

Proclaiming Christ

Key Verse:
*“What then?
notwithstanding,
every way, whether
in pretence, or in
truth, Christ is
preached; and I
therein do rejoice,
yea, and will
rejoice.”*
—*Philippians 1:18*

Selected Scripture:
Philippians 1:15-26

THESE WORDS WERE written by Paul while he was a prisoner in Rome, and they reflect the special dedication that he gave to preaching the Word of God. He was able to rejoice in the preaching of Christ, for he recalled the words of Jesus, when he said, “Let your light so shine.” (Matt. 5:16) Paul knew that this was the commission given to all of the Lord’s disciples.

Jesus had declared of himself, “I am the light of the world.” (John 8:12) He knew, however, that he would not personally remain in the world, and that the work of God entrusted to him would be continued by his representatives—his ambassadors. In Revelation 20:4, they are referred to as those who are “beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God.” This language describes the giving up, or sacrificing, of the earthly things of this life in the service of Jesus and the message of truth he proclaimed, which came from God. During the Gospel Age, faithfulness as witnesses of Jesus leads to sacrificial death, and we are encouraged by the promise, “Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.”—Rev. 2:10

In the beginning of the Gospel Age, miracles were employed which demonstrated the glory of God. Jesus

healed the sick and raised the dead. The apostles did the same, but they themselves died. After the apostles fell asleep in death, the Lord's people throughout the age since have been called upon to walk entirely by faith, without the need of the performing of great miracles to prove their "witness of Jesus." They have been witnesses of him through their faithfulness in living and proclaiming the "gospel of Christ" under adverse conditions, which, as Paul asserts, is "the power of God unto salvation."—Rom. 1:16

The commission given to the disciples by Jesus was that they should be his witnesses in all the world by preaching the Gospel. (Matt. 24:14; 28:19; Acts 1:8) Even now, in the harvest of the Gospel Age, those who witness for Jesus do so by proclaiming the marvelous plan for human salvation which Jesus was sent into the world to execute. In proclaiming this message, these tell not only of the miracle of Jesus' resurrection by the mighty power of God, but also of the resurrection of Christ's body members, who will live and reign with him in heavenly glory. (Eph. 1:18-23) They proclaim also that blessed feature of the Gospel message which promises a resurrection of all the dead and the restoration of the willing and obedient to perfection of life as human beings on the earth.

As "witnesses of Jesus, and for the word of God," let us go forth with a song of praise upon our lips—praise to God for his love in sending Jesus to be the Redeemer and Savior of the world. Let us praise and honor God for his divine wisdom which designed such a loving plan of salvation (John 5:23), and for his divine justice which made provision to wash away Adamic sin by the blood of the Redeemer. Finally, let us rejoice that the Spirit of God has commissioned us to be witnesses of Jesus, just as Paul was, and to proclaim the glorious hopes, heavenly and earthly, promised in his Word.—Col. 1:25-27; Acts 3:19-21 ■