

Philippians 1:12-26 For Me to Live is Christ

Reminder- Paul is writing this from prison.

A) One of the things that is true about all of us – is when we are going through a tough time

B) That can tend to be all that we see – Our focus is on the difficulty we are in and how to get out of it

C) But Paul writes this letter to the church in Philippi that is filled with Joy

1) Great lesson how to have Joy even when going through difficult things

D) Last week – we saw four reasons why Paul's heart was filled with Joy when he thought of the believers in Philippi

Tonight we see a big reason why Paul personally could have Joy – despite his difficult situation

12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, 13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;

A) #1 Paul focused on the Big picture – God was at work and God had a plan

Background- Paul really wanted to go to Rome and Preach the gospel – it was a strong desire –

A) It was something he talked about and prayed about a lot – It was a huge desire

B) He wrote to the Romans and he said, **pray for me that I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and that we may be refreshed together.**

C) Things didn't turn out exactly the way that Paul hoped.

1) Paul would make it to Rome but not the way that he expected

Here's what happened. After his third missionary journey, he goes back to Jerusalem.

A) He's in the temple area with another fellow going through a ceremonial ritual.

B) Some of the Religious leaders spot Paul there.

1) They were not fans – they viewed him as a traitor defected to the other side –

C) He was once a Pharisee and now he was a follower of Jesus

So they start a riot, and they attack Paul

A) A Roman soldier arrests Paul-- not to punish him, but to protect him from the mob—

B) Paul ends up getting beaten by the Roman officials – sort of – he is trouble maker –

1) see if we can beat some sense into him

C) Paul pulls his Roman citizenship card out and says, you can't beat me. I'm a Roman citizen.

D) To get rid of a problem

The Roman officials in Jerusalem send him to Caesarea by the sea, where he spends two years.

A) And he goes through **three trials** in two years. He stands before Felix. He stands before Festus.

B) He stands before Herod Agrippa. And after two years, he finally says, I'm done.

C) This judicial process is crazy.

1) He appealed his case to Caesar – which was the right of any Roman Citizen

So they put him on a ship. It is not a cruise ship. It's not a Princess Cruise. It is a prison cruise.

A) Paul is going to Rome and the Roman Govt is even paying for the trip –

B) But he is going as a prisoner -

C) He almost doesn't make it to Rome. **The ship sinks.**

1) He has to swim to shore. But he finally gets to Rome, where he's put in jail again.

C) All of that is under this banner, V.12 but the things which happened to me.

1) That's what he is referring to.

The Life of the Apostle Paul speaks loudly to us that our life doesn't have to be defined by the things that have gone against us

A) Life doesn't have to be defined by the circumstances that haven't turned out the way that we hoped

B) Paul's insight - God got me to Rome and he has given me a new ministry - amongst the Palace guard

C) There were about 10,000 troops in what was known as the Palace guard or Praetorian Guard.
1) They were the bodyguards of the emperor.

D) He's under guard 24 hours a day in a rented house.

E) 6 Hr shifts - so 4 guards in a day!

F) Paul had a captive audience - literally - they couldn't walk away

G) So The whole Palace guard ends up hearing the gospel - about 10,000 men

1) Some of them are getting saved!

Paul said: V.12 This actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel,

A) Some translations - For the greater progress of the Gospel -

B) Paul uses here a Greek military term which referred to the corps of army engineers.

1) They went out in front of the advancing army to open up the way by cutting down trees

C) Creating a Path for the soldiers to travel on!

1) Paul was saying - His chains were actually creating a pathway for the gospel to travel on.

Paul's imprisonment for Christ did not bind the gospel; rather it helped to release it

A) Roman guards were actually coming to know Jesus!

B) And so were members of the household of Caesar himself

1) Philippians, in chapter 4:22, he says,

all the Saints send you greetings, especially those who belong to Caesar's household.

C) This is probably how it happened... guards

Part of the Palace guard's detail was to be a body guard for the family of Caesar

A) So while on duty - they might have been asked - what is it like guarding that Paul character

B) These guards who had embraced Jesus were able to share Jesus with these family members

1) And some of them were getting saved

C) So the gospel was spreading amongst the guards and the who's who in Rome

D) Now this was Not the way that Paul would have written the story/ -

1) Or even imagined the story but he no doubt was STOKED at what God was doing.

So Paul's focus on the big picture helps him to see how God is working despite his situation

A) Moving in an even greater way than if he was free

B) So the first thing we learn from why Paul was able to have Joy in a difficult situation is

1) He was able to FOCUS on the big picture

2nd Paul saw how others were made more confident to preach the gospel Reason: V.14-18

14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

15 Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: 16 The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; 17 but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. 18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

Others are becoming more confident to share

A) Meaning they were not confident before

B) Christians in Rome, were scared to say anything ABOUT JESUS

1) They were timid.

C) They were afraid and understandably. Paul ended up in jail. They could too

But in watching and hearing HOW Paul was being so bold and unhindered with the soldiers

A)It had a contagious effect on them

B)They started thinking differently. They started having thoughts like,

1)if God can use Paul in jail, God can certainly use me out of jail.

C)So they were becoming a little more bold.

D)The believers were emboldened by Paul

1))And now they're reaching the kind of people that Paul couldn't reach.

