

Philippians 1:19-26

May 19, 2024
Northlake Bible Church



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The Heart of the Matter: Life is Christ and Death is Gain

Summary: Paul is confident that he will be Holy Spirit-empowered to exalt Christ before his captors, even if it ends with his execution. His life on earth is all about Christ, and if he dies, he will be with Him which is far better. However, since living on would mean building up the church, he is convinced that God will spare him for that purpose.

Outline:

- Paul's joy that he will be delivered, and Christ exalted (Vss. 18b-20)
- Paul's confidence whether by life or death (Vss. 21-24)
- Paul's assurance that he will yet minister to the Philippians (Vss. 25,26)

Paul's joy that he will be delivered, and Christ exalted (Vss. 18b-20)

1. **Paul assured of his deliverance (“salvation”) whether in death or in life. (Vs.19)**
 - a. What is Paul's situation, and how does this tie back into vss. 12-18?
 - b. Why does he say in 18b, that he is rejoicing?
 - i. His deliverance
 - ii. Christ will be exalted whether he lives or dies
 - c. What will be Paul's “deliverance”?
 - i. Is it that he expects to be freed from prison?
 - ii. Or, vindicated before God in his witness? (Job 13:3, 13-16)
 - iii. Will his deliverance be through boldness to exalt Christ before his captors?

Paul's joy that he will be delivered, and Christ exalted (Vss. 18b-20)

a. Deliverance mediated through their prayers (God uses the means of our prayers and commands us to pray for what He will accomplish). Phil. 1:4; 4:6, 2 Cor 1:11, Rom 15:30-32, Eph 6:19

a. Deliverance mediated through the provision of the Spirit of Christ.

i. The Spirit who brings to us the presence of Christ. Rom 8:9-11

ii. The Spirit who groans for us when we do not know how to pray. Rom 8:26,27

iii. The Spirit who gives us the power and words we need in time of trial. Mark 13:11

Paul's joy that he will be delivered, and Christ exalted (Vss. 18b-20)

1. Paul's confident expectation. (Vs. 20)

a. He will not be put to shame in anything. (He has a history of testimony and past sufferings) Acts 16, Acts 23-26, 2 Cor 11:22-33

i. Shame would be to dishonor Christ.

ii. Before his captors he will not fear and bring shame to Christ.

b. Christ will be exalted in his body (as always).

i. Exalted in boldness = "make large" and making Christ as greater than ourselves. John 3:30

ii. By life or by death – Paul's testimony could bring the sentence of death. Acts 26:24-32

Paul has confidence that through their prayers and the strength of the Holy Spirit, he will be given the power, boldness, and words he needs when he stands before a Roman tribunal – even if his witness leads to his execution. His whole life is Christ. There is no fear of man when he is exalting Christ.

Paul's confidence whether by life or death (Vss. 21-24)

1. Paul's chief end – the fountain and wellspring of his life. (Vs. 21)

- “to live, Christ”
- “to die, gain”

a. To live is Christ. Philippians 3:7-10, Gal 2:19-21, 2 Cor 5:13-15

b. To die is gain. (2 Cor 5:8)

i. How is death gain?

c. For the unbeliever, what is the contrast?

i. To live is...? To die is...?

Paul's confidence whether by life or death (Vss. 21-24)

1. Paul's human struggle. (Vs. 22-24)

a. Living on in the flesh would mean ministry that bears fruit.

a. His personal desire: to depart and to be with Christ (like a ship loosed from anchor). This verse denies the teaching of soul sleep. We are with Christ at the time of death, else Paul would not have said that to depart is better. Lk 23:43 "this day you will be with me in paradise."

a. Paul's Apostolic duty: To live on is better for the Philippians.

Paul's assurance that he will yet minister to the Philippians (Vss. 25,26)

1. Paul's discernment of God's will/purpose for his life. (Vss. 25-26)

a. Looking at the options of departing and being with Christ or the need for ministry, he understands that the need for ministry is greatest, and thus he believes God will spare his life.

a. He will remain for these purposes:

i. For their progress in the faith.

ii. For their joy in the faith. (So, their joy will increase as they progress in the faith)

iii. So that they may be proudly confident (boast) in Christ for answering their prayers and bringing Paul back to them.

Questions for Reflection: 1:19-26

- If you had been a member of the church in Philippi, what would you have prayed for Paul? How should you be praying for our missionaries from NBC?
- How do we exalt Christ (make Him large) in the trials God has given to us? (be they large like suffering and death, or the everyday trials of living in a fallen world)
- How do we grow a heart that says with Paul, “to live is Christ, to die gain”? (How does Christ become most precious to us?)