

Title ideas:  
The Joy of Knowing God's Ways!  
The Joy of Knowing God's Works!

## Philippians 1:12-18

### Scriptures:

Romans 8:28 - And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.

12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the

things which happened to me have actually

turned out for the furtherance of the gospel,

4297 – progress,  
advancement

### Notes:

The Philippians were distressed at the news of Paul's imprisonment. Paul was the reason the gospel reached Macedonia. What would happen to the spread of the gospel if the great Apostle Paul was imprisoned or killed.

'brethren, - six times in Philippians. Denotes a strong sense of unity and spiritual comradeship.

'things which happened to me' = He was falsely accused by his countrymen the Jews. Sent to Rome and imprisoned.

To understand Paul, we must understand that the gospel was the main thing - the only thing. Everything else in life was to be secondary to the proclaiming of the truth of the gospel, including his own comfort and security.

One benefit of Paul's imprisonment was his writing of the Prison Epistles – Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

"Alcohol and drugs on the outside of the church cannot hurt it nearly as much as the envy and strife on the inside of the church." (McGee, 1983) page 297

"I'm convinced that the troubles, challenges, and problems we face are custom-designed to do one thing: to allow us to draw others to Jesus Christ and to encourage them in Jesus Christ." (Courson, 2003) page

Scriptures:

Acts 28:16 - Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him.

Philippians 4:22 - All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household.

<sup>13</sup> so that it has become evident to the whole

5318 – widely  
known, well  
known, visible,

palace guard, and to all the rest, that **my** chains

Notes:

'my chains are in Christ' – means that everyone knew that the reason Paul was in prison was because of his faith in Christ, not because he had broken the law.

It is believed that Paul was chained to a Roman soldier (Acts 28:16). Each new shift change brought someone new to hear the gospel message. They would also be forced to listen to Paul's conversations with Paul's friends and co-laborers.

And they were getting saved (Phil. 4:22).

are in <sup>+</sup>Christ;

Scriptures:

14 and most of the brethren in the Lord,

having become confident by my chains, are

3982 -

much more bold to speak the word without fear.

4056 – to a much  
greater degree

5111 – dare, to  
be courageous

3056 – gospel

870 - fearlessly

Notes:

As the people around you walk through the things God allows in your life, they will find the courage and boldness to go where God is leading.

Not only did Paul's chain allow him to share the gospel with the lost, they also enabled Paul to encourage the believers in Rome. As word spread that the great Apostle Paul had been put into prison, many men would have responded to the call of God to continue his work even if they didn't feel they compared to Paul.

Watching another believer go through difficult times with joy because of their faith has a positive and purifying effect upon other believers.

When a large tree is cut down, the smaller trees that were trying to grow in its shadow begin to grow much more quickly. When an eminent servant of Christ is removed, room is made for others to grow in his place.

Scriptures:

15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and

2784 – proclaim  
with the goal to  
persuade, urge,  
warn to comply

5355 – jealousy –  
“envy n. — spite  
and resentment  
toward the  
success or  
possessions of  
another.”

strife, and some also from goodwill:

2054 - conflict

2107 – what  
pleases

Notes:

Some may have felt that Paul's appeal to Caesar brought too much attention to the church. Others may have been envious that Paul's ministry was effective even while he was in prison.

Paul had arrived in Rome with a long list of things God had done through him. Paul was uniquely called and gifted by God to be an apostle. Some would view Paul a threat to their influence and ministry.

Scriptures:

16 The former preach Christ from selfish ambition,

2052 – (implying rivalry), hostility

Notes:

Paul was operating under orders from God. These are not heretics or false teachers. They were teaching the true gospel of Jesus, but their preaching included self-promotion.

“They were not anti-Christ but anti-Paul.” (Hughes, 2013) page 50

not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my

55 – ‘free from secondary motivations’

2018 – cause to experience

2347 – trouble, distress, oppression, tribulation

‘add affliction’ – they were preaching in a way to make Paul’s imprisonment even more miserable. They were hoping to steal Paul’s joy. What they didn’t understand was that Paul’s joy was not connected to his circumstances or to his or others successes or failures. Paul’s joy was in Christ and in the proclamation of the gospel message.

chains;

Scriptures:

17 but the latter out of love, knowing that

Notes:

I am appointed for the defense of the gospel.

2749 -

627 – make a formal justification

18 What then? Only *that* in every way, whether

in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in

4392 – a show, a  
false reason for  
vindication

225 – facts that  
correspond to  
reality

this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

5463 – be glad,  
be delighted

5463 -

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Notes:

This is the kind of faith that can change the world. Paul doesn't care may think of him or do to him as long as the gospel is preached.

We may not approve of the way someone might minister or preach, but if Christ is preached, that is what really matters.

What matters to you more than the gospel? What matters to you more than one more person hearing the gospel message?

Paul wanted only one thing in life – that the gospel would go forth to the whole world. Everything else in his life secondary. All of Paul's needs, wants, dreams, desires, and wishes were consumed by his desire to proclaim the gospel to anyone God would put in front of him.

"All kinds of issues cry for our attention – abortion, pornography, media bias, economic justice, racial discrimination, classism, sexism, to name a few. And we need to be alert and involved in certain of them. But if any of them become the main thing so that the gospel is marginalized, beware!" (Hughes, 2013) page 52

Whatever is your calling in life, whether it be as a lawyer, teacher, plumber, or pastor – the gospel must come first.

There may be times in life when you feel metaphorically chained by the circumstances of life. But let the gospel be first in your life and you will be like Paul and find joy in how God is working through your circumstances to proclaim the gospel.

"Yet while he looked into the face the evils that surrounded him, he was able to see beyond them, and to believe that the consequences of all his trials would be real and lasting good." (Spurgeon, 2015) page 22

Paul believed that it was good that he was in prison, that it would be good if he died there, that it was good that gospel was preached, even if they did it for wrong reasons. Christ was preached and that was the highest good. Paul believed that all these things would be used by God for good and for God's glory.