

TO LIVE IS CHRIST**God's Surprising Purposes****Philippians 1:12–30**

“For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.” Philippians 1:21

Day 1: Read Philippians 1:12–14.

1. Explain how Paul turns the concern of the Philippians away from his own circumstances to God's purposes. (vs. 12)
2. Paul is writing this letter from prison. How does his imprisonment provide an unlikely evangelistic opportunity? Describe a time when a life situation presented you with an opening to share the gospel with an improbable audience.
3. What assurance do we have that no circumstance is a barrier to the advancement of the gospel? (Is. 55:10–11; 2 Tim. 2:8–9)
4. How does Paul's suffering in prison bring an unanticipated bonus to the church? (vs. 14)

Day 2: Read Philippians 1:15–18a.

5. Out of what unworthy motives are some leaders in the church sharing the gospel? (vss. 15, 17a) How do they hope their actions will affect Paul? (vs. 17)
6. Others share the gospel out of goodwill and love; what makes the difference? (vs. 16)
7. What is Paul's assessment of and response to those preaching with insincere motives? (vs. 18a) How might Paul's example impact us today as we rub shoulders with less than perfectly transparent Christians?

Day 3: Read Philippians 1:18b–21.

8. Paul is uncertain about the outcome of his upcoming trial and about his future ministry opportunities, but what things empower him to continuously rejoice? (vss. 19–20)

9. The word translated “shame” has to do more with disappointment than embarrassment. So when Paul writes, “I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed” (vs. 20), he is saying that he is confident that God will not disappoint. What’s Paul so confident about? (Rom. 1:16; 2 Tim. 1:12; Phil. 1:6)
10. Why is it so important that Christ be exalted in our bodies? (1 Cor. 6:19–20) What must take place for Jesus to be magnified in our bodies? (Rom. 12:1)
11. Summarize Paul’s thoughts from verse 21 and Galatians 2:20 and discover the essence of Paul’s life and ministry. As you reflect on these passages where does the essence of your life and ministry diverge from Paul’s?

Day 4: Read Philippians 1:22–26.

12. Describe the almost unbearable tension that Paul is wrestling with. (vss. 22–23) What choice do you think is more difficult for Paul to embrace?
13. Which is ultimately superior and why? (vs. 23) Meditate on and be encouraged by the following verses: 1 Cor. 13:12; 1 Jn. 3:2; Rev. 21:1–5.
14. Christ is more important than life to Paul; yet at this point, what is more important than departing and being with Christ? (vss. 24–26)

Day 5: Read Philippians 1:27–30.

15. What is the first distinguishing mark of living lives “worthy of the gospel of Christ” (vs. 27)? (vs. 27b; Eph 4:3)
16. How does Paul challenge the Philippians to reorient their thinking about suffering in a startling and fresh way? (vss. 29–30; see also Rom. 8:17; 2 Cor. 4:7–11)
17. Why shouldn’t we fear those who oppose us? How should we interpret our experience of such opposition? (vs. 28; also 1 Cor. 3:17; 1 Pet. 4:13–14)
18. Reread this week’s passage. Share some ways your heart has been challenged to rethink the true nature of joy in living.