

BE A BRINGER

“40 One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother. 41 He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, “We have found the Messiah” (which is translated, the Christ). 42 And he brought him to Jesus....”
John 1:40-42a

A bringer makes one touch each week by investing and inviting someone to Christ and church.

Name three people you will pray for their salvation this week:

PRAYER REQUESTS FOR THE WEEK

“Moreover, as for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD in ceasing to pray for you;....” I Samuel 12:23a

Ed & Annita Hoagland



Missionaries to Mexico City



They will be here next Sunday, June 10th to give an update on their work in Mexico City. Ed will also present the next message on our current series on Ruth. The message is titled “Moving Forward In Favor”.

Finding Joy Through Suffering

The same God who used Moses’ rod, Gideon’s pitchers, and David’s sling, used Paul’s chains. Little did the Romans realize that the chains they affixed to his wrists would release Paul instead of bind him! Even as he wrote during a later imprisonment, “I suffer trouble, as an evildoer, even unto bonds; but the Word of God is not bound” (2 Tim. 2:9). He did not complain about his chains; instead he consecrated them to God and asked God to use them for the pioneer advance of the Gospel. And God answered his prayers.

To begin with, these chains gave Paul contact with the lost. He was chained to a Roman soldier twenty-four hours a day! The shifts changed every six hours, which meant Paul could witness to at least four men each day! Imagine yourself as one of those soldiers, chained to a man who prayed “without ceasing,” who was constantly interviewing people about their spiritual condition, and who was repeatedly writing letters to Christians and churches throughout the Empire! It was not long before some of these soldiers put their faith in Christ. Paul was able to get the Gospel into the elite Praetorian Guard, something he could not have done had he been a free man.

But the chains gave Paul contact with another group of people: the officials in Caesar’s court. He was in Rome as an official prisoner, and his case was an important one. The Roman government was going to determine the official status of this new “Christian” sect. Was it merely another sect of the Jews? Or was it something new and possibly dangerous? Imagine how pleased Paul must have been knowing that the court officials were forced to study the doctrines of the Christian faith!

Sometimes God has to put “chains” on His people to get them to accomplish a “pioneer advance” that could never happen any other way. Young mothers may feel chained to the home as they care for their children, but God can use those “chains” to reach people with the message of salvation. Susannah Wesley was the mother of nineteen children, before the days of labor-saving devices and disposable diapers! Out of that large family came John and Charles Wesley, whose combined ministries shook the British Isles. At six weeks of age, Fanny Crosby was blinded, but even as a youngster she determined not to be confined by the chains of darkness. In time, she became a mighty force for God through her hymns and Gospel songs.

The secret is this: when you have the single mind, you look on your circumstances as God-given opportunities for the furtherance of the Gospel; and you rejoice at what God is going to do instead of complaining about what God did not do.

KEY VERSE

Philippians 1:29 (NKJV)

“For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake “

WEEKLY READINGS

Monday: Philippians 1:12-30

Introduction

1. Describe a time in your life when you faced difficult circumstances. Did you find it easy or difficult to rejoice?
2. How would you describe Paul’s overall attitude as he awaits trial as a prisoner?

Tuesday: Philippians 1:12-14; Philippians 4:8

Look For The Positive In Every Situation

3. What positive outcomes did Paul see as a result of his imprisonment?
4. Why do you think he was able to see the positive in his situation? How can you have the same mindset in your life?

Wednesday: Philippians 1:15-18; Galatians 1:10; Proverbs 29:25

Don’t Depend On The Approval Of Others

5. Why is it at times easier to fear men instead of God?
6. How does fearing people rob you of your joy?

Thursday: Philippians 1:19; II Timothy 4:16-18

Trust God To Help You Out

7. Why do you think Paul was able to have confidence that God would help him?
8. How can you have unshakeable faith that God will deliver you in the middle of your trials?
9. What are some situations in your past where you have seen God deliver you from?

Friday: Philippians 1:20-30; Ephesians 2:10

Stay Focused On Your Purpose

10. What was Paul’s purpose in life?
11. What is your purpose? How is it similar or different to Paul’s?
12. Do you think most Christians feel the same way Paul did about departing to be with Christ (Philippians 1:21)? Why or why not? In what ways does our view of death affect the way we live?
13. How could your current situation exalt Christ and spread the gospel? How could you use this opportunity?