

# GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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## The word is not bound

By :

**P**aul, constrained in a Roman prison, exhorted Timothy, “Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, of the seed of David, according to my gospel: wherein I suffer hardship unto bonds, as a malefactor; but the word of God is not bound. Therefore I endure all things for the elect’s sake, that they also may obtain the salvation which is Christ Jesus with eternal glory” (2 Timothy 2:8-11).

Paul was suffering in at least two ways in connection with the gospel. He was suffering physical “hardship” in prison. He was also looked upon as a “malefactor” or an “evil doer”. Yet he endured. Why? Because he knew endurance, by being faithful in preaching the gospel of Christ, would continue to bear the fruit of salvation in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

In the context of being restricted in prison from his missionary travels, Paul said that the word of God is not bound. During his first imprisonment, he preached the kingdom of God in prison, none forbidding him ( Acts 28:31). The “whole praetorian guard” understood that Paul was

in prison, not as an evil doer, but for the cause of Christ (*Philippians 1:14*). Imprisonment restricted Paul in traveling, but it did not keep the gospel for making “progress” (*Philippians 1:13*). Brethren took heart in Paul’s example and were “more abundantly bold to speak the word of God without fear” (*Philippians 1:14*).

We should take great encouragement to know that regardless of how restricted we are physically, the saving gospel of Christ can continue to bear the fruit of salvation. That is, if we continue to proclaim it.

Paul asked the brethren in Thessalonica to, “pray for us that the word of the Lord may run and be glorified...” (2 *Thessalonians 3:1*). Prayer was to be offered for the one presenting the gospel for the word will not make progress when people will not teach it. Paul knew it could be hampered if preachers and teachers of the gospel would be intimidated by evil men who do not want the teaching. Therefore he adds to the prayer request, “that we may be delivered from unreasonable and evil men: for all have not faith” (2 *Thessalonians 3:2*). Paul wanted the Ephe-

sians to remember him in their prayers. He wanted them to make request of God that he would make the mystery of the gospel known and “as an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak (*Ephesians 19-20*).

Even in chains the gospel could be made known and save people with eternal glory. But the word is not going to make progress if believers are to cease in the bold proclamation of it. If Paul had giving up, and ceased to speak boldly, the word in effect would have been bound in chains. His chains would have kept him from proclaiming the gospel. His quitting would have discouraged the brethren so they would have lost heart to speak boldly the word of God.

The truth of the gospel of Christ will penetrate the heart of people when it is preached. It is the effective sword of the Spirit when wielded. It is not bound. But if we cease to preach it to others and apply it in our lives it will be hampered to accomplish what God designed for it to accomplish: save souls in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.