the Gospel, to live like Christ, and to glorify and exalt God and Jesus Christ.

However, for Paul, whether these people are sincere or insincere. Truthful or untruthful. Selfless or selfish. Right (pure) motive or wrong motive (impure) as long they both preach Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour. The Messiah who came born by a virgin birth, and in this I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice. Paul will rejoice (CHAIRO). To rejoice means to be glad and feel happy or have joy. It gives him joy and happiness. It is to hail. It is a welcome greeting. It is a welcome treat. I rejoice because you preached Christ. Yes, I will rejoice more if you continue to preach Christ. I will be more happy and glad and hail and praise God for the Gospel being preached. Christ is being preached and exalted.

Whether you preach Christ is **pretence or in truth, I rejoice** and will continue to rejoice if you faithfully preach Christ. Share Christ and make His name known and His works on the cross to everyone. Even though it hurts me, destroys his ministry, and discourages the church from disliking Paul and believing. It is ok to allow them to go ahead as long they preach Christ and teach right. I rejoice, and I will continue to rejoice. Paul was humble, and he knows God is sovereign, if they are

true followers of Christ, they will be convicted and repent. If they are not a true follower of Christ, they will not last and will eventually stop. God will put them to shame.

We want to preach Christ with a right heart and motive. We are sincere and truthful. We are doing it not for money or sordid gain but for the salvation of many and the command of Christ to make disciples. Maybe repent from pretending that you care and you love the lost. Show sincerity. Teach and present Christ. Love people and forgive people. Be selfless and show genuine compassion. Whether you become unpopular or poor, let us share Christ. What is the motive of Paul saying these words, "I rejoice in spite some of the people are just pretenders and not sincere." What was really the advocacy of Paul? Was it to have two gods? Preach Christ and pretend that it is alright to envy one another and create division. Or the second, preach Christ with pure and sincere motive? Let us answer this question by reading our last two, verses 19 and 20 and see and learn from Paul what was the right and pure motive and intention in proclaiming Jesus Christ our Lord.

In verse 19 for I know that THIS WILL TURN OUT FOR MY SALVATION through your prayers.

What does Paul mean by this statement about himself and his calling and service to God? In context, when pretence and who love the truth of God's word preach Christ and help people be disciples of Christ, his good works and his faith in Christ will be justified. The works he invested in preaching Christ are not in vain. I will still rejoice, and affliction will not bother me long. Paul said, **"For I know that. . ."** This is what Paul meant. This is living by faith. When people spread the Gospel and preach Christ, something good will happen to the souls of men. And the result is **"THIS WILL TURN OUT FOR MY SALVATION."** The certainty of them preaching the Gospel of Christ will turn to my advantage. My good works of preaching the Gospel are affirmed. Paul's attitude toward Christ and preaching are all perfectly Christ-centred and God honouring service to God. It affirms that the salvation I received from the Lord is true. God indeed called me to reach out to the Gentiles. This will turn out or will result to my own advantage and blessing. My suffering is not a curse. It is not a punishment for my sins. That my obedience to God and to Christ is worthwhile. God is a worthy God; He saved me completely and continuously. This suffering and the progress of the Gospel are testimonies of God's faithfulness to me that I am saved and continually being by God. Paul was saved because someone led him to Christ, and the Lord keeps pursuing him and saving him by his grace and mercy. Giving him saving faith to continue on. He is being saved from false teachings and false doctrines. In his life-threatening journeys for years. My ship-wrecked experiences, staying overnight in the ocean, and being stoned to death, and now my imprisonment. These are all God's sovereign plans to save many and for the gospel to progress. Therefore, this is not suffering that is in vain or useless. These sufferings have eternal dividends. Paul's prayer and desire is for the church to preach Christ and make disciples as Christ commanded them to go and make disciples even if they suffer. Their preaching of the Gospel plus suffering for the Gospel

affirmed my salvation and calling, eternal life in heaven. It also affirmed that one day, God will allow him to be free from this imprisonment.

Preach Christ and make disciples for our sanity and growth. Coming to church without church involvement and service to Christ, you and I are still prone to temptations and sin. We will hurt our marriage and family. That is why to preach Christ is for all believers to obey. Because someone shared Christ with us, we see the salvation of God is true. We become more sober and humble. We become reflective and meditative. We become more discerning, and seeing time is precious.

How did Paul attain saving grace? How did he continue to rejoice and continue to rejoice in the Lord? In spite of the bad people in the church versus good people in the church, how does this turn for my salvation? Paul was assured many would be saved. But what would be God's instruments? How long? Who will be the instrument God will use to affirm my salvation is genuine? that I am saved by the grace of God and called by God?

