

# Sermon Discussion Questions



LOOKOUT  
MOUNTAIN  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH

## "THE JOYFUL CONFIDENCE OF JESUS' SERVANTS"

### Discuss

Probably all of us have anxiously awaited word from a loved one who was in some kind of trouble. The Philippians knew about Paul's imprisonment, and it's not hard to imagine how they must have longed to hear how he was doing. Perhaps they expected a message detailing his misery and distress. The letter they received, however, is not a doleful recitation of woes, but a proclamation of joy. Cue the trumpets, not the music of mourning.

- 1) How would you fill in the blank in this sentence (using your own words, not Paul's)? "The important thing is \_\_\_\_\_."  
What's most important to you?
  - Normally we expect that fear and anguish will rise in more or less direct proportion to the amount of danger and suffering being experienced: more danger → more fear, less danger → less fear. How did Paul's focus on Christ being preached affect his reaction to his circumstances?
    - ◇ Why do you think that most of his "brothers in the Lord" were actually encouraged to speak the word of God *more* courageously and fearlessly because of his chains? (v. 14)
    - ◇ How similarly do we as American Christians live like Paul and his brothers in the Lord?
- 2) Are these verses teaching that circumstances don't matter at all? Was Paul just some kind of Stoic, determined to ignore his own suffering?
  - If you have time, read through Psalm 31 and take a look at 2 Cor. 12:7-10 (where Paul talks about his thorn in the flesh), and discuss how persecution and other trials should be faced.
- 3) Paul mentions two kinds of preaching that occurred as a response to him and his ministry: preaching that grew out of goodwill and love and preaching that was rooted in ambition and envy. (See vv. 15-17)
  - When Paul says, "What does it matter?" was he saying that the motivation behind preaching is unimportant? (v. 18a)
  - What exactly did he mean?
  - We know from other letters of Paul that he was often deeply critical of the *content* of teaching and strongly opposed to heresy (see Galatians 1:8-9, for example). So through what grid should we evaluate preaching?

DATE: May 19, 2019

SPEAKER: Chad/Brian

SERIES: Philippians

PASSAGE: Phil. 1:12-18a

### Pray

SOVEREIGN GOD,

We pray that your cause, not our own causes, would engage our whole hearts.

Make this our chief desire: to bring honor and glory to you.

We know that you can accomplish great things, and it is to your glory that people should be saved.

Like Paul, we rejoice in the preaching of the Gospel and celebrate the word of God being spoken courageously and fearlessly in so many places, even places where there is much persecution.

Use us as you will, do with us what you will, so that your Kingdom comes and your interests in this world advance in triumph.

We pray this in the matchless name of our Savior, Jesus, amen.

- based on Phil. 1:14, 18; "Service and Equipment," The Valley of Vision, 178

#### PRAY FOR HOME MISSIONS

Bridges Community Church in Los Angeles

#### PRAY FOR WORLD MISSIONS

"Our Favorite Professors"