

INTRODUCTION.

TODAY, ~ WE CONTINUE OUR EXAMINATION OF PHIL. 1:12-26, ~ THE SECOND MAJOR section of the letter, ~ Paul's report from prison. ~ which we began to look at last time.

▶▶ This morning, ~ we'll look at [verse 14](#). ~ ~ READ . . . .

IN VERSE 14, ~ PAUL REPORTS ON WHAT EFFECT HIS IMPRISONMENT HAD ON the majority of the believers in Rome and the subsequent result of that effect.

THESE ARE THE TWO MAIN POINTS IN VERSE 14. ~ ~ BUT BEFORE WE DISCUSS THEM, ~ there are 2 phrases that we need to talk about.

1<sup>st</sup>, ~ "MOST OF THE BROTHERS."

▶▶ "brothers" could be paraphrased as "brothers and sisters" or "fellow believers."

▶▶ The "fellow believers" Paul's referring to here are most likely believers in Rome.

▶▶ Phrase "fellow believers" shows us that Paul is not speaking about pastors or preachers or evangelists only. ~ ~ He is referring to believers in general.

THE 2<sup>nd</sup> PHRASE TO TALK ABOUT IS, ~ "IN THE LORD."

▶▶ Some translations . . . . ~ ~ Interpretive decision . . . .

▶▶ Couple problems.

▶▶ Unnecessary repetition: ~ ~ Like identifying as believers. ~ ~ Brothers = believers . . . .

▶▶ Opens it up to the question, ~ in whom did there confidence grow?

▶▶ Position of phrase. ~ ~ Emphatic position . . . .

WE COULD READ VERSE 14 THIS WAY.

▶▶ "The majority of the believers in Rome, having become more confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear."

NOW LET'S DIG INTO VERSE 14. ~ ~ As said, ~ Paul reports on what effect his imprisonment had on the majority of the believers in Rome and the subsequent result of that effect. ↴ ↴ 1/7

IN VERSE 14a, ~ WE SEE THE EFFECT OF PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT ON THE majority of the believers in Rome.

"AND MOST OF THE BROTHERS, HAVING BECOME CONFIDENT IN THE LORD BY, ~ or through, ~ my imprisonment."

▶▶I.e., ~ Paul's imprisonment produced within the majority of believers in Rome a greater confidence in the Lord.

▶▶It's important to understand here that they did not lack confidence in the Lord. ~~ They already had confidence in the Lord and that confidence increased.

▶▶It's interesting how they responded to Paul's imprisonment isn't it?

▷▷Rather than diminish their confidence, ~ which would seem logical, ~ it actually increased their confidence in the Lord.

▷▷One might think that the imprisonment of a prominent leader in the early church would have caused other believers to become discouraged and depressed. ~~ Opposite . . . .

▷▷A lot of opposites in the Kingdom. ~~ We sin . . . . \*\*~~ Heb. 10:34 . . . .\*\*

PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT . . . . ~~~ BUT DID THIS GROWTH OF CONFIDENCE IN THE Lord come simply because Paul was in prison?

▶▶No, ~ we have to dig deeper and ask this question. ~~ What was it about Paul's imprisonment that sparked this growth in confidence?

▷▷I suggest 3 things . . . .

▶▶The 1<sup>st</sup> thing that no doubt sparked this growth of confidence in the Lord was Paul's attitude.

▷▷I think we've already established that Paul had a very positive and joyful attitude even though he was in prison.

▷▷Attitudes affect others. ~~ Ps. 73 . . . . ~~ Ps. 73:15

↪↪It seems Asaph was tempted to express his doubts to the believing community. ~~ But he knew that if he yielded he would have caused other believers to stumble.

▷▷What 1 believer does & says may have a profound effect upon other believers. **↵↵ 2/7**

▷▷ And we see that in Paul.

↳↳ If Paul had become depressed or bitter by developments, ~ the effect on others would have been far different.

→→ But remember, ~ his joy was rooted in Jesus and not in circumstances, ~ so he maintained a very uplifting attitude.

▷▷ Paul's optimistic attitude affected the majority of believers in Rome in a very encouraging way.

↳↳ So much so that their confidence in the Lord grew.

▷▷ My brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ our attitudes affect others. ~~ We are to build each other up not drag each other down or cause other believers to stumble.

↳↳ In 1 Thess. 5:11, ~ Paul writes, ~ "Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing."

▷▷ And we see here in Phil. 1:14a that Paul's attitude did exactly that in the lives of these believers.

▷▷ So we need to cultivate an optimistic attitude no matter how adverse the circumstances.

↳↳ And if you think about it, ~ we have quite a few reasons for being optimistic even in the midst of difficulties.

▶▶ The second thing that most likely sparked this growth of confidence in the Lord was Paul's courageous witness while he was in chains.

▷▷ Not the mighty Roman empire, ~ nor its Caesar, ~ nor its imperial guards could intimidate Paul.

↳↳ Paul clearly understood and was fully convinced of what Nebuchadnezzar had to learn the hard way, ~ "that the Most High rules the kingdom of men and gives it to whom he will."

→→ And that "his dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom endures from generation to generation; all the inhabitants of the earth are accounted as nothing, and he does according to his will among the host of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand or say to him, "What have you done?" ↯↯ 3/7

▷▷ Seeing Paul's courageous testimony, ~ the majority of the believers in Rome grew in their confidence in the Lord.

