

THE PAULINE PERSPECTIVE

Phil. 1:12-30

A. GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY IN CIRCUMSTANCES 1:12-18

1. Sometimes we only see God's hand when looking back
 - a. Paul wants them to learn from his experience
 - b. "Have actually turned out" and "it has become evident" show that it took the passage of time to find out; he didn't know this at first.
2. Paul focuses on the positive, Romans 8:2
 - a. Most of the church is emboldened by his imprisonment
 - b. Christ is being preached by more people
 - c. Even if some of them have wrong motives, the gospel is still being preached

B. PAUL'S DESIRE FOR HIMSELF, 1:19-26

1. Paul believes that the preaching of the gospel will result in his deliverance from prison.
2. At his trial, Paul wants to be bold for Christ and not to be put to shame by his adversaries.
3. Whatever happens, win or lose, release or death, he wants Christ to be exalted.
4. He is okay with either outcome: Alive = living for Christ; Dead = being with Christ.
5. Paul chooses not to tell them which he prefers – "What I shall choose I do not make known."
6. He desires to depart and be with Christ, 2 Cor. 5:8

C. PAUL'S DESIRE FOR THE CHURCH, 1:27-30

1. To live in a way that reflects properly on the gospel
 - a. What our outlook should be in the midst of affliction
 - b. How we handle adversity often has the greatest effect on those around us
2. Evidences of proper behavior
 - a. integrity: "whether I come and see you or am absent"
 - b. good testimony: "I may hear of your affairs"
 - c. perseverance: "stand fast"
 - d. unity of purpose: "in one spirit"
 - e. unity of effort: "with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel"
3. Results of proper behavior
 - a. boldness: "not in any way terrified by THE adversaries"
 - i. the adversaries, not your adversaries
 - ii. they are enemies of THE gospel, not you
 - b. assurance of salvation "but to you of salvation, and that from God"
4. Suffering for the gospel is Christ's gift to you
 - a. "not only to believe, but also to suffer"
 - b. Salvation is a gift and so is suffering

D. WHAT IS OUR DESIRE?

1. How do we respond to suffering?
2. Do we trust that God is truly working all things out for his good and glory?
3. What do others learn when they observe us go through trials?