

Philippians 1:21-30

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. 22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. 24 But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

27 Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and

see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, 28 and not frightened in anything by your opponents. This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, but of your salvation, and that from God. 29 For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, 30 engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.

Community Group Study 15 Nov 2009

Introduction

Paul makes the stunning statement that he is looking forward to death. This is not from a place of being discouraged or depressed, but rather it's because death is the final barrier between himself and a perfect relationship with Christ. He is so intimate with Christ on earth (to live is Christ) that He longs for the fullness of that. We see that his reason for desiring heaven is Christ himself, not any other motivation. Paul's dilemma is that although he would rather be with Christ, he sees the benefit to his labour amongst other people (for the glory of God). He ends off the passage by revealing that his readers should live their lives in a manner worthy of the gospel, not fearing those who oppose them.

This passage highlights the distinctive perspective a Christian has on the purpose of death, life, unity and suffering.

Discussion

- >>How do you feel about death?
- >>What does "to live is Christ" mean for you?
- >>In what areas are we still fearful of death or opposition? Why are we still fearful?

Explain the text

- >>What was Paul's turmoil about?
- >>Why would he "rather depart"?
- >>What did Paul see as the reason for his continued life on earth?
- >>What does it mean to "live life worthy of the gospel"?

Application

- >>How can we stand firm "in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel"?
- >>List changes in your life you have to make to live "worthy of the gospel".
- >>How do we embrace the fact that it has been granted to us that we "suffer for his sake"?