

## Week 18

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Ephesians 3:10-13, ESV

*10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. 13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.*

The church announces the victory of Jesus Christ. The church announces this victory to every tribe tongue and nation and in doing so continually reminds both angels and demons (vs. 10c) that we aren't waiting for Jesus to reign, Jesus IS reigning. Jesus crushed the head of the serpent through His life, death, and resurrection and before He ascended He told the church, "tell everyone".

Paul admonishes us to have *boldness* and *confidence* in our faith. In order to be people that herald the glorious message of the gospel with confidence and boldness we must have a clean conscience in Jesus. This means we must perpetually repent, flee sin and strain our gaze on Jesus. The author of Hebrews when speaking of the deceitfulness of sin, says "for we have come to share in Christ, if indeed we hold our **confidence** firm to the end" (3:14). One day we will rest from the power that sin has over us, but until that day, our secured faith is displayed through our staying the course *to the end*. This battle for holiness that we constantly face is a testimony to onlookers who see us holding fast to our confession of faith (Hebrews 10) despite what comes our way.

It is interesting that Paul encourages this type of faith while he's in prison. A confident and bold faith is one focused on Christ's return. Paul strained his gaze toward the return of Christ and therefore persevered well in the midst of persecution- even imprisonment and execution. We can be encouraged to not "lose heart" because as Paul's life teaches us, suffering can be used for the glory of God and the expansion of the Church (vs. 13). The Bible guarantees that we will experience suffering in this life, but this world is not our home! Like Paul, our suffering can be used to expand the Kingdom of God as we use our trials to proclaim Christ. Immerse yourself in the goodness of the gospel and cling to the feet of Jesus in your difficulty because He is making all things new and all the bad things in our life will one day be made good.

### QUESTION:

How can we view our current or past sufferings for the glory of God and His church?

### WALK IT OUT:

Know God's word, pray for perseverance, surround yourself with community that pushes you towards right thinking rather than those who encourage you to complain.

### PRAYER:

God, give me more confidence and boldness in my walk with you. Help me to view this life as temporary and look for ways to bring glory to you despite my affliction. Give me your holy spirit to guide and direct my ways.

