

A Philippians Sermon Series

JOY

IN THE MIDST OF ANYTHING

OPENING COMMENT

Paul's framework for understanding life seems absolutely alien to our current cultural understanding of what brings joy. As we read Philippians 1:18-26 we gather that Paul is not concerned about himself in the slightest but is motivated by a radically different definition of flourishing. Each verse cuts to the heart of our presuppositions on where true value and purpose really lie and exposes where we have ultimately acquiesced to the cultural narrative of self-actualization.

READ THE TEXT: Philippians 1:18-26

What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice.

Yes, and I will rejoice, ¹⁹ for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰ as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.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.



UNDERSTANDING THE TEXT

1. What is the “this” in verse 19 referring to?
2. How does Paul see his deliverance being accomplished? (vs. 19)
3. What is Paul eager and hopeful about? (vs. 20)
4. How does Paul define life and death? (Vs. 21)
5. What is Paul’s desire? Why? (vs. 23)
6. How does he see his life on this earth and where its value is? (vs. 24)
7. What does Paul aim for his life and involvement with the Philippian church to accomplish? (vs. 26)

APPLYING THE TEXT

1. Paul’s explicit priority is that Christ is honored in all that he does. Where do you find yourself most clearly honoring Christ? Where do you find yourself most struggling to honor him?
2. The infamous line “to life is Christ and to die is gain” exposes what we place our hope and value in. How might we begin to train our hearts and minds to view life from this lens?
3. Paul does not see his life as primarily about him or his comfort, rather he sees his life as being beneficial for those around him. How would this priority, others over self, manifest in today’s culture? How might we move ourselves to think and act more like Paul in this area?
4. Paul’s ultimate purpose is to see Christ glorified. How would this priority change the way you approach life and those around you? Does that make life more or less exciting?

BIBLICAL THREAD

1. Psalm 96 – A call for global praise of God.
2. Matthew 5:11-16 – light on a hill so that people glorify God.
3. John 17:4 – Jesus accomplished his goal of glorifying God the Father in his ministry.
4. Romans 15:8-9 – Paul outlines the ultimate goal for the gentiles to Glorify God.
5. 1 Corinthians 10:31 – Whatever you do, do it to the Glory of God.
6. 2 Corinthians 2:14-17 – Our life as an aroma for God’s pleasure and people’s good.
7. 2 Corinthians 4:17-18 – proper perspective in the midst of difficulty.

CONCLUSION

As we move into the summer months and look to rest and recharge, it is a great reminder to reorient ourselves towards our purpose as Christ’s disciples. Paul longs to find his way to unveiled fellowship with Christ and counts death as gain because he understands that is where true rest is found. Even in our vacationing and enjoyment of God’s creation it is important to remember that Christ’s glory is our purpose and the building of his church is our focus.



SHARE & PRAY

LIFE GROUP VISION:

The goal to meeting together around the word of God is three fold. First, we want to more clearly understand what God is saying to us through his Word and apply it to our own hearts and minds. Secondly, we want to build a loving community with each other to disciple one another toward maturity in Christ. Thirdly, we desire each of us, as ambassadors of Christ, to look outwards to our community and ask how we can bring the truth of the gospel to bear on those whom God has placed in our lives.

