

Philippians Daily Walk

Theme 3: Hope

Day 1 — Philippians 1:20–21

Christ Above Everything

Key Scripture

"I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." — Philippians 1:20-21

Introduction

Every person lives for something.

Some live for success.

Some live for wealth.

Some live for comfort.

Some live for recognition.

Paul lived for Christ.

As he sat in a Roman prison facing an uncertain future, Paul made one of the most powerful statements in all of Scripture:

"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."

Paul's circumstances did not determine his hope because Christ was the center of his life. Whether he lived or died, whether he was free or imprisoned, whether he experienced comfort or suffering, his greatest desire was that Christ would be glorified.

This passage challenges us to ask a life-changing question:

What am I truly living for?

Scripture Focus

Philippians 1:20-21

"I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."

Historical Context

Paul wrote Philippians while under house arrest in Rome. He did not know whether he would be released or executed.

Many people would have been consumed with fear, self-preservation, or bitterness.

Instead, Paul focused on one thing:

Exalting Christ.

His concern was not primarily about his comfort, safety, or future.

His greatest concern was that Jesus would be honored through his life.

Because Christ was Paul's highest priority, he possessed a hope that circumstances could not destroy.

What This Passage Teaches Us

1. Hope Is Found in Christ, Not Circumstances

Paul's hope was not based on whether things worked out the way he wanted.

His hope was rooted in Jesus.

Circumstances change.

Christ does not.

When our hope is anchored in temporary things, disappointment is inevitable.

When our hope is anchored in Christ, we remain steady even during life's storms.

Supporting Scripture

"Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever." — Hebrews 13:8

Biblical Example

Job lost his possessions, health, and family, yet continued to trust God.

Reference: Job 19:25

Application

Where have you placed your hope recently—in Christ or in circumstances?

2. Courage Comes from a Christ-Centered Life

Paul prayed that he would have sufficient courage.

True courage does not come from self-confidence.

It comes from confidence in Christ.

When Christ is first, fear loses much of its power.

Supporting Scripture

"Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid...for the Lord your God goes with you." — Deuteronomy 31:6

Biblical Example

David faced Goliath because he trusted God's power rather than his own abilities.

Reference: 1 Samuel 17

Application

What fear would lose its grip on your life if you trusted Christ more completely?

3. Life Finds Meaning When Christ Is the Center

Paul's statement "to live is Christ" means:

- Christ was his purpose.
- Christ was his motivation.
- Christ was his joy.
- Christ was his identity.

Everything Paul did flowed from his relationship with Jesus.

Supporting Scripture

"Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness." —
Matthew 6:33

Biblical Example

Mary of Bethany prioritized sitting at Jesus' feet over everything else.

Reference: Luke 10:38-42

Application

What currently receives most of your time, attention, and passion?

4. Christ Is Greater Than Death

Paul says, "to die is gain."

This statement only makes sense because Paul understood eternity.

Death was not the end.

Death meant being fully in Christ's presence.

His hope extended beyond this life.

Supporting Scripture

"To be away from the body and at home with the Lord."
— 2 Corinthians 5:8

Biblical Example

Stephen faced death with confidence because his eyes were fixed on Jesus.

Reference: Acts 7:54-60

Application

How does the promise of eternity change your perspective on life's challenges?

5. A Life That Exalts Christ Leaves a Lasting Legacy

Paul wanted Christ to be exalted in his body whether through life or death.

His focus was not on building his own reputation.

His focus was on glorifying Jesus.

People may forget our accomplishments.

They will remember how faithfully we pointed them to Christ.

Supporting Scripture

*"Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." —
Matthew 5:16*

Biblical Example

John the Baptist said:

*"He must become greater; I must become less." — John
3:30*

Application

Does your life point people toward Christ or toward yourself?

What Does "To Live Is Christ" Look Like?

In Our Relationships

Loving others as Christ loves us.

In Our Work

Serving with integrity and excellence.

In Our Decisions

Seeking God's will above personal preference.

In Our Trials

Trusting Christ when life is difficult.

In Our Successes

Giving glory to God.

Biblical Examples of Christ Above Everything

Paul

Left status, comfort, and personal ambition to follow Jesus.

Reference: Philippians 3:7-8

Peter

Left his fishing business to become a disciple.

Reference: Matthew 4:18-20

Mary Magdalene

Devoted her life to Christ after experiencing His grace.

Reference: Luke 8:2

Stephen

Remained faithful to Christ even in death.

Reference: Acts 7

Discussion Questions

1. What do you think Paul meant when he said, "To live is Christ"?
 2. Why was Paul able to face uncertainty with confidence?
 3. What competes with Christ for first place in people's lives today?
 4. How does focusing on eternity change the way we live now?
 5. What fears are easier to overcome when Christ is our priority?
 6. How can believers keep Christ at the center of daily life?
 7. If someone observed your life for a week, what would they say you are living for?
-

Personal Reflection

Take a moment to evaluate your priorities.

Ask yourself:

- What excites me most?
- What worries me most?
- What do I spend most of my time pursuing?
- What would I struggle most to surrender?

These answers often reveal what sits at the center of our lives.

Invite God to realign your heart around Christ.

Weekly Challenge

This week:

Begin Each Day

Pray: "Lord, help me live for You today."

Evaluate Priorities

Identify one thing competing with Christ for your attention.

Encourage Someone

Share your faith story or encourage another believer.

Memorize

Philippians 1:21:

"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for the hope that is found in Jesus Christ. Help me to place Him above every earthly pursuit, desire, and ambition. Give me courage to live boldly for Him and faith to trust You in every circumstance. May my life reflect Your glory and point others toward Your Son. Teach me to live with eternity in view and to find my greatest joy in Christ alone. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Key Takeaway

When Christ becomes the center of our lives, hope rises above circumstances, courage replaces fear, and every part of life gains eternal purpose.