

Philippians 1:12-14 **Suffering Saints**

Introduction:

It may sound strange to us that God would advance the gospel ministry through suffering. Perhaps if we were a commanding officer in the field of battle we would instruct our troops to stay healthy, do our exercise drills in order to persevere through the turbulence of war. But with God's plan in the battle to win souls, He can and often does even use our weakness when the odds are against us to be effectual witnesses of the gospel of grace. (II Corinthians 12:9-10)

I. Gospel Advancement through Suffering – v.12-14

A. Paul's imprisonment – Rom. 1:16; II Tim. 2:9

1. The rich young ruler – Luke 18:18-30
2. What seems impossible with men is possible with God – I Cor. 25; II Cor. 12:9
3. John Bunyan's prison experience

B. The Praetorian Guard

1. Many believed on Christ for salvation – Phil. 4:22
2. This is God's way – Joseph – (Gen. 45:8; 50:20) Job – Job 1:1-22

Suffering Purposes:

3. Corrective – Prov. 3:11-12
4. Compassion – II Cor. 1:3-9
5. Instructive – I Pet. 1:6-7

C. Spreading the Good News – v.14

1. The domino effect – Ill.
2. John MacArthur – comments

II. Gospel Advancement Has Effects On Other Christians – v.14

A. Has your life's example affected other Christians? (Acts 19:23-41)

1. Take Courage – John 16:33
2. Matthew Henry's – the early Christians not deterred from preaching Christ.
3. C. S. Lewis – "Screw Tape letters"

B. Bold Witness

1. An erroneous idea about evangelism... Acts 4:31; Phil. 1:20
2. "The Soul Winner" Spurgeon – I Thess. 2:2

