

Phil 1:19-26

To Live Is Christ

19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. 24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. 25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, 26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

Up to verse 18 Paul spoke mainly in past or present tense.

- I thank God upon every remembrance of you, vs 3
- I make requests for you all with joy, vs 4
- He who has begun a good work, vs 6
- you all are partakers with me of grace, vs 7
- how greatly I long for you, vs 8

Then in verse 18 he begins to look to the future.

Phil 1:18

What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

He wanted the Philippian church to know

- that the things which happened to him in the past
- were **not** going to rob him of his future joy.

Thank God that He controls the future.

Cory Ten Boom once said:

Even though we don't know what the future holds, we know who holds the future.

As we study today,

- we'll see that Paul believed,
- if even for a moment
- that he could face execution at any time.

Paul mentions rejoice, joy or rejoicing 19 times in the letter to the Philippians.

He didn't say to "be happy in the Lord," he said to "rejoice in the Lord."

Phil 1:19

19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

Paul wasn't sure if he'd be released from jail or not since he says in the very next verse, "Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death."

Romans 8:28

Paul understood that God would either deliver him from the trial,

- or He'd deliver him thru the trail.

God's deliverance is always in His time, not ours.

- If we didn't have trials we wouldn't be tested.

And most people don't mind obstacles as long as they don't get in their way.

Diamonds are cut and polished in order to remove imperfections,

- and so it is with the Christian,
- he cannot be perfected without trials.

Know that the things Satan throws in your path to defeat you,

- may very well be the stepping stones to victory.

Paul prayed for deliverance knowing he'd be delivered one way or another.

Deliverance is being rescued from something, be it danger or destruction.

- The greatest deliverance is from sin.

Paul was confident that he'd be delivered

- whether by death or by life.

His confidence was thru the prayers of the Saints

- and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ.

Matt 7:11

11 If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

Phil 4:6

6 Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;

1 Peter 3:12

12 For the eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
And His ears are open to their prayers;

But the face of the Lord is against those who do evil."

James 5:16

16 Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Phil 1:20

20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.

There is a lot packed into this one verse, so let's take a close look at it.

20 according to my earnest expectation

He used the same terminology in:

Rom 8:19

19 For the earnest expectation of the creation eagerly waits for the revealing of the sons of God.

Psa 37:7 says something similar. There it says,
Rest in the Lord and wait patiently for Him;

Earnest expectation is derived from:

(*apokaradokia* - to look for as with the neck stretched out and the head thrust forward) - (Like an ostrich when he's moving)

and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, (to be ashamed is to result in withdrawal)

Paul was always eager to share the truth.

Acts 21:13 that he wasn't only ready to be bound for the sake of the gospel but to die at Jerusalem for the sake of the gospel.

but with all boldness (with sufficient courage), as always, so now also Christ will be magnified (to make larger) in my body, whether by life or by death.

Paul is in jail during the time Caesar Nero is in power. He wasn't concerned about the verdict of his trial, but for the testimony he would leave.

Now, above all else, Paul wanted Christ magnified in him.

- To magnify means "to make larger."

According to universeguide.com and cosmoknowledge.com

- the largest star visible to the naked eye is the V762 Cassiopeiae.

The radius of the Cassiopeiae is roughly 193 times larger than the sun.

That's amazing especially since the ν 762 can be seen with the naked eye,

- yet, it's 16,308 light years away.
- One light year is nearly 6 trillion miles,
- multiply that by 16,308 and that's the distance.

Many people look at Jesus as this

- far distant person that lived on earth 2,000 years ago
- instead of magnifying Him for who He really is!

Paul's earnest expectation was that he'd be faithful to Jesus in everything.

Being faithful comes in different forms of scripture:

Rom 12:1

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

2 Cor 3:12

12 Therefore, since we have such hope, we use great boldness of speech —

Acts 4:13

13 Now when they (religious leaders, Sanhedrin) saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that they were uneducated and untrained men, they marveled.

