

Gained Confidence

Philippians 1:11-14 HCSB filled with the fruit of righteousness that *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. (12) Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has actually resulted in the advancement of the gospel, (13) so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard, and to everyone else, that my imprisonment is for Christ. (14) Most of the brothers in the Lord have gained confidence from my imprisonment and dare even more to speak the message fearlessly.

Philippians 1:11 HCSB filled with the fruit of righteousness that *comes* through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Filled with the fruit of righteousness. As we saw in the previous verse and as is clearly outlined in Ephesians 2:8-10, all of Jesus' talmidim are required to produce fruit (cf. Matthew 5:20-48 where Jesus consistently raised the bar)

- **Hebrews 12:1 HCSB** Therefore since we also have such a large cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us lay aside every weight and the sin that so easily ensnares us, and run with endurance the race that lies before us,
- **James 3:18 HCSB** And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace.
- **Amos 6:12-13 HCSB** Do horses run on rock, or does someone plow *it* with oxen? Yet you have turned justice into poison and the fruit of righteousness into wormwood-- (13) you who rejoice over Lo-debar and say, "Didn't we capture Karnaim for ourselves by our own strength?"
- **Galatians 5:19-23 HCSB** Now the works of the flesh are obvious: sexual immorality, moral impurity, promiscuity, (20) idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambitions, dissensions, factions, (21) envy, drunkenness, carousing, and anything similar, about which I tell you in advance--as I told you before--that those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God. (22) But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, (23) gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law.

Through Jesus. This fruit cannot be based simply on our own efforts for these will never rise to the task. This is one of those things that are impossible for men but definitely possible with God (Luke 18:27; Matthew 19:26; Mark 10:27).

- **John 15:4-6 HCSB** Remain in Me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in Me. (5) "I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in Me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without Me. (6) If anyone does not remain in Me, he is thrown aside like a branch and he withers. They gather them, throw them into the fire, and they are burned.

To the glory and praise of God. The evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives is what glorifies God.

- **John 15:8 HCSB** My Father is glorified by this: that you produce much fruit and prove to be My disciples.

Why does this glorify God? It stems from men trying and trying and being completely incapable of truly and permanently reforming themselves. What they could not do by their

own efforts, is immediately and naturally done through the vivifying presence of the Spirit and thus God is glorified. This is why it is a grace of God and why no man can boast.

- **Ephesians 2:8-10 HCSB** For by grace you are saved through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift-- (9) not from works, so that no one can boast. (10) For we are His creation--created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time so that we should walk in them.

Philippians 1:12 HCSB Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has actually resulted in the advancement of the gospel,

What has happened to me. Paul had been jailed.

Advancement of the Gospel. Paul's enemies, because they think like mere humans, had made the same mistake they always make. The same kind of people had thought to end the kingdom of God by killing the Son of God. That hadn't worked. They thought they could end the ministry of God by flogging Peter and the other apostles (Acts 5) but that hadn't worked. They routinely tried imprisonment but it seemed only to inflame the passion of God's people and the Gospel spread more and more (as we will see in v. 14). We are seeing the same effect today in many countries where the Way continues to be persecuted.

Philippians 1:13 HCSB so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard, and to everyone else, that my imprisonment is for Christ.

It has become known..for Christ. The soldiers responsible for his imprisonment have realized that Paul is not a criminal but is instead being persecuted for Christ.

- **1 Peter 2:12 HCSB** Conduct yourselves honorably among the Gentiles, so that in a case where they speak against you as those who do evil, they may, by observing your good works, glorify God in a day of visitation.
- **1 Peter 3:17 HCSB** For it is better to suffer for doing good, if that should be God's will, than for doing evil.

Imperial guard. The imperial guards were tasked with the protection of the emperor or other high officials. They would be the equivalent of our modern US Secret Service. That these were assigned to Paul is something of a surprise but may give us an indication of the level of importance that was given to this Jewish, Roman, highly educated but rabble rousing apostle.

- **Acts 28:16 HCSB** And when we entered Rome, Paul was permitted to stay by himself with the soldier who guarded him.
- **Acts 28:30-31 HCSB** Then he stayed two whole years in his own rented house. And he welcomed all who visited him, (31) proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with full boldness and without hindrance.

Whereas many would view imprisonment and being under constant guard a frustrating if not intolerable situation, Paul viewed it as a two year opportunity to witness, this time to a group of men that would be otherwise inaccessible.

My imprisonment. The Greek here is literally "*mou desmos*" (pronounced moo dess-moss) "my bonds", whether he means that figuratively as the HCSB translators obviously believe, or actual, literal bonds.

Philippians 1:14 HCSB Most of the brothers in the Lord have gained confidence from my imprisonment and dare even more to speak the message fearlessly.

Gained confidence. It's madness from the merely human perspective. Contrary to normal expectations, Paul's imprisonment for the faith encouraged others to speak out fearlessly. We often fear the unknown more than we fear the real. Once the dreaded, unknown possibility is seen, we realize that we too can face it down.

Think of movie monsters. Through the first two thirds of the movie, the monster is snatching and eating people but is always hidden in the shadows. We only get brief glimpses here and there. But once the monster finally makes it out into the light and the clear, unforgiving eye of the camera lens, we realize "Oh! Is that all it is? That's hokey. We can kill that."

It's the same with the threats of the devil. They can take more weight and power than they really deserve when we fail to shine the light of the Word of God on them. When we realize that men like Paul, humans just like us (James 5:17), can face those threats fearlessly and remain faithful, then we gain the hope that maybe we too can do the same thing.