



Sermon Series Notes

"A Christian Perspective For Life, Part 2" (Philippians 1:15-30)

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Intro: Two weeks ago we looked at verses 1-14. In verse 12, Paul begins to reveal his perspective regarding his imprisonment. He sees that God is using it to encourage other Christians to be courageous and fearless, and to advance the gospel. People were being saved as a result of Paul's chains, and he was a witness for the gospel in places and to people that would be impossible to reach apart from his present circumstances. We saw last time how God will use a variety of perplexing and sometimes painful circumstances for a Christian in order to advance the gospel: Jail/prison, a fiery furnace, a lion's den, physical illness, a closed door, an accident, persecution, and even death. With this in mind, it is essential that Christians, develop and maintain a heavenly perspective in life. Paul continues revealing for us his heavenly perspective...verse 15.

I. THE TEXT

vv.27-29 Whatever happens, you maintain a heavenly perspective

- * It will keep you working together for the cause of the gospel
- * It will keep you from giving in to fear from those who oppose you.
- * It will allow you to realize the tremendous privileges you have been granted.

1. To believe on Christ
2. To suffer for Him

- Phil.3:10b; Acts 5:41; I Peter 4:1

II. PAUL'S HEAVENLY PERSPECTIVE

A. For Me, To Live Is Christ

1. Competition is no longer my motivation in life & ministry

* See I Cor.9:25-27; Eph.6:12

* Mark 1: 5 The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

* See John 3:22-30; Doves of people were going over to the church of "First Jesus" instead of "First Baptist!" And it was now causing some conflict. As a matter of fact, it was creating a bit of competition.

* Luke 22: 24 Also a dispute arose among them as to which of them was considered to be greatest.

* John 20:1-8 (John outrunning Peter; John only gospel writer that tells us it was Peter who struck Malchus...).

* John 21: 21 When Peter saw him, he asked, "Lord, what about him?" 22 Jesus answered, "If I want him to remain alive until I return, what is that to you? You must follow me."

* Numbers 11:24-29 (Joshua jealous for Moses' sake)

* King Saul's envy/jealousy of David (see I Sam.15:12)

* Matt.27: 18 For he knew it was out of envy that they had handed Jesus over to him.

2. My life is no longer centered in myself

* Gal.2: 20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

* I want Christ to be exalted in my life, whether by life or death.

3. I consider all things a loss compared to Christ (Phil.3:7-8)

* Gal.6: 14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

* This does not mean that I cannot enjoy things God blesses me with in this life (Phil.4:12-13). It means that Paul realized the greatest blessing in life is Christ, and Christ took precedence over everything and everyone else in this life...

* Everything in this life must have a heavenly counterpart that supersedes my earthly experience, dream, or desire.

* Illus: Our cruise vacation in "paradise."

* I can enjoy vacation, as long as I do not live for vacation (see Luke 12:16-21). I can enjoy earthly riches, as long as I maintain a heavenly value mindset (see Mark 10:17-22). I can enjoy the family God has given me, as long as my counterpart is my commitment to the family of God (see Matt.12:46-50; Luke 14:26). I can enjoy earthly honor, as long as I give glory for that honor to Christ. I can enjoy "all things" in this life, as long as I do not begin to live for this life only.

B. For Me, To Die Is Gain

1. Firm belief in another world we usually call heaven

* Luke 23: 43 Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise."

* II Cor.12: 3 And I know that this man--whether in the body or apart from the body I do not know, but God knows-- 4 was caught up to paradise. He heard inexpressible things, things that man is not permitted to tell.

2. A confidence that, for the Christian, death is the doorway to paradise.

* The word for "depart" here pictures loosing the tent pegs and breaking camp (II Cor.5:1), or loosing a ship from its moorings and sailing away.

* John 14:1-6

* Lots of people have questions about where a Christian goes when he dies. Some believe in a thing called "soul sleep," but belief in soul sleep is not biblical (II Cor.5:8; Eph.4:8/Ps.68:18; Luke 16).

3. A readiness, even a longing for death, that is only the result of a life sold out to Christ.

* Paul seems to imply that he had a choice to stay or leave, and he says that he would really be better off dead. If you had a choice, what would you choose?

C. If I Go on Living, It Is For The Purpose Of Laboring For Christ

* My labor in this life is focused on fruit for the cause of the gospel.

- John 6: 27 Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval." 28 Then they asked him, "What must we do to do the works God requires?" 29 Jesus answered, "The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent."

- John 4: 32 But he said to them, "I have food to eat that you know nothing about." 33 Then his disciples said to each other, "Could someone have brought him food?" 34 "My food," said Jesus, "is to do the will of him who sent me and to finish his work.

* Some people are living for the next paycheck, cruise/vacation, success in life, stardom, marriage and family, retirement...

* If we are not looking forward to death, it is because we are not living and laboring for Christ...

CONCLUSION

* He is no fool to lose what he cannot keep in order to gain what he cannot lose.

* What are you living for? Would death be gain for you?

* How would we fill in these blanks? For me, to live is _____. For me, to die is _____.

* Invitation to receive Christ; Phil.3:8

* Invitation for Christians to restore/maintain a heavenly perspective (Luke 8:14; Luke 16:11; II Cor.4:17; Ps.16:11).