

Home Group Helps

Philippians 1:18b-26

Joy for the Journey: Joy in All Future Prospects

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.

I. Paul's Devotion – The Glory of Christ (v.18b-21) – 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.

II. Paul's Dilemma – Life or Death? (v.22-24) – 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.

III. Paul's Decision – To Live and Serve (v.25-26) – 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.

1. Launching Question(s):

- It is said of the godly woman of Proverbs 31 that “she smiles at the future.” (v.25). How might we “smile at the future” as well?

2. Observation Question(s):

- Remembering that Paul is under arrest awaiting trial for a capital offense (insurrection) as he pens this letter, what are some things that you observe about his “mood” as you read these verses?

3. Interpretation Question(s):

- Vs. 21 is probably the most famous verse in this most beloved of epistles, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”
- Why does Paul make this statement (i.e., what is the context)?
- What does Paul mean by this statement?

- After telling the Philippians that he is hard pressed about which option is best, Paul goes on to state “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.”
- Why is being with Christ (death) “better” than life for the Christian?
- Why is remaining alive “more necessary” for the welfare of the Philippians (and for your current ministry)?
- How can you be as joyfully enthusiastic about life or death as is Paul?

4. Reflection Question(s):

- What is keeping you from demonstrating joy in all future prospects?

5. Application Question(s):

- How can you affirm the truth, “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” this week?

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