

To Live is Christ

Introduction:

Philippians is a warm & personal letter written by Paul. Some have called Philippians Paul's *Epistle of Joy*. "Joy" and "rejoice" used 15 times in 4 chapters. This epistle tells us a great deal about Paul. He had found REAL peace. In this book, we see the meaning of true peace/joy. Where are you finding joy? Peace? There is powerful spiritual truth in this letter.

I. 1:3-11 – Living in Christ involves a life of thankfulness.

- A. Paul sitting hundreds of miles from brethren – reflecting on them.
- B. 1:3-5 – we need to be thankful for what God has accomplished.
 - 1. Paul's circumstances never stopped him from him praying.
 - a) His thoughts were on others – not on self. (1:4-5)
- C. 1:6-11 - His thankfulness led him to confidence.
 - 1. Paul lived in confident expectation that God would be faithful to meet his needs. + Needs of the Philippians.
- D. We need to spend more time thanking God for what He has done in our life!

II. 1:12-20 – Living in Christ causes one to rejoice in the preaching of the gospel.

- A. 3 John 4 – John's joy. No doubt Paul's was the same. (Lost souls hearing God's plan of redemption.)
- B. 1:12-14 – we can learn from this!
 - 1. Good can be made out of almost any circumstance if we will look for a way to do it.
 - 2. If magnifying Christ is our primary focus – we can always make good out of ill.
- C. 1:15-20 - Some preach that have no business to preach.
 - 1. 1:17a – selfish ambition. ; 1:17b – seeking to cause Paul pain...
 - 2. 1:18 – God can use those w/imperfect motives to proclaim Jesus.
 - 3. 1:19-20 – Paul possessed extreme confidence.
 - 4. He was concerned about Jesus' glory – not his own.

III. 1:21-26. To live is Christ. To die is gain.

- A. 1:21 – what was Paul's focus in life? 3:7-8 – Jesus!
 - 1. Gal. 2:20 – ALL his life was devoted to serving Jesus.
 - a) 1:22; 25-26 – as long as he lived this was going to be the case.
 - 2. This must be our desire. Can we say... Jesus is *the* focus of our life?
- B. 1:21 – because of Jesus – to die is gain.
 - 1. 1:23 – being with Christ is far better.
 - 2. This knowledge propelled Paul to keep going – no matter conditions on earth. Phil. 2:17-18
- C. We have the same assurances!

IV. 1:27-30 – To live in Christ requires proper conduct.

- A. 1:27a – this implies there is conduct NOT worthy of the gospel.
 - 1. 1 Pet. 2:11-12 – *keep your behavior excellent*.
 - 2. Is it excellent in front of family? On the job? At Church? Everywhere?
- B. 1:27b – behavior to be excellent everywhere! With Christians or not!
- C. 1:27c -30 – proper conduct involves standing firm in spirit.
 - 1. 1:28-30 – Christians who are living right will not be intimidated by those who work against them.

Conclusion:

- A. Committed Christianity is a major theme in Philippians 1.
- B. Are you committed to principles of righteousness?