

SOUTH GROVE FREE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LONDON

Lord's Day Morning

Date 7th August 2022 Hymns Ps 103v1-7 Kilmarnock, 43, 383, 364 Read: Philippians 1:12-18 Text Philippians 1:15-18

Series: Philippians (25) Title: Paul Clarifies, Compares and Cheers that Christ is preached (2)

When the Apostle Paul was imprisoned for preaching the gospel, he was chained to Roman soldiers, each taking their turn to guard Paul.

Paul testified of the Gospel's saving power by Grace alone through Faith alone, in Christ alone, dethroning every false idol and pagan god worshipped by the Romans.

Paul was writing to the saints at Philippi, to assure them, that such things have happened unto him, including prison, for the furtherance of the gospel,

but also believers who lived at Rome, where strengthened as they witnessed God's work advancing by Paul's bonds.

It proved God's truth goes marching on, Christ will build His church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

For this reason, the believers at Rome who were once fearful to preach the word, now preached the word with boldness, courage.

Remember, the Roman Ruler at this time was Nero, who hated Christians and had them die a martyr's death.

Church history records, that Nero authorised the burning of Christians, using them as lights for Rome at night.

During Nero's reign, Paul had the sentence of death upon him, he could have been executed at any time.

When fearing believers looked at Paul circumstances in prison and seen him spread the gospel they were encouraged and strengthened once again to proclaim and announce Christ for the forgiveness of sins.

However, from **verses 15-18** believers who were now bold to speak Christ's name, were divided into two groups:

believers who preached Christ to support Paul in gospel ministry, and believers who preached Christ to distress Paul in gospel ministry.

The two groups in view are the detractors and the supporters. A detractor is a person who belittles or devalues the reputation of someone. A detractor is someone who wants to tear someone else down.

These words are astonishing because Paul clarifies the detractors preach Christ. They are not false teachers, but genuine believers.

To preach Christ is to proclaim and announce Christ in all the scriptures.

Their MANNER, METHOD or how they preached Christ was SOLID.

Their MESSAGE about Christ was SOUND, they preach Christ as the exclusive, effective, and exalted Saviour. They preach redemption, the forgiveness of sins through Christ's blood.

Yet as Paul writes he points out their MOTIVES or why they preach Christ is SHOCKING and SHAMEFUL.

Upon examination, the Philippians learned that some preached Christ for their own glory, cause, and advancements.

Some preached Christ with the purpose that people would follow them, distance themselves from Paul, and not receive instruction from Paul.

In a sense they acted as the Pharisee's who Christ spoke of in Matthew 6, their motives are to be seen of men.

Therefore believer, the question comes to our hearts, why do we preach Christ, serve Christ, why do we share the gospel.

It is for Christ's glory or our own. It is to draw people to Christ or self. It is to make a name for self.

Why do we teach children, youth, desire church membership, baptism, church offices, see sinners saved, spiritual growth, is it for Christ's glory or to be seen of man?

We learn from Paul, you can have the right message but wrong Motives. You can do right the wrong way.

May this message, and Paul's account, stir and challenge our hearts to keep preaching Christ but with the right motives that in all things Christ will have the pre-eminence.

Christ will be lifted up to draw sinners to Himself.

Having thought of Paul's clarification

Now please notice.

II SECOND, PAUL COMPARES HOW CHRIST IS PREACHED

Notice the key word **some**, in **verse 15** **"SOME indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some also of good will:**

The word **some**, relates back to **verse 14** ***and many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.***

Verse 16 ***"the one preach Christ of contention..."*** **verse 17** ***But the other of love..."***

Believers, who had been fearful, now had boldness to preach the word, but they misused, misapplied, and misdirected that boldness by preaching Christ to take away from Paul's preaching.

That's why Paul uses the words, **"Some indeed** to emphasise the shock of what is going on.

The word **indeed** means **surely, certainly, of a truth**, in other words, Paul himself is shocked, amazed, as would the Philippians hearing this letter read out,

that some within the church of Christ, the family of God, the household of Faith, fellow preachers, fellow believers, would preach Christ in such a way to advance themselves by causing trouble, to other believers who are faithfully serving God, preaching Christ.

