

Sunday 29 July 2018

Speaker: Martin Armstrong



To Be A Transforming
Community Committed
to Jesus Christ

Sermon Summary

Ephesians 3:1-21 Paul's Calling

1. As Paul wrote this letter, he was a prisoner in Rome awaiting trial before Nero. How did Paul define his situation? What does this indicate about Paul's view of life?
2. How do you evaluate/interpret your own negative circumstances in life? How would Paul's point of view have made all the difference to him in his experience here?
3. In spite of all his former privileges and responsibilities, how does Paul view himself? In what ways would his humility impact his work for Christ?
4. Paul does not feel sorry for himself or view himself as a poor, unfortunate victim. To be a powerful, effective believer in Jesus we also have to be a prisoner, or slave to Jesus and obey Him. Do you agree? What may this entail?
5. In Acts 19:29 when Paul was in Ephesus, the silversmiths who made emblems of the Goddess Diana, blamed him for their drop in sales. *v30The city was filled with confusion, and they rushed together into the great theater... Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him.* Who was hearing correctly here: Paul or the believers?
6. Paul also describes himself as a slave and accepts the experiences of life as God's training programme. God develops our character by using experiences in our lives to refine us. Describe a difficult period in your life that in retrospect, enabled you to learn and grow a lot.
7. Some people believe that if we trust in Jesus we will not have difficulties and problems in life. Discuss this in terms of Hebrews 12:5-7, John 16:33, Job 5:17? How does being a slave, fit in with our status as son's & daughters & co-heirs of Christ?
8. Job shows us that God expects us to trust Him, even though we may not always understand Him. Job 5:17. Describe a time when you that was the case in your life.
9. In (165AD) Polycarp the Bishop of Smyrna was burnt at the stake for refusing to proclaim that Caesar was Lord. All he had to do was to say, "Caesar is Lord." And his life would be spared. His famous reply was, *"Eighty and six years have I served Him and he has done me no harm. Why should I now deny Him?"* What would you have done if you were in his situation?
10. Pray for each other and for strength to obey Christ through difficult situations.