**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS: THE WEALTH AND WALK OF A BELIEVER**

*“Prison Cell Lessons”*

* **THE PRISONER’S PROBLEM**
* **He is an apostle (sent one) who is unable to go anywhere.**
* **His circumstances would seem to be hindering him from doing the work God has called him to do.**
* **THE PRISONER’S PERSPECTIVE**
* **Believe in the sovereignty of God**

*“prisoner of* ***Jesus******Christ****”*

*“sovereignty” –The characteristic of God that describes the truth that He is in* ***control*** *of all things and can* ***do******whatever*** *He pleases.*

*In order to truly believe in the sovereignty of God, you must first believe that He is both* ***Omniscient*** *and* ***Omnipotent****.*

Omniscience – He **knows** all (Pr. 5:21)

* Premise #1: God **knows** what I am going through.

Omniscience-God can **do** anything (Rev. 19:6; Gen. 18:14)

* Premise #2: God can **do** whatever He **desires** to do concerning my situation.

Note: Because God is sovereign, we know that in whatever circumstances we find ourselves He has either directly brought it to be or, at the very least, allowed it to occur.

* **Trust in the goodness of God**

*Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die:*

*5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.*

*Exodus 34:6 .. The Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and* ***abundant in goodness*** *and truth,*

*Psalm 145:9 The* ***Lord is good to all****: And his tender mercies are over all his works.*

*Psalm 31:19 Oh how* ***great is thy goodness****,*

*Psalm 107:8 Oh that men would* ***praise the Lord for his goodness***

*James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is* ***no variableness****, neither* ***shadow of turning****.*

*Genesis 50:20 But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but* ***God meant it unto good****, to* ***bring to pass****, as it is this day, to save much people alive.*

* **Grow in the grace of God**

Question: If God is sovereign and He is good, then why do bad things happen to good people?

* **There are no good people. (Rom. 3:10)**

*Romans 3:10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one:*

* **We may be reaping what we have sown. (Gal. 6:7)**

*Galatians 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.*

* **God may be allowing us to endure difficulty because He wants us to grow. (II Cor. 12:7-9; II Pet. 3:18)**

**We only realize in midst of great difficulty that God’s grace is sufficient. That we may not be getting what we want, but we are still getting more than we deserve. (that’s God’s grace)**

NOTE: THE MOST IMPORTANT GOAL OF ANY TRIAL IS NOT TO CHANGE THE **CIRCUMSTANCES**, BUT TO CHANGE **ME**!

* **THE PRISONER’S PRODUCTIVITY**
* **Two years of unhindered preaching of the gospel at the crossroads of the world. (Acts 28:30-31)**

*Philippians 1:12 But I would ye should understand, brethren, that the things which happened unto me have* ***fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel****;*

*13 So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, and in all other places;*

*14 And many of the brethren in the Lord, waxing confident by my bonds, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.*

* **Onesimus saved. (Philemon 1:10)**

*Philemon 10 I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have* ***begotten in my bonds****:*

* **Wrote the books of Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon**

**Note: It is in the midst of our greatest trials that we often have the greatest opportunities.**