Now V.15-18 Interesting: Some preach for the wrong motives –

A)They want to make a name for themselves

B))Jealousy is motivating them – Strife is driving them –

C)Paul says I really don't care – Just glad that Christ is being preached

Romans 1:16

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek.

So the gospel was spreading throughout Rome

A)To the Palace Guard through Paul – to the Roman city – through the church

B)Because the Christians were emboldened by Paul's example

So don't miss this: Paul wanted to go to Rome to preach the gospel

A)God sends him not as a missionary but as a prisoner

B)And The longest period of Paul's incarceration ends up being the greatest period of Paul's impact.

C)The gospel is spreading throughout the most significant city in the Roman Empire

D)In other words, Paul's Confinement was God's Assignment.

1)That Prison became God's Pulpit.

E)The gospel was going forward in power and great IMPACT

The 3rd reason that Paul was able to have Joy in a difficult situation is - Paul had a clear passion and purpose for his life

19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. 21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

#1 Paul's Passion – Found in V. 21 The Phrase for me to live is Christ

A)Living for Jesus became Paul's passion
That DEFINED HIM

B)That is what Paul's life was about **Knowing Christ drawing near to Christ / serving Christ**

1)And Making Christ known!

BEEN SAID: "Life is what we are alive to."

A)PAUL was alive to JESUS!!!!

B)*For me to live is Christ* – It is all about Him !!!

C)To Die is gain – It means I just get to be with him

Paul's passion and purpose was birthed on the road to Damascus Acts 9

A)Who are you Lord ? – Passion Knowing Jesus

B)Purpose – what do you want me to do?

C)Guys that should be the passion and pursuit of all of our lives –

D)Jesus who are you – want to know you more !

Purpose: What do you want me to do?

A)How do you want to use my life ?

B)What is my purpose in the grand scheme of things as it relates to your Kingdom

1)My sphere influence

C)Question what are you alive to?

How would you fill in the Blank – for me to live is
? Work / House / Friends / Girlfriend / Boy

A)What is the thing that marks your life / what
are you ALIVE TO – For you to live is _____

B)We need to be able to say it is JESUS
1)That was Paul’s Passion

C)I love the way that Paul describes his purpose in
V. 20 so now also Christ will be magnified in my
body, whether by life or by death.

**PAUL HAD A UNIQUE PERSPECTIVE ON
LIFE –**

A)He viewed life as a stage – **a platform** – For
Christ to be MAGNIFIED on

B)No matter what happened – no matter what the
outcome of his imprisonment would be –
1) Christ would be magnified in Paul’s Life

C)Question - How can a mere human being ever
magnify the son of God?

**Think of it this way: The stars are much bigger
than we can see with the naked eye**

A)And yet a telescope magnifies them and brings
them closer into human view

B)Our lives are like a telescope that brings Jesus
closer to people

C)See to most people especially the unbeliever –
Jesus is distant – hard to fathom -
1)He is like a star that is galaxies away

**But when the unbeliever is allowed to watch a
believers life –**

A)when they see a believer in the midst of a
tragedy –

JESUS IS BROUGHT NEAR TO THEM

B)The believer’s life is a “lens” THAT MAKES a
“distant Christ” come very close.

C)Especially in the face of difficulty – they wonder
How did you make it through that? – **tell them
JESUS**

**AS Jesus is magnified in our lives he becomes a lot
more tangible and visible to OTHERS**

A)So Paul’s Passion was CHRIST

B)HIS PURPOSE WAS THAT Christ would be
magnified in his life

C)Paul had a clear perspective on death – to die is
gain

#4 He was yielded to the plan of God for us life

²² But if I live on in the flesh, this *will mean* fruit
from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.

²³ For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a
desire to depart and be with Christ, *which is far
better.*

²⁴ Nevertheless to remain in the flesh *is more needful
for you.*

Paul was yielded to the plan of God for his life.

A)Paul understand that life was about Jesus – and
life was about others.

B)Acronym for Joy – Jesus others You Vs YOJ

C)That was Paul’s perspective – Dying and going
to heaven would be better for ME –
1)I would love that

D)But staying is much better for you!

²⁵ And being confident of this, I know that I shall
remain and continue with you all for your progress
and joy of faith, ²⁶ that your rejoicing for me may be
more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you
again.

**So Paul is like – I am confident that I am going to
be here for a little while more**

A)Amazing contentment and focus – for his life

B)He was yielded to the plan of God.

C)So he was not troubled by the circumstance

**Note He wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians,
and Philemon during this time.**

A)One of the most trying times was turned into
one of the most profitable times – Perspective

**Paul had learned what Peter and James had wrote
about – God uses trials to build character**

A)God uses trials to open other doors of ministry

B)So even in Prison in Philippi – Paul and Silas are singing at midnight – not the blues – Praise

I have to confess that I am not always in that frame of mind or at least not at first

A)Usually takes me a little time and complaining to get there

B)I start off like David complaining – but ever notice how David eventually turns to praise

1)David bi-polar?

C)No he just had a change of perspective –

D)He got his eyes off of his situation and on to God and his perspective changed

I am learning to do that more

A)Perspective is everything

B)Joy starts when you can answer the question who are you alive to

C)Want your life to have Joy even in difficult situation?

1)See the big Picture

2)See how God is working in others

3)Keep knowing Jesus as your Passion and allowing Jesus to be glorified in your life, your purpose

4)Stay yielded to the plan of God in your life!

A)He is always working – Way Maker