

Philippians 1:12-19

Paul's imprisonment has served the gospel's cause

(The People's Bible, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon, pages 23-28)

Look

- Verse 12 *"What has happened to me"*—Paul was imprisoned in Rome at this time, accused of being a troublemaker, desecrating the temple, and forsaking the laws of Moses. (Acts 24:5,6)
- Verse 15 *"Some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry."* This is perhaps a reference to preachers who had arrived in Rome before Paul, who were now jealous of the attention Paul was receiving. Others, in the process of tearing Paul down, spoke about Paul's message, while proclaiming Christ.

Discuss

1. What blessings did Paul's imprisonment bring
 - for the gospel?
 - for the Christians in Rome?
2. Paul's imprisonment had caused people to take sides and speak about him. What were the two positions people took in regard to Paul? Why was Paul glad about the preaching, even the preaching of those who preached from false motives?
3. Up to now, Paul had reflected on the past. Now, however, he looked to the future. What was his attitude as he looked into the future? What two resources could he count on?
4. Paul was confident that through the prayers of the saints and the work of God's Spirit, he would be delivered. A better translation might be, "I will be victorious." What victory would be his if he lived? if he died?

Apply

5. What blessings does God give his sons and daughters through the trials he allows to enter their lives?

Paul rejoiced that the gospel continued to spread. He asked for the Philippians' prayers and was confident that through the power of the Spirit he would be victorious no matter what happened.