

**DATE OF MESSAGE:** September 4, 2016

**MESSAGE TITLE:** The Story of My Life

**SCRIPTURE:** Philippians 1:12-18

### **KEY TRUTH**

God is writing your life's story with each thing that comes your way, whether they be hardships or moments of joy. Paul encourages us in this passage to look at each moment as an opportunity to declare that the most important thing in any circumstance is that Christ be preached throughout the world.

### **GETTING STARTED**

Today's passage reveals some of Paul's reflections on his imprisonment. He assures the believers in Philippi that his imprisonment had actually helped the gospel advance. Paul found unshakable joy in the midst of persecution, as have other believers through the centuries. A recent movie, *The Insanity of God*, was released that tells the stories of persecuted believers who have lost their jobs, freedoms and even their lives for following Jesus because they found Christ to be worth the sacrifices they made. Check out the movie trailer and information for *The Insanity of God* at [www.insanityofgodmovie.com](http://www.insanityofgodmovie.com).

### **OBSERVATION**

*What has happened as a result of Paul's imprisonment? Who heard the Gospel because of Paul's imprisonment (vs. 13)?*

*What effect did Paul's imprisonment have on his fellow believers? How did Paul say the believers who learned about Paul's imprisonment shared Christ (vs. 14)?*

*According to verses 15-17, what opposition did Paul face from outside the prison? How could Paul's opponents preach the Gospel in a way to afflict Paul in prison?*

*What did Paul conclude about those who preached Jesus out of false motives? What does his response show about Paul's faith in God's sovereignty?*

## **APPLICATION**

*Read Philippians 1:21. Given your priorities, how would you honestly finish this sentence: "For to me to live is \_\_\_\_\_."*

*What difficult circumstances is God using in your life to advance the gospel?*

*How is God stirring your heart to share the gospel with your five? What opportunities is He giving You to share Christ?*

## **PRAYER**

*Knowing that your gospel advances through the world despite persecution fills us with joy. We pray as Paul did in Ephesians 6:19 that your Spirit will give us the words to share in communicating the gospel and the boldness to share Jesus at the appropriate time. May we have the courage of Paul to share the gospel, no matter the consequences.*

## **SHARE POINT**

Read and review the application questions. Share with someone in your life how God's Word is changing you into a growing disciple. Encourage that person to do the same. That person could be a family member, a friend, a co-worker or a neighbor.

## **COMMENTARY NOTES**

Paul realizes that the Philippians are grieved over his imprisonment, so he encourages them by pointing out that these circumstances are furthering the proclamation of the gospel. His joy in difficult circumstances is meant to be an example to the Philippians to likewise rejoice even in difficult times. Further, Paul's charitable attitude toward fellow believers who make life hard for him is also to function as a model for the Philippians, since it is evident that there is some disunity in the congregation.

## **SOURCES CONSULTED**

ESV Study Bible

Serendipity Bible for Personal and Small Group Study

