



## Pressing On For His Glory

The glory and mystery of God's Word is that it's how the Lord speaks to us. While we passively read about those who have received visions or even a visit from the Father Himself in the form of a burning bush, the majority of us 'hear' from the Lord through the Bible. This is why it is so important for us to read and study it. I find when I am praying about something, the Holy Spirit answers with a verse or passage. So I encourage you to make time for God's Word every day, even if you don't really feel like it.

The past few weeks have been particularly challenging for me. If you've dealt with lingering physical pain, you know how truly exhausting it can be. Add in some additional life stresses, and by early evening you feel like a piece of burnt toast. If there are two types of responses to situations like this, fight or flight, I land on the latter. Not just because I love airplanes, but because I don't like to fight or struggle against difficult things. I look for the easiest escape from a situation I don't like. Maybe I'm just lazy? Either way, today's passage was quite encouraging for me personally, and it again shows how the Lord speaks through His written word.

If you recall where we left off, in [Philippians 1:21-24](#), Paul had just shared his personal struggle in that he wanted badly to **depart and be with Christ**, but knew it was better for the believers in Philippi if he **remained on in the flesh for [their] sake**. Remember, Paul was locked in prison when he wrote this letter. We think we've got it bad? Paul had it much worse!

He then wrote:

***Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.*** [Philippians 1:25-26 NASB](#)

The ESV renders verse 26 as: ***so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.*** I prefer this wording because Paul's intention comes across more clearly in our modern English.

Here we see the heart of a true minister of God as Paul put aside his own desires and well-being for the sake of this little church. I say little because, in this era, churches met



in houses. Christians didn't have synagogues like the Jews and certainly did not have mega-churches with their own zip code. These groups of believers were intimate and vulnerable, so like newborn children, Paul understood that they still needed him to shepherd them in the walk. His concern for their spiritual well-being was sincere and is what drove him to press on in his trial for their ***progress and joy in the faith***.

Paul also saw a light at the end of the tunnel. Even while imprisoned, he had confidence that God kept him alive so he would eventually be released and continue ministering in person. As we've seen before, Paul doesn't question God's reasons, but he lived in expectancy and hope, which translates to joy even in the worst situations.

I found this passage oddly comforting this morning. As one who tends to want to flee from difficult situations (in Paul's case this may have meant praying for death... think about that for a moment!), Paul's words are a reminder that God has us here for a reason. In ministry, this means we are here to love and serve others so that they ***have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus***. We are reminded that our purpose here is not for our own blessing or honor or glory or riches, but for God's, and the benefit of those He has placed in our path to care for. Knowing this, we are emboldened to push forward and minister where God has set us today. And once again we see how God's Word reminds us that we must always seek God's will. We must rely on God's will. We must obey God's will. We must love and cherish God's will. In doing so, joy, encouragement, and the preverbal light in the tunnel are granted to us by the Lord.

May the grace, peace, and love of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!

~Associate Pastor Jeremy Preece