Notice Paul compares their attitudes in preaching Christ

Paul begins with the distractors - ***Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife...***

the word **envy** means **jealousy**. ***It means not just wanting what another person has, but also resenting that person for having.***

Envy is the sin of jealousy over the blessings and achievements of others.

In this case Paul's ministry was blessed, and prospering, and theirs was not, and so they envied him, they couldn't see why Paul should be blessed and they weren't.

He had success they didn't have but wanted. In prison, souls heard the gospel and were saved under Paul's ministry.

Envy is a strong word; it is the same word used concerning Joseph's sufferings. In **Acts 7:9** "***And the patriarchs, moved with envy, sold Joseph into Egypt: but God was with him. Genesis 37:11***" **and his brethren envied him.** **Gen 30:1** ***Rachel envied her sister,***" Rachel had become very envious that Leah had children but for some time Rachel was barren.

It is the same word used concerning the crowds' attitude of Christ, in **Matthew 27** when Pilate in **verse 18** "***knew that for envy they had delivered Him.***

these preachers while they preached the same Saviour as Paul, yet they preached with a attitude out of envy against Paul.

This leads on, to the word *strife*, meaning *Contention* which is rivalry.

It is to forget who your friends or supporters are and who you should support. Instead, there is rivalry, competition, bitter conflict.

This was the attitude of the detractors toward Paul. They preached Christ seeing Paul as their opponent, rival.

Then the word in **verse 16 *contention*** means **self ambitious**, It is self-seeking, extreme selfishness.

It is the desire to be number one no matter the cost!

This word ***contention*** relates to an office, elections.

The thought is to canvas. A person desires the position as party leader, MP of an area, maybe an office in the church, and that person will say and do whatever it takes to secure that position, even its means degrading the other person, taking votes away from that person.

Remember, believers in the church at Corinth where taking sides, setting men against men, believer against believer, ministry against ministry.

Paul said in **1 Corinthians 3:3-8** ***For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men?***

4 For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal? I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.

7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. 8 Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one

Paul taught, believers in the local church labour as one together, for the same cause, it is God who gives the increase.

According to the Apostle Paul's list in Galatians 5:19-21 envy, strife, contention are works of the flesh.

Paul's list of the works of the flesh can be divided in to four sections, it is in the third section that **envy, strife, contention are found.**

They are also recorded in Romans 1:29, 2 Corinthians 12:20, 21, 1 Timothy 6:4.

They all deal with the sin of pride, wanting power, position, praise and pre-eminence.

We must learn from the attitudes of those who supported Paul, they preach Christ as verse 15 states of **good will**: the word means **good pleasure, good intent, benevolence, a gracious purpose.**

The love of God flowed through them, they were channels of blessing to Paul and others. Their motive was pure in proclaiming Christ.

Paul said for to me to live is Christ, Paul lived to exalt Christ, he has no interest to degrade others, rather He desired to Preach up Christ.

Make much of Christ. Paul's messages were not filled with rivalry against other believers, rather He opened the scriptures and preached Jesus for the remission of sins.

Not only does **Paul compares their attitudes in preaching Christ**

Notice Paul compares their Agenda in preaching Christ

The detractors were seeking to take away from Paul's service. As they preached the gospel their real agenda was to discredit, distress, accuse, criticise, belittle, devalue, dishonour Paul. To make his ministry appear useless, weak since he was in prison.

Notice what Paul said in **verse 16** "...**supposing to add affliction to my bonds**:"

the word **affliction** means ***tribulation, distress, to put pressure on.***

The word **add** is an interesting word it means ***bear up, top raise up, to bring upon, to inflict, to accuse.***

The word **supposing**, means **to think, thinking, it refers to their mind set, frame of mind**, it is in the continual tense meaning this was on going.

These preachers, believers were walking in the flesh. They continually caused Paul distress. They took any moment to degrade Paul.

Whereas in **verse 17** those who walked in the spirit and supported Paul by preaching Christ, out of "**love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel.**"

The word **set** means **appointed, fixed to a position**. It refers to a special assignment. They preached Christ out of a love for Christ, and because they were walking in the spirit.