▷▷ And, ~ my fellow citizens of heaven, ~ when we clearly understand and become fully convinced of the truth that Jesus reigns over history and all of life, ~ ¶¶

↳↳ our confidence in Him will grow too.

▶▶ And the 3<sup>rd</sup> thing that most likely sparked this growth of confidence in the Lord was the fact that the gospel advanced and didn't retreat or end up in the dustbin of history.

▷▷ So when the majority of the believers in Rome saw that despite persecution the gospel spread and was not snuffed out, ~ their confidence grew.

▷▷ Jesus said, ~ "I will build my church, ~ and the gates ~ [or forces] ~ of hell shall not prevail against it."

↳↳ Jesus promises us that the church will not be destroyed by the evil powers arrayed against it.

↳↳ These believers were seeing this played out before their eyes.

→→ They lived in the heart of the mighty Roman empire.

↳↳ But they saw that the mighty Roman empire could not prevent Jesus from building His church.

↳↳ And as a result, ~ their confidence in the Lord grew.

▷▷ My brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ we live in the mightiest nation on earth.

↳↳ But even this nation cannot prevent Jesus from building His church.

→→ The whole nation could turn against us tomorrow and the next day outlaw Christianity.

↳↳ But Jesus will continue to build His church.

▷▷ All the hostile nations on earth combined cannot prevent Jesus from building His church.

▷▷ And as a result of this fact, ~ our confidence in the Lord should grow. ¶¶ 4/7

AT THIS TIME, ~ IT'S IMPORTANT TO POINT OUT THAT SINCE IT WAS IN THE LORD in whom their confidence grew, ~ ¶¶

▶▶we can say that in these four sparks the majority of the believers in Rome saw, ~ as we just alluded to, ~ the hand of God.

▷▷I.e., ~ they recognized that Jesus is sovereign over history and all of life, ~ and that it was He who was causing the gospel to advance, ~ ¶¶

↳↳and empowering Paul to be a courageous witness, ~ and to have a positive attitude.

→→As Zech. 4:6b says, ~ "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, says the Lord of hosts."

▶▶When they recognized this, ~ their confidence in the Lord grew.

▷▷Confident, ~ no doubt, ~ that what God did for Paul and the gospel ~ He could and would do for them.

▶▶And we, ~ my fellow citizens of heaven, ~ can be absolutely, ~ 100% confident ~ that God can and will do for us ~ what He did for Paul and the gospel.

NOW, ~ AS WE NOTED AT THE BEGINNING OF OUR MESSAGE, ~ ¶¶

IN VERSE 14 PAUL REPORTS ON WHAT EFFECT HIS IMPRISONMENT HAD ON THE majority of the believers in Rome and the subsequent result of that effect.

▶▶Having looked in detail at the effect Paul's imprisonment had on them, ~ we now turn briefly to the subsequent result of that effect.

IN VERSE 14b, ~ ¶¶

▶▶Paul tells us that, ~ as a result of their increased confidence, ~ the majority of the believers in Rome were "much more bold to speak the word ~ [i.e., ~ the gospel] without fear."

▶▶They were bold before, ~ now they are much more bold in sharing the gospel.

▷▷Walter Hansen: ~ "When the danger of speaking for Christ increased beyond their worst nightmares, ~ their boldness increased beyond measure."

▶▶Now, ~ it's important to mention here that this occurred without knowing what the outcome for Paul would be. ¶¶ 5/7

▷▷ The word for "bold" indicates a willingness "to show boldness or resolution in the face of danger, ~ opposition, ~ or a problem."

▷▷ IOW, ~ their confidence and subsequent boldness did not arise because of a positive result in Paul's situation.

↪↪ They and Paul had no idea what would happen to Paul.

▶▶ This is amazing when you stop to think about it.

▷▷ This fearless proclamation of the gospel was happening within the midst of adversity, ~ opposition, ~ and danger.

▶▶ This is even more amazing when we consider the historical situation in Rome at the time.

▷▷ In Rome in the early 60's A.D., ~ Nero's madness was peaking and the church there had begun to fall under suspicion, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ as Nero's persecution and massacre of Christians just a couple of years later bears witness.

▷▷ Even under approaching storm clouds, ~ God emboldened His people to fearlessly share the gospel.

▶▶ My brothers and sisters in Christ, ~ let this be a great encouragement to us.

▷▷ Because storm clouds may be brewing over our heads.

▷▷ And the God who emboldened these early believers is our God too.

▷▷ And He stands ready, ~ willing, ~ and able to embolden us to fearlessly share the gospel in the midst of adversity, ~ opposition, ~ and danger.

▷▷ Like these early believers, ~ ¶¶

↪↪ let us put our confidence squarely and fully in Him and then stand back ~ and see what He does for us when the storms of adversity, ~ opposition, ~ or persecution hit.

## CONCLUSION.

IN CLOSING, ~ WE SHOULD NOTE THAT THIS FEARLESS PROCLAMATION OF THE gospel caused the gospel to spread even more. ¶¶ 6/7

▶▶ And this shows that once again persecution serves to advance the gospel.

▶▶ And once again, ~ we see the opposite of what our persecutors intend.

▷▷ Persecutors want to intimidate believers. ~~ They want to drive us underground. ~~  
They want to silence us.

▶▶ But as we see, ~ God turns the tables on our persecutors. ~~ [Esther . . . .](#)

▶▶ Be encouraged my fellow believers.

LET'S PRAY . . . . [7/7](#)