

SERMON OUTLINE | Philippians 1:12-18

I Am Put Here for the Defense of the Gospel | Matt Nelson

September 14, 2025

BACKGROUND

WHAT I WANT YOU TO KNOW

Gospel Progress Among Unbelievers (vs. 12-13)

Gospel Progress Among Believers (vs. 14-17)

I REJOICE

CONCLUSION

SERMON DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

MAIN POINT

Having offered his customary greetings, thanksgiving, and prayer, in this passage Paul begins to unpack the body of his letter to the Philippian church. His imprisonment was discouraging to the Philippians and seemed like a significant defeat for the gospel. But Paul shares that his circumstances have had results they did not expect.

The main idea in this passage is that Paul wants the Philippians to know that Caesar's chains have released the power of the gospel. The main takeaway is that God has stationed you where you are in the interests of Christ.

FOR DISCUSSION

1. What were your thoughts on the text/sermon? What stood out? What was most helpful? What was confusing?
2. How does Paul interpret or understand his circumstances?
3. How has the sovereign hand of God worked in Paul's life and that of the Philippian church? (Consider also Acts 16:1-40)
4. Why is Paul joyful in the midst of his imprisonment? What are the various reasons?
5. What are some ways the Christ Hymn of Philippians 2:5-11 helps us understand Paul's response to suffering?
6. Take turns sharing one of the following:
 - a. Share a situation where you have experienced *koinonia*, or gospel fellowship, as a source of strength and encouragement.
 - b. Share a situation where an undesirable circumstance in your own life resulted in unexpected blessing. Have you seen it bless others?
 - c. Share a situation where you have been encouraged by the faithfulness of another in their trials. What encouraged you?

AREAS OF APPLICATION

7. Share a situation where you're currently struggling to trust and obey God and seek His glory.
8. Examine yourself: Are you bitter toward God regarding your station? What aspects are most challenging for you personally?
9. Examine yourself: Where are you not applying the gospel to situations of hurt within your family or the church?
10. Have you ever been hurt or let down by a fellow believer or church leader? Can you say to God and others - "May it not be charged against them" (2 Timothy 4)? Bring it in prayer to God, apply the gospel, ask others for help.
11. What would responding differently to your station look like? What would change?
12. What are some practical steps you can take to change sinful habits of responding to affliction?
13. Memorize a Bible passage that reminds you that God has put you where you are for good reason.
14. Memorize a Bible passage, such as Luke 6:27-36, that reminds you to be merciful toward "enemies".
15. Write a Thank You message to someone whose fellowship has blessed you. Include in your note an encouragement in the Lord.

PRAYER POINTS

16. Adoration. Give glory to God who ordains our circumstances for His glory and our good.
17. Confession. Confess any bitterness toward others or God and any unbelief and disobedience with regard to your station.
18. Thanksgiving. Thank Him for gospel grace and for granting you to be part of His Great Commission together with the church.
19. Supplication. Intercede for those who have hurt or failed you. Ask God to help you forgive and bless them.