



GracePointe Baptist Church
9805 NE 10th Street
Midwest City, OK 73130
Phone: (405) 769-5050
<http://www.gracepointeonline.com>

Speak the Word without Fear

Wednesday, March 12, 2008

"And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear." (Philippians 1:14, ESV)

1. When someone goes to jail for a cause such as preaching it produces either faith or fear in those who are left behind. As we will see today, fear may have been the first reaction to this new converts but it eventually turned to boldness. So much so, that this verse literally translates "by means of my bonds the brethren "are more abundantly bold."
2. Years before Paul arrived in Rome, a congregation of Gentiles established a local church there. Paul sent them a letter one day to describe the truth of all Christian Doctrine and we have that letter and call it the Book of Romans. So when Paul arrived in Rome he immediately proclaimed the gospel not only to people of this local church but also to the Jews, with the result that "some believed...some disbelieved." (Acts 28:24) "And some were convinced by what he said, but others disbelieved." (Acts 28:24, ESV)
3. Paul lived in Rome for two years, during his imprisonment, and welcomed all who came to him, boldly proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ openly and without hindrance. "He lived there two whole years at his own expense, and welcomed all who came to him, proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord

Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance." (Acts 28:30-31, ESV)

4. After Paul got arrested what had been the attitude of the brothers? As we look at this verse it appears that at first they might have not had much courage but were "frightened by their opponents." (Phil 1:28) They also were not looking after others best interests (Phil 2:4) but were looking after their own affairs. (Phil 2:21) "and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God." (Philippians 1:28, ESV) "Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Philippians 2:4, ESV) "For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 2:21, ESV)
5. Praise God! Their situation did not stay that way though. Things were changing. Paul was not waiting trial but a verdict (Phil 2:19, 23-24). Everyone had a chance to see the assurance and confidence that Paul showed. They saw his courage "under fire" and it became contagious. " I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you." (Philippians 2:19, ESV) "I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also." (Philippians 2:23-24, ESV)
6. We see that most of the brothers, after seeing what the grace of God is able to accomplish in the heart of His "bound" Apostle, became confident in the Lord and became much more bold to "speak the word without fear."



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7. Tonight we see that boldness is a characteristic we need to pray for again. (Acts 4:24-31) "And when they heard it, they lifted their voices together to God and said, "Sovereign Lord, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and everything in them, who through the mouth of our father David, your servant, said by the Holy Spirit, " "Why did the Gentiles rage, and the peoples plot in vain? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers were gathered together, against the Lord and against his Anointed"— for truly in this city there were gathered together against your holy servant Jesus, whom you anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, to do whatever your hand and your plan had predestined to take place. And now, Lord, look upon their threats and grant to your servants to continue to speak your word with all boldness, while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus." And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness." (Acts 4:24-31, ESV)

8. Paul's confinement was doing what his circumstances outside of prison didn't do. Cause others to speak more boldly for Christ. Paul can say "My chains" has become a source of courage for others. Sometimes the Lord moves leaders on so the next generation can take ownership in the Gospel. One generation of people who are "more than conquerors through Christ the Lord" moves on to let the next gen grow in grace and truth and the Gospel continues on in complete and total victory until He returns.

9. One of the things we can glean from this is that the younger believers are learning from the Apostle's example. They are learning that God is present to watch over those who love Him. This is opposed to the people we will see next week who are preaching from envy and not from confidence in or love for God.

10. Paul being arrested would have been discouraging and disheartening if all we could see was the iron shackles on his wrists. But as the people of God we can see the hand of the Lord upon him (and us) which makes His people unconquerable and causes them to triumph in the midst of adversity. It allows us to boldly speak in the midst of danger where we too can "speak the word without fear." " What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things? Who shall bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died—more than that, who was raised—who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or danger, or sword? As it is written, "For your sake we are being killed all the day long; we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered." No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:31-39, ESV)