

— WEEKLY —  
**BIBLE  
STUDY**  
**NOTES**

## Reflection and Discussion

Read through the passage for this study, [Philippians 1:12-18](#). Then consider and answer the following questions. (For further background, see the ESV Study Bible, page 2281, available online at [www.esvbible.org](http://www.esvbible.org).)

1. [Philippians 1:12](#) begins with the words, “I want you to know . . .” What might this phrase indicate about this section of Philippians? What might it suggest about Paul’s purposes in this letter?

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2. Paul encourages the concerned Philippians by insisting that his imprisonment has actually helped the spread of the gospel, and he gives three examples to prove his point ([Phil. 1:12-18](#)). Identify each of the encouraging examples, describing them in your own words. (Hint: one is in [Phil. 1:12-13](#), another in [Phil. 1:14](#), and another in [Phil. 1:15-18](#)).

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3. Isn’t it wonderfully ironic how *opposition* to the gospel could turn into *opportunities* for the gospel? That certainly wasn’t coincidence or luck; God was behind it all. As with Joseph’s brothers, what Paul’s enemies meant for evil, “God meant . . . for good” ([Gen. 50:20](#)). Can you think of other stories in Scripture where something was meant for evil but used by God for good?

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After answering that question, read [Acts 2:23](#) and [Acts 4:27](#) for the ultimate instance of this.

4. In [Phil. 1:14-16](#) Paul mentions several good and right motivations for preaching the gospel. Identify them, noting also the wrong motivations Paul mentions in [Phil. 1:15-17](#).

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5. Paul says that his imprisonment for Christ has actually made some believers more “confident” and “much more bold to speak the word without fear” ([Phil. 1:14](#)). This may seem counterintuitive. Why would persecution of one Christian produce courage in others? What does “love” ([Phil. 1:16](#)) have to do with gospel-boldness?

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6. What does [Phil. 1:12-18](#) say about Paul’s priorities, aims, concerns, and joys? What is primary in Paul’s mind, according to these verses? Which verse makes that explicit?

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