

Philemon

This man is mentioned in V. 10:31, 23, 24. Here was a runaway slave in Colossae whose name was Onesimus. *Run away slave - Won to Christ - Reconciliation* Somehow he made his way to Rome and Paul sent him back. Converted to Christ. Along with a letter to his owner - V. 1. Paul wrote this letter about the same time he wrote Colossae. V. 23-24.

II Timothy - *Letter contained deep moving truth*

Now this was part of the proclamation at Rome. Paul used conferences, he used teaching methods. The opportunity to write. They changed the guard at intervals and Paul tells in Phil., I want you to know brethren, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the Gospel. That it has become known throughout the whole Praetorian guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. Phil. 1:12-14.

Paul had visitors - he would sure tell them about Christ. And in the meanwhile, he had the care of all the churches. The problems continued to mount up.

Fourth, preaching.

So his proclamation included conferences, teaching, writing - and preaching. V. 31. Preaching the kingdom of God. And those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence - no man forbidding him.

Lovingly, clearly, he expounded and earnestly testified. 2 Cor. 4:5 - for we preach not ourselves but Christ Jesus the Lord. And ourselves, your servant for Jesus sake.

Who would not sit at the feet of Paul, or listen to him tell about Jesus. I would.

I think he must have been a most glorious exponent, who made the world his parish. He magnified the preached word. And Christianity still grows by the right kind of preaching. The right kind of man in the pulpit. His life told the story of the gospel. Paul was no lazy man - he was a worker.

He preached (not) himself. It is very easy for a man to preach himself. ^{Broz -} About his own experiences and to tell about the things that interest him most. And to boost his own ego in the presence of people. There is a tremendous danger - and all preachers face this. Paul did not preach something cheap. He preached Christ Jesus as Lord.

Did you know the world today cries in sin - "sir, we would see Jesus." We preach Jesus, not merely his humanity. We love to think of him as a perfect man. We love to think of him as the anointed Messiah. As God's appointed deliverer. Divinely sent Saviour.

Jesus said, whom do men say that I am? Some say you are John the Baptist. Or that you are Elijah. Yet another will say you are Jeremiah. Whom do you say that I am. And the sinner, Simon Peter, in his prompt reply said - "thou art the Christ." Then Jesus said upon this rock will I build my church and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.

Why did Jesus come down from Heaven among men. To take away sin. Behold the lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. The son of God has come to seek and to save that which is lost. The name takes on precious meaning. Call his name Jesus. He will save his people from their sins.

And now once in the world, he hath appeared to put away sin with the sacrifice of himself. No wonder the song - Sweetest note in Seraph's song

Sweetest name on mortal tongue

Sweetest carol every sung

Jesus, blessed Jesus.

That name heals like medicine. It quiets our fears, it relieves us of despair. It comforts our minds.

Edward Irving said that there was a dying man in the attic. He was notorious for his sin. Irving told of God's love and God loved you enough to die for you. And the man opened his eyes - does it. "Then I will love him back." Now this is our Gospel.

Martin Luther tells of little Margaret, 4 years old, he prayed for her. The Doctor told him that little Margaret is gone now. Is it possible that my sweet child can go in the darkness and cold by herself. Then in a moment more he said, no, yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. For though art with me.

Christ has abolished death. John on Patmos - ^{Jesus said} fear not, I am alive. I was dead, I am alive. Now, and I hold in my hands the keys of death. And the invisible word - and I am alive forever more.

Men and women everywhere, I come to ask you, if you would dare to live for Christ. And follow him. It is not easy to obey.

When old John Clifford, a non-conformist leader in England, told of the missionaries that he needed in Persia. He said I need 40. And I am calling for missionaries. He said I want six men to go back with me. I am merely at the end. And I will promise you an early death. You cannot live out half of your days. You will go to your graves early. But for Christ's sake he gave himself for you. Who will be willing to go. He got six to go.

We need a rebirth of that passion. Paul preached like that. And he lived like that. Will you dare to become a Christian and live for Christ in this way.

An aged mother once thanked me several times that her son was saved during a revival meeting, which I preached.

Now Paul's proclamations at Rome were made through conferences, teaching, writing, and preaching.

v.31 → This (last word) - it says, no man. In the Greek the words mean, without let or hindrance. The adverb means in the Greek means unhinder. That is, Paul in these chains in regard to his Gospel - it was unhindered. Any obligation to the Roman government. He wrote and teaching, writing, and preaching the word of God - and it was not bound.

That one word falls like victory upon us today. It is a mountain peak in Luke's story. We wonder why Luke never told us what happened to Paul. Whether he was executed, whether he was released. But here is a tale or a story that started way back in Jerusalem 30 years ago. Now it finished up in Rome. It is nothing less than a miracle of God's grace. The church had its beginning in Acts - when it's number could be counted. But now it numbers in the thousands.

And the story of the crucified Christ has swept across the world. And the last part of this text says, it was without hindrance. And it was being preached in the very capitol of the world - as the Gospel reached the center of the world, Luke felt perhaps his task was complete.

*Ending of Acts is abrupt - story does not conclude.
Sir Wm. Ramsay: Dr Luke proposed to write 3 volumes I. Life of Jesus Christ
Luke II. Acts of the apostles III. Paul's trial -
Luke leaves Paul in Prison possibly because his death came before Paul's*

We begin the message with the providences of the island. And we conclude with the proclamations of Rome.

But the final footnote is this - the Gospel is now in your hands. And you have the privilege. No man forbidding. You can tell it whenever and wherever. So it is up to you to write the next chapter of the book of Acts.

*- chag 29. - your chag - If Luke should begin
What would he write?*