Four ways God is saving us in our Christian life and walk:

a) through your prayers. Prayers of the body of Christ (The church in Philippi) and His church backing up Paul in prayer. Asking God to extend the life of Paul and use him more and more in building the Kingdom of God. This is to show us how important our prayers are. Paul wants the church to pray for the reason of his salvation from chains, imprisonment, and even death. Prayer for the greater progress of the Gospel of Christ. The righteous prayers of faithful men and women avail much and it is effective. (2 Corinthians 1:8-11; James 5:16)

b) and the provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. This is the help, support and guidance of the Holy Spirit and Christ Himself, the Word of God. The filling (abundantly filled) of the Holy Spirit being directed, guided, and supported is being filled with the knowledge of God's Word. This is what Paul experienced; he is being saved by God by the prayers of the church in Philippi and by God's Spirit and the words of Christ in his life and ministry.

c) According to my earnest expectation (vs 20). What does this mean? Desiring God's saving grace and His ongoing salvation on Paul and spiritual growth. Paul knows God has the ability to save him continually. Paul had this earnest prayer and high expectation of God's saving grace, providence, and miracle. This is his earnest expectation. He knows God will bless and use Him. He knows God called Him to be an apostle. He knows God will be on His side. God will never abandon him. His focus is on God's ability to save him, and the ability can save anyone. God can build more churches, and God will not abandon His church. Nothing is impossible with God. He can change the hearts of unbelievers even though he is the most wicked, immoral person in the world. He knows God is all powerful God. He can change the hearts of kings and queens, rich and wealthy people in this world. His confidence in in God alone. His expectation of God is high!

d) and hope (in Greek means ELPOIS). It is to expect favourable things. A better blessing and a better life. A better growth for the church. God will save more people. God can make this church a growing, healthy, organic church. Expecting a better result and a better life in heaven and with God for eternity. The hope of having the Holy Spirit as his helper and wisdom in this life. This is to say Paul's earnest expectation is God's saving grace is upon him, and He is faithful till the end of Paul's life. And having hope is a better life with God in heaven and a better ministry here on earth.

What will be the result of our Prayers, the provision of the Holy Spirit, earnest expectation, and hope?

1) that I will not be put to shame in anything (vs 20). This is to say God can answer our prayers. God's Spirit is our helper, our wisdom and comfort. Guide and strength. His words of Christ are our defence and offence. God is worthy of our trust. We love God. We love Christ. We desire God and deep connection and communion with God and Christ. We can fully trust His ways and sovereign plan in our lives, church, marriage and family. God is our hope when it seems there is no hope. God is the Blessed Hope. Our true joy and true life is in heaven and our eternal relationship with God.

When we have these spiritual things and the joy of having God and his saving grace, by God's grace, like what Paul said, I will not be put to shame in anything. No one. No other human beings and even false teachers and prophets. Or the government or any creatures in this world can destroy us or kill us. Put to shame means disgrace us, dishonour us, or destroy our reputation. Make us guilty and embarrass us. Put us into pieces and disfigure and destroy the church. Make the church ugly and unattractive. Or scandalise us and the church. What does it mean **in anything**? Wherever and whenever the Lord will lead me and us, the Lord will not put us to shame because of the grace of God.

Let us read Romans 8:37–39 “37 But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

We need prayers for one another (Paul asked for prayers). Leading of the Holy Spirit (we need God's wisdom and guidance, discernment and fear of God). We must desire and trust God's plan and sovereignty in our lives. We need to constantly hope for His coming and look forward to the Kingdom's coming. With this in our hearts and minds, He will not put us to shame in anything. He will not allow us to go through embarrassment and disgraced and dishonours by men that will lead as astray and fall away. We might fall to sin but not fall away. God Himself will help us finish the race. He will not allow us to quit and surrender. Put our flags down and quit Christian life and ministry. But this is all only by the grace of God. If we suffer, we suffer, but He will not allow us to be destroyed by the world and satan and false teachers of this world.

2) be magnified in my body. Let us continue reading half of verse **20b but that with all boldness.** Paul was very much assured and confident. Full of confidence to say this thing. With all boldness or courage to take every challenge, every road, every opportunity, every activity or circumstance we will be facing. Paul was fully bold and courageous, without fear and fully trusted the Lord. Every mission trip, going through the roadless travel. My boldness is firm and from Christ. As Paul was being assured that no one could put him down or put him to shame. No one can discourage him or afflict him to abandon his faith. Nothing and no one. Christ even gave me boldness, courage and confidence in the Lord as a result.

Christ will even now, as always, be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. Christ will be more exalted and magnified (will be praised, worshipped, honoured, declared great and powerful, full of glory and praise, Great God of the universe) in our lives from start to finish. Until the coming of Christ, and He will be with us always, even to the end of the age. The Lord will allow us to be with Him and help us to finish the race and complete our purpose here on earth (2 Timothy 4:7-8). He will be with us and give with boldness and courage. When we say body, it could be our whole being: Body, mind, and soul (spirit). We can also say the body of Christ. His church. But it seems it is the whole being of Paul. His body will be subjected to the proclamation of the Gospel. His emotions, mind, and soul. In every part of his life in Christ, Christ will be exalted more and more in his life. Be magnified and praised and honoured more and more. Our prayer is that Christ will be exalted and magnified all the more in our lives and ministries here on earth till we die and see Christ in heaven.

2 Timothy 4:7-8

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith.

8 In the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

Romans 14:7-9

7 For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself;

8 for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

Conclusion: 4 signs of a healthy Gospel church:

1 We proclaim Christ and His Gospel (vs 12-14)

2 We defend Christ and love His Truth (vs 15-17)

3) We exalt Christ till the end (vs 18-20)

Four ways to see the saving grace of God in our Christian life and walk: (vs 19-20a)

- a. Through your prayers.**
- b. The provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.**
- c. According to my earnest expectation**
- d. And hope,**

**What will be the result: Prayers, support of the Holy Spirit, earnest expectation, and hope?
(vs 20b)**

First result: God will not allow us to be put to shame in anything.

The second result: Christ will be exalted and magnified in our life and till we die.