

PLAIN SPEECH

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“Seeing then that we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech” (2 Cor. 3:12)

By Scott Parker

IT'S ALL GOOD

Paul did not have an easy life (2 Corinthians 11:24-33). He suffered much as a good soldier for the Lord (2 Timothy 1:8; Galatians 6:17). Let's consider a couple of noteworthy points about our ancient and beloved brother.

First of all, Paul, despite all of the setbacks and suffering he faced, never seemed to lose his composure. For instance, read of his resolve recorded in Acts 14:1-7 and again in Acts 14:19-22 or Acts 20:17-24. Of course, who can forget that grand text recorded in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 which shows so beautifully how Paul refused to cave in as his earthly life turned to shambles? The text reads this way:

“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.”

Secondly, when things got difficult for Paul, that truly converted man simply refused to stop spreading the gospel (Acts 22-26) and refused to stop encouraging the brethren (Philippians 4:1-4). What's more is that Paul's determination to sow the seed amid the fields of sorrow actually worked out for the furtherance of the gospel (Philippians 1:12) and his concern for the brethren reaped benefits (2 Thessalonians 1:1-4).

Now, I've said all of that to say this: even though each of us is going to face hard times (1 Peter 4:12), we need to be sure that we are doing what we can to further the cause of the kingdom by sowing the precious gospel seed and strengthening our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Let me share with you some of the things that have been accomplished during my, now, 40 day stay at the hospital:

- ♫ I have had prayers lifted for my recovery every single day via faithful saints. Thank you, brethren.
- ♫ I have been strengthened time and again by visits and calls and cards. Thanks again.
- ♫ I have been able to strengthen some struggling saints.
- ♫ Many times have various parts of the Bible been discussed with hospital employees.
- ♫ Many hospital employees have shown interest in attending our assemblies.
- ♫ One hospital volunteer studied the scriptures for an hour and one half with a friend of mine, Brian Yeager, who came all the way from El Paso, Texas to visit me.
- ♫ One of the nurses here, whose husband is ailing in another hospital, was paid a kind visit by a couple of saints.
- ♫ One brave saint paid a visit to another hospital to visit the severely burned husband of another of my nurses.
- ♫ I have had biblical discussions with liberal church “elders” and “preachers.”
- ♫ I have had opportunity to confront denominational errorists time and again.
- ♫ 2 nurses (Julie and Lisa) have asked me to send them Bible study material.
- ♫ On and on I could go.

Know this: I may be in the hospital. I may be a recovering amputee. Yet, you can rest assured it is “all good” up this way. Let's make sure we all keep mission minded during the difficult days we are all sure to face (Acts 14:22).

I love all who follow the Lord (1 Corinthians 16:22).