“For me to live is Christ” (v 21),

- in his own person and experience,
- he displays Christ and “lives” Christ.

Later he will say, “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice” (4:9).

Our desire to live for Christ should be greater than our desire to live this natural life.

Most people have a strong desire to live at whatever cost.

Example: Bill Jeracki, Aron Ralston

We will spend money on the best doctors,

- take up disciplined eating habits,
- move to particular climates,
- and even cut off body parts to live.

In this short life,

- we don't know how long we will live.
- What will you live for?

Verse 21 summarizes it: "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

During the Hellenistic period, (a period of time when a person was Greek in language, Greek in their outlook and way of life, but was not Greek in Ancestry), some people were pessimistic about human life.

Paul, being the optimist he was, begins to tell the Philippian church the positives of both living and dying in Christ. It's a win, win situation.

Paul said something similar in Romans 14:1:

Rom 14:1

1 For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.

At one moment Paul seems not to know what the outcome of his imprisonment will be (we see that in verses 19-21).

Yet, he then suggests that he can "choose"

- whether to live or die (v 22),
- and finally tells the Philippians
- that he's sure he will "remain" (v 25).

It wasn't Paul's choice whether the Lord took him then or whether He took him later.

But one thing we can for certain, when it's time to go, it's time to go!

Eccl 8:8

8 None of us can hold back our spirit from departing. None of us has the power to prevent the day of our death. There is no escaping that obligation, that dark battle. And in the face of death, wickedness will certainly not rescue the wicked.

Only Jesus had the power to lay down His life and raise it again!

Had the Lord already shown Paul

- thru the Holy Spirit that his imprisonment
- would not end in his execution?
- I don't know!

But his attitude about his own death was certain.

- He expected “deliverance ...
- whether by life or by death” (vv 19, 20),
- and he had an unshakeable confidence
- that to die is “better by far” (v 23),
- because it means being “with Christ.”

Phil 1:22

22 But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell (to reveal, to make known). Paul didn’t know yet what he would choose, to stay or to go because it hadn’t been revealed to him.

Jesus said not to store up for yourselves treasures on earth, our treasures are to be laid up in heaven.

In this letter to the Philippians Paul says in chapter 3:20 that our citizenship is in heaven.

With that said, would we prefer to stay here

- or would we prefer to be in heaven.

Paul wanted what God wanted for him.

He did know that if he were gone from this earth, his opportunity for producing fruit, for evangelizing was over.

23 For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. (the original Greek reads: much more better)

For Paul it was like being stuck between a rock and a hard place.

- That’s what being hard pressed is.

But notice what Paul wanted,
He had a desire to depart and be with Christ.

The word depart is the Greek word “analyō,” (to break up, to depart, to dissolve)

This word “analyō,” was used of four different people groups:

- Sailors, Soldiers, Farmers and the releasing of prisoners.

Paul said to a young Timothy in

2 Tim 4:6

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

When it was time for soldiers to move out from one camp to another they used the word “depart.” It’s time to depart.

The third way the word “analyō,” was used

- was when a farmer at the end of a work day
- removed the yoke from his animal.

His animal was freed from his burden of work for the day.

Fourth: the word Analyō (to break up) was used in the releasing of prisoners.

Jesus came to set the captives free.

Paul had a desire to depart and to be with Christ.

24 Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.

25 And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,

About a year after Paul was released from house arrest,

- he was arrested again.
- This time he was arrested in Troas
- and placed in a Mamertine prison in Rome.

Notice why Paul knew that he would remain in the flesh, it was for the progress and joy of their faith.

Earlier in verse 12 Paul said that his imprisonment was for the furtherance of the gospel,

- now he says that his release is for the progress and joy of their faith.

26 that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

We can rejoice in Christ as well as rejoicing for others. This isn't contradictory but complimentary. The Lord puts believers in our path for encouragement and for fellowship.

The section ends wonderfully—on the note of joy.