

“To Live is _____”
Philippians 1:19-26

To live is _____. We fill in the blank with many different things, none of which can satisfy. God won't allow them to satisfy. For Paul, while in prison and facing possible execution, confidence was found in living for Christ. That meant giving his life on behalf of Christ for the advance of the gospel and the spiritual progress of the Philippian believers. How would you fill in the blank today?.

Paul wants deliverance. He needs, prays for and expects deliverance. But not deliverance as we normally think of it. He is not trying to escape his circumstances.

Read Philippians 1:18b-21

I. Delivered from, delivered through, or delivered for?

1:19; “salvation” = “deliverance” (rescue)

- Penalty of sin – Eph. 2:8-9
- Power of sin – Phil. 2:12
- Presence of sin; eternal relationship with Christ – Rom. 13:11; 1 Peter 1:5
- From sickness – Mt. 9:22
- From enemies – Acts 7:25
- From physical danger – Acts 27:20; Heb. 11:7

Is Paul focused on deliverance from prison?

Confident this time. But that is not the deliverance he hopes for.

Quotation from Job 13:15-18; vindication; I have lived well.

Through the trial...

For avoidance of shame

For exaltation of Christ

Setting – about to go to trial. Death or release.

“this” = response to present circumstances

Through earthly petition that unleashes heavenly provision

What are these provisions?

Indwelt by Spirit

Special empowerment by Spirit activated through prayer

OT = “Spirit came upon”; NT – Acts 7:54-60

Tapping into great paradox of life – only understood from the inside

To live is Christ (not self)

To die is gain (not loss)

Blessed are the meek; persecuted

Serve to become great

Take up your cross

Lose your life to find it

Die to bear fruit

Find joy in trials - James 1

Looking at the past – gospel has made progress; even though Paul is in prison, even though some are preaching from false motives. This gives Paul joy. Looking toward the future, he anticipates even more joy. Why? Because to live is Christ and to die is gain – nothing but good can come from his circumstances.

II. To live is Christ – 1:21-26

If I am going to stick around on earth, I don't want to waste my time

A. Delivered for “fruitful labor”

Fruit (literal; figurative = result or effect):

- Converts - Jn. 12:24; Rom. 1:13
- Character – Gal. 5:22; Heb. 12:11; Phil. 1:11

- PEOPLE; invest in them. Phil. 4:1

- “The benefit that comes from labor”

1. Progress in the faith – 1:25

Let your progress become evident

2. Joy in the faith

3. Overflowing confidence – 1:26

Through answered prayer

God listens; God responds

Not always yes. Paul will later be imprisoned and die

Paul lived confidently

2 Timothy 4:6-8 (same word for “departure”)

1:23 – “depart” (analysis, “to undo again”) = release; boat being released from moorings

- B. What is your fruitful labor?

Children – young kids (“quantity” time); older kids (pray)

Neighbors

Co-workers

Aggies

Missionaries

H.S. students – find one Christian friend; pray; study the Word

Aggies – dorm outreach

III. To live is Christ, to die is gain

Delivered for the presence of Christ

What is the worst that can happen to me? Short suffering, then eternal presence of God.

Conclusion

How do you fill in the blank? To live is _____

Is your life fruitful? Are you investing in fruit that lasts or fruit that will not last?