United Evangelical Free Church
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Philippians
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The Advantages of Adversity

Philippians 1:12-18

[12] Now I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel. [13] As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. [14] Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly.

[15] It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. [16] The latter do so in love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. [17] The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. [18] But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice,[1]

In Philippians 1:12-18, Paul brings the church in Philippi up to date on how he is doing personally. He explains that his joy does not come from his circumstances or from the opinions of other people. Paul's joy comes from knowing that a sovereign God can use our difficulties to accomplish his plan and purpose.

As Paul explains, adversity has several distinct advantages:

- ❑ **Adversity enhances our witness (12)**

- ❑ **Adversity brings us in contact with new people (13)**

- ❑ **Our response to adversity can encourage others (14-17)**

- ❑ **We can have joy in adversity by remembering that a sovereign God can use our difficulties to accomplish his purpose (18)**

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1 *The Holy Bible: New International Version*. 1996, c1984 (electronic ed.). Grand Rapids: Zondervan.