



**Educate  
+ Engage**



THE GIFT NO  
ONE WANTS: ~~TH~~

jailed

### OVERVIEW

Paul often faced pain points—times and even seasons of life that were extremely difficult. However, even in the midst of pain, whether being blinded, shipwrecked, or even jailed, God used it to get glory out of his story. Though pain is the gift nobody wants, God is with us through it and uses it for a purpose.

#### Scripture Passage

Philippians 1:13 (NKJV)

So that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;

### EDUCATE

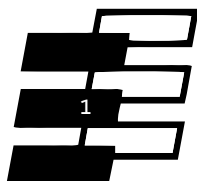
Isn't it amazing to know that there is a God who loves you!

*Discussion Question: When was a time you went through something difficult, yet you felt the presence of God and He helped you through it?*

It is amazing when God reveals Himself in our difficulty! But what do we do when we feel like He is nowhere to be found? What do we do when we feel stuck and that our prayers are going unanswered? This lesson will address the feelings of being trapped and how to find hope in the midst of difficult circumstances.

**Point 1:** Develop a godly perspective of pain.

As we've learned in this series, Paul had a memorable conversion experience. He was against Christians until His encounter with God on the road to Damascus. He was then commissioned to be an apostle to the Gentiles. He would go on to travel the then-known world and preach the gospel of Jesus. He would start churches and help existing churches. He would write two-thirds of the books of the New Testament. We would think God would never allow anything bad to happen to him. However, in order for Paul to be great, he had to receive the gift no one wants. He had to have the gift of pain that made him better.



## Lesson 2

Philippians 1:13 reveals that though Paul was in Prison, he recognized that His chains were in Christ. He knew that God allowed it. When we feel like we are stuck in a season of unanswered prayers and tempted to think God has neglected us, we need to develop a godly perspective of the pain. In Philippians 1:14, Paul declared the gospel was being preached because of what God was allowing Him to go through.

**Point 2:** Find your purpose through the pain.

Paul also had a word that this was not going to be the end for him; what he was going through did not define him and would not stop the future God had for him. There is a purpose in the pain.

Philippians 3:12–14

Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

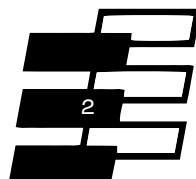
Paul was willing to allow to pain to make him better because he had a proper perspective of the pain. He also realized that though it felt like he was stuck in jail, He could still reach for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. He might not have felt that God was there, but God was indeed still there!

Paul wrote four letters to churches while jailed. He wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon while jailed. Paul did not lose his purpose because he was jailed; rather God used Paul being "stuck" to write down what He inspired him to share with the world.

*Discussion Question: What are things you can do to discover your purpose during a painful season?*

**Point 3:** Learn to have patience in the pain.

Paul wrote in the Book of Romans that God works all things together for the good. Paul, inspired by God, could write this because he had experienced it. Though he was jailed, he had the right perspective and realized there was a purpose in it. However, probably the hardest part of this "pain point" of feeling stuck and neglected is learning to have patience in the pain. Paul declared that he could do all things through Christ who gave him strength, but he understood where this strength came from.



Philippians 4:10–13

"But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at last your care for me has flourished again; though you surely did care, but you lacked opportunity. Not that I speak in regard to need, for I have learned in whatever state I am, to be content: I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

Paul learned that being content in Christ is the key to make it through this pain point. We have to learn to be comfortable in the process that God has us in. It isn't enough to just know God is allowing it for a purpose. We must allow the process to be fulfilled to really obtain the purpose that God has for us. He has not neglected us, and we aren't stuck. We are content and He is working on our behalf!

*Discussion Question: Patience is more than just waiting nicely; what should patience look like in a difficult season?*

### Closing

You are doing your best to live for God, but you have quickly learned that there are pain points. Living for God does not prevent pain points. Instead, through God and His Word, we can be like Paul and have the proper perspective of the pain. We must allow it to make us better instead of bitter. God can work it for our good and the good of others if we allow Him. Let's focus on the purpose instead of the problems. And while we might be "jailed" and we've been in the season of feeling stuck for a while, let's be content. Let's be patient in the process as God works it together.

If you eat a stick of butter alone, it's pretty gross. If you eat an egg alone, it is gross. However, with other ingredients being mixed in a bowl and then put through a process, you can have a delicious chocolate cake. Baking takes patience for the result. The same is true for God.

### ENGAGE

How can you and I be patient in the pain to let the process be fulfilled? Let's pray that we can have a proper perspective to know that there is a purpose in the pain.

