

JOY TO YOUR WORLD: The Castaway Opportunities

PHILIPPIANS 1:12-18

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■ Central Church

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■ Social Media: #JoyToYourWorld

When You See Obstacles as Gospel Opportunities, You'll Have Joy to Your World

1. Accept the Obstacle as God's Sovereign Plans (12, 13, 14, & 17).

2. Look for ways to transform Obstacles into Opportunities (13-18).

Ways that Obstacles can become Opportunities:

1. Use Obstacles to Make Contact with the Lost (13).

2. Use Obstacles to Inspire Courage in the Church (14).

3. Use Obstacles to Celebrate Competition Preaching Christ (15-18).

Philippians 1:12-18

I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,

¹³so that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ.

¹⁴And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

¹⁵Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry, but others from good will. ¹⁶The latter do it out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. ¹⁷The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment.

¹⁸What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice,

(ESV)

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APPLICATION QUESTIONS

These questions are for further study and application of today's sermon. Thoughtfully writing out the answers to these questions will help your fight for life change. One of the best ways to grow in the body is by discussing the answers to these questions in a small group. Find one here:

www.centralchurch.com/groups

1. What are some of the obstacles that seem to oppose your joy in this season of the year especially? How could the Lord be using those obstacles to bring you into contact with people who do not know the gospel?
2. Paul was courageous in sharing his faith in Jesus Christ. He was so courageous that his passion and zeal for the gospel spread everywhere in Rome. How could your courageous demeanor amid your struggle affect others for the gospel's sake? What would this look like for you?
3. It's been observed that the "Bible Belt" has a long history of "slimy ministry" through intentional church splits, sheep-stealing leaders, and opportunistic pastors seeking to build their own kingdom. This selfish motive is not a new development in church history. Paul saw it happening in his day. What perspective does Paul take concerning the competition of preaching Christ around him? How should this help us in our context?

Quote for the Week. . .

Augustine's Confessions:

"How sweet all at once it was for me to be rid of those fruitless joys which I had once feared to lose and was now glad to reject! You drove them from me, You who are the true, the sovereign joy. You drove them from me and took their place, You who are sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood, You who outshine all light yet are hidden deeper than any secret in our hearts, You who surpass all honor though not in the eyes of men who see all honor in themselves. At last my mind was free from the gnawing anxieties of ambition and gain, from wallowing in filth and scratching the itching sore of lust. I began to talk to you freely, O Lord my God, my Light, my Wealth, and my Salvation."

