



SMALL GROUPS

The Gospel advances over all challenges (v.12-14)

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.

- Paul's Roman guards have been exposed to the Gospel (v.13)
- Paul's Christian friends are emboldened to spread the Gospel (v.14)

What would *you* feel while chained to guards like this? What would you *do*?

Paul's realistic: it's not all good, but it's not all bad (v.15-17)

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 selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.

- Some are motivated by envy, rivalry, and selfish ambition (v.15a, 17)
- Some are motivated to please God and love others (v.15b, 16)

If you saw your pastors thrown in jail, would you be emboldened like this? Do you share the Gospel even now—*without* the threat of prison?

Did Paul's statement here surprise you?

Paul wants us to pick a side—Christ's (v.18)

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

- 2 ways to cast our allegiance: pretense or truth (v.18a)
- Paul's chief concern the advance of Christ (v.18)

What if you spent some time going around the circle and affirming the sincere faith you see in others in your group? How specific can you be as you affirm why you see sincere faith in them?

Bottomline: Make Christ's advancement the chief concern in your life.

For those not yet living a Jesus-centered life:

1. Accept the Gospel that has been proclaimed from the start.

For those living a Jesus-centered life:

1. Compare your concerns to the Chief concern
2. Compare your behaviors to the Chief concern
3. Learn to speak with Gospel fluency

What are the chief concerns in your life?

If others listed your chief concerns, based on what they see? Based on your time, speech, or patterns, what would they say?

What if you practiced sharing the gospel tonight with one another?

QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN READING SCRIPTURE

1. Is there a command to obey?
2. Is there a sin to avoid?
3. Is there a promise to believe?
4. Is there an example I need to follow?
5. What new truth about God have I seen?
6. What's repeated?

So...

What do I need to surrender?

What do I need to step into?

What do I need to steward?

What do I need to share? (either for my own accountability or to expand the Kingdom into others' lives?)