



The Life of Joy: Chains

Philippians 1:12-18

Brandon Lauranzon, March 30 & 31, 2019

Step 1: Reflect on the Text

Why do we do this first? We always want to start with the Bible. The goal is to meditate on the Word and read it with an ear sensitive to the Holy Spirit's promptings. Look for words or phrases that stand out through logic, repetition, layout, etc.

-  Read the sermon scripture(s) listed above. What stands out to you? What do you find interesting and/or important? What is challenging or causes you to have questions?

Step 2: Reflect on the Sermon

INTRODUCTION

- 1 Brandon said, "You have chains in your life. You have things that weigh you down, that make you feel trapped, that make you feel like you can't go on. The circumstances of your life that God has allowed you to go through and you wonder what good could possibly come from this!" What are your chains?
- 2 What was your one, big takeaway from the sermon? How would you summarize the main theme of the sermon in one phrase or sentence?

CHAINS: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EVANGELISM

- 3 How did Paul decide to use his time in prison? What would he have said to a guard who asked him, "Why are you in these chains?"

- 4 Discuss the following quote by James Montgomery Boice. Do you see your trials, your hardships, your circumstances, as an opportunity to tell others about Jesus?

Paul was chained to a prison room. You may have chains of your own. You may be tied to a desk when you would like to be out in more direct Christian service. You may be tied to a home, especially when the children are young and need constant care. You may be tied to a sickbed and may never see beyond your hospital room. This should not be a cause for discouragement. If you are in circumstances like these, this has been given you by God and can be used by him. You can bear a witness to people who come by your desk, your kitchen sink, or your hospital bed. If you do, God will bless your efforts. You will see spiritual fruit. What is more, it will entirely change the way you look at your limitations, whatever their cause. You can learn to say with Paul, “Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel.”

CHAINS: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EDIFICATION

- 5 What is edification? How were the brothers and sisters in Rome edified by Paul’s chains? Does the faithfulness of believers in other parts of the world edify you?
- 6 Brandon said, “Other people in this congregation need to see you looking to God in the midst of your chains.” Discuss the following quote by Sinclair Ferguson.
- “God’s logic is very different from ours. We assume that the circumstances must be right if we are to be really effective Christians. But God is not waiting for the circumstances to be right; he is committed to producing really effective Christians, whatever their circumstances may be.”

CHAINS: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR EVALUATION

- 7 Chains have a way of exposing our motives and our priorities. What false motives were at play in the actions of some of the believers in Rome? Have you ever had similar motives affect your actions? What was the apostle Paul’s ultimate priority in life? Do you have that same priority? How can priorities affect the way that people interact with the church?

Step 3: Final Reflections

- † How has your understanding, appreciation, and love for Jesus and the gospel grown as a result of this study?
- ♥ In what areas of faith and practice are you feeling convicted by the Holy Spirit to act as a result of this study?