



DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

Spiritual Relationship (Part 1) ... by Gareth

● RELATIONSHIP TO GOD THE FATHER

- ***To our God and Father be glory for ever and ever.*** – Paul concludes his letter exalting, magnifying and glorifying God for all things. Paul was praising God and giving Him the glory due His name for the privilege of being a Christian and suffering for Christ, for at that very moment he was in a Roman prison and chained to a guard 24 hours a day.
- Paul was praising God for the Philippians, for the gift they sent him and for his own circumstances. Paul was fulfilling the very purpose of God – to bring glory to God whatever the circumstances. Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever. John 15 v 8 "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit;" Surely Paul did not like being in jail, but he knew there was a purpose for it in God's plan for his life. NOTE.
- Why could Paul give God the glory for all things? Because he had a spiritual relationship with God the Father. He had a biblical concept of God and personal fellowship with Him.

Paul Understood God's Sovereignty.

- Paul understood in his experience the truth that God is sovereign over all things, and that his puny, human will was insignificant when compared to God's will. Paul's concept of God came from the Old Testament scriptures (*1 Chron. 29:11-12: Yours, O LORD, is the greatness and the power and the glory and the majesty and the splendor, for everything in heaven and earth is yours. Yours, O LORD, is the kingdom; you are exalted as head over all. Wealth and honor come from you; you are the ruler of all things. In your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. 2 Chron. 20:6: O LORD, God of our fathers, are you not the God who is in heaven? You rule over all the kingdoms of the nations. Power and might are in your hand, and no one can withstand you.*).
- Paul knew God had control of all nations, even the Roman emperor (*Isa. 40:15, 17, 22-23: Surely the nations are like a drop in a bucket; they are regarded as dust on the scales; he weighs the islands as though they were fine dust. Before him all the nations are as nothing; they are regarded by him as worthless and less than nothing. He is enthroned above the circle of the earth, and its people are like grasshoppers. He brings princes to naught and reduces the rulers of this world to nothing.*).



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Week 12

- He realized God does as He pleases with men, even Paul (*Psa. 115:3: Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him.*).

Paul Understood God's Compassion.

- Paul also came to know God as a personal God, one of love, compassion and mercy. God is a loving Father. He also received this concept from the Old Testament scripture (*Neh. 9:17, 31: But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love....But in your great mercy you did not put an end to them or abandon them for you are a gracious and merciful God. Psa. 103:8: The LORD is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.*). The God who had control of Paul's circumstances also cared for him in a very special, personal way.

Paul Understood God's Character

- God in His character is both sovereign and love. These two attributes of God must be kept in balance or we will become unbalanced as Christians. NOTE. One of the reasons Christians do not have the same attitude towards circumstances, as Paul did is that their view of God is too small.
- Men think God is like they are but it is not so (*Psa. 50:21: You thought I was altogether like you.*). There is none like God who is absolute sovereignty and absolute love (*Exo. 15:11; Who among the gods is like you, O LORD? Who is like you—majestic in holiness, awesome in glory, working wonders?*). Our responsibility as Christians is to get to know the God of the Bible and enter into fellowship with Him (*Jer. 9:23-24: Let not the wise man boast of his wisdom or the strong man boast of his strength or the rich man boast of his riches, but let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight, declares the LORD.*).
- Martin Luther once said to the humanist Erasmus, "You thoughts of God are too human."