They know Paul is set apart for gospel ministry, they acknowledge the Lord words in **Acts 9:15** ***he is a chosen vessel***

unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.

They recognised God had placed Paul in Rome, in prison according to His own divine purpose. They understood in that particular place, at that particular time, Paul was defending the Gospel.

The word **defence** and its Greek meaning apologise is where we get our English word **apologetics**, which gives a strong argument, answer and defence for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Their agenda was to preach Christ, share the gospel working together with Paul, supporting and standing with him, in the gospel ministry knowing he was **set for the defence of the gospel**.

Believer may that always be our agenda to preach with Christ with the right motive and agenda to support the ministry where God has placed us, working together and see the gospel advance in London.

Oh! that the gospel bells and the name of Christ will ring loud in this city of London and nation.

As others ask as in days of past blessing, what the news, may we answer Jesus has done all things well.

The Lamb was slain on Calvary that the news, to set a world of sinners free that the news, for us His precious blood was shed, and now He's risen from the dead, that's the news,

The Lord has pardoned all my sin, and Jesus Christ can save you to, that's the good news London must hear and we must share, preaching Christ.

I Paul Confirms that and, II Paul Compares how Christ is preached

III THIRD, PAUL CHEERS THAT CHRIST IS PREACHED

Here is another example of a spirit filled believer, having considered some who preached Christ to oppose Paul and some who preached Christ to assist Paul.

Paul instead of getting bitter, angry, calling for prayer against his brethren who opposed him, he said in **verse 18** *What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached.*

The word **pretence** means **to appear,** *it refers to a false display, Pretending.* It connects the words in **verse 15** *not sincerely, not pure and honest motives.*

Their message was genuine but their motive, intentions the reason they were preaching was false, impure.

Paul thought of it this way, let them say what they want against me, trouble me, distress me, but at least others are hearing of Christ, *and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice.*

The words *yea, and will rejoice,* refers to the words follow.

Show whatever your situation is, whoever causes you distress, adding pressure even if it's a believer, you can still rejoice in the Lord.

What a lesson. Now Paul was not rejoicing in their wrong, and carnal motives, because he wouldn't be able to rejoice in sin.

Rather, Paul can take the view, they set up rivalry against me and though it may be discouraging, distressing, and disheartening, but at least people are hearing the gospel of saving grace.

Let the name of Paul perish, let the name of Christ which is high over all be preached. The gospel advancement does not depend upon Paul, or any believer, it is the Lord who advances His own cause.

Its not so much, the Lord is apart of our work for Him, which is true but only because we are apart of His work which He chooses to do through us.

sinners grasp the gospel truth, believers grow in gospel truth. Its not about Paul or any denomination, It's about Christ.

Paul was concerned for the honour of Christ, the salvation of sinners, the sanctification of believers.

As he is bound to a roman guard, Paul cheers, he rejoices knowing outside the prison, others are preaching and proclaiming Christ.

God is sovereign, and He can use those who preach the Gospel for the wrong motives to turn it around to His glory for the building of His church.

What another lesson that is for our heart's believer, as Christ said other sheep have I which are not of this fold, Christ died for His Church, He loves His church, He gave Himself for His church.

Human speaking, man has divided and separated Christ's church, believers who are presbyterian, Baptists, Methodists, congregational, gospel halls, and much more, and among them various kinds and titles.

We need to see beyond the Name of the religious organisation and look to the name of Christ.

We may differ when it comes to distinctives, preferences, these identify us to a local church organisation, obviously things must be done decently and in order, but there is no perfect church on earth.

yet here is the point, if Christ is preached in His unique person, His sinless life, and substitutionary death, victorious resurrection, His glorious return, spreading the gospel, they are not our enemy.

they may set themselves up that way, but If I get an invite through the door from some congregation in London seeking to have a gospel mission, I may not agree with all they do, but I can rejoice that there is a group of believers who are seeking to win souls for Christ, I can rejoice that I am not alone, Christ is preached.

They may blast me as a preacher, speak ill of this denomination, that's between them and the Lord, but I must and can Rejoice like Paul, that Christ is preached, because God is able to turn it out unto the furtherance of the gospel.