

## Prison Did Not Rob Paul

Paul encountered some road blocks while preaching the Gospel. We can relate to these road blocks and have probably encountered some or similar ones. Paul turned them into stepping stones. Paul was in prison, but prison did not rob him of certain things. He was confined, but not controlled; restrained, but not restricted; incarcerated, but not incapacitated. Although in prison, he was not robbed of certain things such as:

**1. His Pen** - Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon were all written while Paul as in a Roman prison. Notice Ephesians 1:1; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:1; and Philemon 1:1.

**2. His Purpose** - Paul's purpose was to live for/in Jesus Christ. Philippians 1:21 says, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Paul's entire life was Christ.

**3. His Pulpit** - Paul was chained to a Roman soldier 24 hours a day! The shifts changed every six hours, which meant that Paul could preach to at least four men a day.

**4. His Prayer** - While in prison, Paul prayed for the brethren and the church. Ephesians 1:15-23; 3:14-21; Philippians 1:9-11; and Colossians 1:9-12 illustrate Paul's sincere desire in prayer was on behalf of the saints.

**5. His Praise** - In Acts 16, Paul and Silas sang praises to God at midnight while in prison. Although he was confined, he was able to be joyful.

**6. His Peace** - Philippians 1:12 says, "Now I want you to know, brethren, that my circumstances have turned out for the greater progress of the gospel." Paul's peace was in the cross of Christ.

**7. His Patience** - Paul was confident in God's plan for his life, thus he had patience.

Paul can be a great encouragement to all Christians. Though in trials, he was triumphant. Though in chains, he was challenged. Thus, Paul could be truly described as the apostle of the heart set free.

- Mark N. Posey, *Bulletin Digest* -

## PRAYERS

Paul told our long departed Thessalonian brethren to, "Pray without ceasing" that is, to have regularly scheduled prayers. Paul's inspired pen indicated that prayers were to be made for the leaders of the nations, the sick, the healthy, the preachers, the lost and a host of others. We should ask God to forgive us, to help us do better in the future, to protect our loved ones, to prosper the work of the church, etc. Our prayers should be for ourselves, but not for ourselves exclusively. We must be careful not to be selfish in our petitions! Pray for others! Pray for the ability to serve others. Pray for the good of others. Pray for the work He gave us to do. Pray without ceasing.

- Tim Smith (*Beacon*, Bellview Church of Christ, Pensacola, FL) -

## FIVE ELEMENTS OF PRAYER

•Supplication •Intercession •Thanksgiving •Praise •Confession

Pray hardest when it's hard to pray.

## News & Notes

**SCHEDULE OF SERVICES: Sunday Worship, 10:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m., and Wednesday, 7:00 p.m.** The Covid-19 restrictions apply (masks & distancing).

**MEN'S BIBLE STUDY: Each Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.**

**POTTERS CHILDREN'S HOME:** Monetary donations are being collected until the end of August to help this worthy cause. Give your donation to one of the Elders or Bro. Rico. The church here will match the total donations.

**SPECIAL MEMORIAL SERVICE:** For Bro. Charles Aebi on Saturday, Sept. 4th, 11:00 a.m. at the Barlow Vincent Church of Christ, Vincent, OH. See announcement about the Memorial Service on the bulletin board. Phone: (740) 678-2309.

**OUR GOSPEL MEETING: Sept. 19-23 with Ed Melott. Sunday, 10:30 a.m. & 5:30 p.m.; Monday through Thursday, 7:00 p.m.** Plan to be here.

**PICTURE GALLERY OF PAST MEMBERS:** Submit pictures (black and white or color) to David Malcomson to be displayed as a visual history of the church here.

**PANTRY:** Tuna & noodles.

**SEND CARDS:** Karen Meeks, 49411 Fredericktown Clarkson Rd., Negley, OH 44441. (Friend of Sharon Sprout who has cancer).

**SICK & SHUT-IN: THE ORCHARDS of EAST LIVERPOOL (rehab):** Jim Hadley.

**AT HOME:** Peggy Linger, Randy Beagle, Marilyn Miller, Barb DeLong, David McCoy, Marlene Evans, Russell Martin, Emma Rine, Rick Beck.

**CALCUTTA HEALTH CARE:** Sarah Miller (Room 6).

**VALLEY OAKS CARE CENTER:** Fred Larrimore (Room 210). **IN FLORIDA:** Ilene Rayl.

## Mourning Without Moaning

In His "Sermon on the Mount," Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" (Matthew 5:4). Did you see that? Read it again just to make sure you got it right. Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted." There you have it; what Jesus said was blessed are those who mourn; He didn't pronounce a blessing upon those who moan!

So why do we do it so often? Why are we such "moaners"?

I know life is difficult, and few of us will escape deep "scars" if we live long enough. But if we have Jesus, there's no reason to "moan." Whatever our trials might be, we possess surpassing grace! Although the apostle Paul had a "thorn in the flesh," the grace of God was sufficient for him (2 Corinthians 12:7-9).

Life may give you a reason to mourn, but don't let it turn you into a "moaner." When tempted to wallow in your problems, put things in perspective. In Jesus, even the worst possible circumstances you could ever imagine happening to you are only temporary.

Give it some thought, and then give thanks to God for all your blessings!

- Steve Higginbotham, Karns church of Christ, Knoxville, TN (*Bulletin Digest*) -