

Scripture: Exodus 20 & Philippians 1:12-30
Singing: 64:1-3 – 123:1 – 388:1-5 – 439:1-2 – 203:3-5

Let's Study Philippians (4)

- A. We were warned: sin brings suffering!
- B. We need reminder: salvation changes suffering!

THE CHRISTIAN'S SUFFERING I. It plows deep II. It grows a rich harvest

I. THE CHRISTIAN'S SUFFERING PLOWS DEEPLY

- A. Paul summons our attention: vs. 12a
 - 1. Phrase often repeated: Rom. 1:13; 1 Cor. 10:1; 11:3; Col. 2:1; 1 The 4:13
 - 2. Paul refers to *'the things which happened unto me'*
 - a. notice what he omits
 - b. bear in mind how he views himself (1:1, 7, 17; Eph. 3:1; 4:1)
 - c. his suffering is fruit of his Gospel life and ministry (7b, 12b)
 - 3. Paul's suffering is a big packet (2 Cor. 11:16-33)
- B. No denying: *his realities were deep cutting plows* (2 Cor. 4:8; 2 Cor. 12:7)
- C. Take-away: *we need healthier thinking about our sufferings as Christians*

II. CHRISTIAN SUFFERING GROWS A RICH HARVEST

- A. Key word in Paul's testimony (vs. 12)
 - 1. Paul is here on Joseph's level: Gen 50:19-20; Rom. 8:28
 - 2. Paul is neither neutral nor negative about his suffering
- B. What did Paul see for gain or progress as fruit of his sufferings?
 - 1. He sees that the message he is defending is confirmed (7)
 - a. what is his message?
 - 2. How did he see this?
 - a. in how the Gospel is furthered
 - Paul sounds elated (vs. 13; 4:22)
 - b. in how the Roman believers are mobilized into offensive (vs. 14)
 - effect of witnessing how Paul suffered was reviving (1:28)

Living the truth ...

- A. Is suffering producing a rich harvest in your life?
 - 1. Hebrews 12:5-13 reminds us: *God acts like our parents except perfect*
 - a. He disciplines to disciple us

b. His discipline is not punish but to improve us

2. Phil 1:20: note Paul's ***as always, so now***

a. live in the *now-moments*

b. pray over the *now-moments*

c. embrace the *now-moments*

B. Are you dreaming about escaping suffering?

1. The dream shattered: 1 Cor. 10:13

2. The real remedy is not *dreaming* but *looking and hiding*

*Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth:
for I am God and there is none else. (Is. 45:22)*

And a man shall be as a hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. (Is. 33:2)