

JESUS STRONG IN GOSPEL ADVANCE

Part 2 of Jesus Strong. Philippians 1:12-20.
Peter Foxwell. Cornerstone Church. September 22, 2024.

GOSPEL ADVANCE IN INDIA

Calvary Temple in Hyderabad has grown exponentially.

- It has grown from 24 members in 2005 to 300,000 today.
- Bible preaching and persecution have led to church growth.

JESUS STRONG

Our fall teaching series is called Jesus Strong.

- We're studying the Letter to the Philippians.
- Jesus has all the spiritual resources we need to follow him
- When we align with him, we grow Jesus Strong.
- One way we follow Jesus is by sharing or advancing the gospel.

BACKGROUND TO PHILIPPIANS 1:12-20

Paul was under house arrest in Rome, awaiting trial.

- Acts 21-28 describes what Paul went through.
- Today's passage is like a modern-day missionary update.

JESUS STRONG IN GOSPEL ADVANCE

We grow Jesus Strong when ...

1. We Prioritize the Gospel - verses 12-13.

Philippians 1:12-13 (CSB) Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually advanced the gospel, 13 so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard, and to everyone else, that my imprisonment is because I am in Christ.

- “Advanced” translates a Greek word used for blazing a trail before an army. Paul saw himself as a pioneer of the gospel:

Romans 15:20-21 (CSB) My aim is to preach the gospel where Christ has not been named, so that I will not build on someone else’s foundation, 21 but, as it is written, “Those who were not told about him will see, and those who have not heard will understand” (Isaiah 52:15).

- Paul’s house arrest was in God’s strategic plan. How else would the imperial guards have heard the gospel?
- God purposely places us in our families, workplaces, friendships, and community for the gospel.
- The Lord wants us to prioritize the gospel wherever we are and whatever we’re doing.

2. We Proclaim the Gospel - verses 14-18a.

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

- Paul’s faithfulness in jail inspired the Roman Christians to share Christ.
- It wasn’t all smooth sailing:

Philippians 1:15-17 (CSB) To be sure, some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of good will. 16 These preach out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; 17 the others proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, thinking that they will cause me trouble in my imprisonment.

- Paul's motive was to promote Christ. His rivals were all about promoting themselves - "selfish ambition.
- Christianity is not about personalities or self-promotion, it's about one Person and promoting him by proclaiming the gospel.

Philippians 1:18 (CSB) What does it matter? Only that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is proclaimed, and in this I rejoice.

- We can share Christ wherever God plants us. Pray for boldness.

Ephesians 6:19 (CSB) Pray also for me, that the message may be given to me when I open my mouth to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.

3. We Pay the Price for the Gospel - verses 18b-20.

- The gospel is free, but cost Paul his freedom.

Philippians 1:18b-19 (CSB) Yes, and I will continue to rejoice 19 because I know this (what has happened to me) will lead to my salvation through your prayers and help from the Spirit of Jesus Christ. 20 My eager expectation and hope is that I will not be ashamed about anything, but that now as always, with all courage, Christ will be highly honored in my body, whether by life or by death.

- It costs us everything to follow Jesus. He said:

Luke 9:23-26 (CSB) ... "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will save it.

- Good news: Jesus promised that, even if we lose everything for his sake, nothing can steal our salvation.
- According to verse 20, Paul was confident that the Lord would not allow the trial before Caesar or the fear of death to cause him to stumble in his faith; stumble is the meaning of "ashamed" in this context (Isaiah 28:16; Romans 9:33; 10:10-11).

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

Review

- Review the September 22 study guide (<https://www.famousgod.com/teaching-notes>)
- What were the highlights of the passage or Peter's teaching?
- What questions do you have about the passage or Peter's teaching?
- Use the S.P.E.C.K. method to reflect on and apply the teaching:
 - S: Sins to confess
 - P: Promises to claim
 - E: Examples to follow
 - C: Commands to obey or Christ to rest in
 - K: Knowledge or insights to consider

Discuss

- In what ways is Paul's perspective on the priority of sharing the gospel a realistic or an unrealistic expectation for Christians today?
- What are the main obstacles to sharing Jesus? These could be your thinking/attitudes, personal circumstances, cultural situations, laws, etc. What are solutions to these problems
- What are some practical ways you, your small group, or the Cornerstone could advance the gospel?

Prayers

- Pray for revival in the American Church and national spiritual awakening.
- Pray for the Cornerstone Church - people, volunteers, staff, leaders.
- Pray for your group.
- Pray for whatever the Lord puts on your mind.