



Learn Your Bible

Resources to help you learn and understand the Bible

Short Study 067: Philippians Part 2: To Live is Christ

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Read Philippians 1:12-30

Introduction: This is a deeply personal part of the letter, where Paul tells of his frustrations and hopes for himself and his readers.

1. Active from Prison (vs 12-14). Assuming this was the same imprisonment as the one mentioned in Acts 28:16-30, what was the nature of his confinement? How did this enable Paul to continue spreading the Gospel?

If Paul could spread the Gospel under these circumstances, other Christians would be encouraged to witness under less stringent circumstances (v14).

2. Self-centred Preaching (vs 15-18). Some were preaching the Gospel under selfish ambition – pride, to be esteemed by others as great preachers. Paul reckoned such preaching was better than nothing. Why would this be?

3. Hope of deliverance (v19). Paul is confident the present circumstances will bring about his deliverance, It is unclear how this will come about, but notice what two things will bring it to pass.

4. To live or die (vs 20-23). *For me to live is Christ.* What do you reckon this means? What do commentators say?

Fruit for my labour (v22). What fruit arose for Paul's labour?

I am hard pressed (to know if it's better to live or to die) (v23). That choice was not, of course, in Paul's power, but in God's. But many situations we face present us with a choice we have to make – "Yes or no?", "Shall I or shan't I?" How do *you* make such decisions?

5. Passion to help others progress (vs24-26). Progress in what way?

6. Exhortations (vs 27-38). *Good Conduct* (v27). What sort of conduct would you say is *worthy of the gospel of Christ*?

Unity (v27). How should this be expressed (3 ways are shown here)?

Fearless (v28). It's unclear how this will show the opposition they are going to be destroyed. Have you any suggestions? What do the commentators say?

7. Suffering for Christ (vs 29-30). Paul actually says that suffering will be *granted* to Christians – implying it is a *privilege* to suffer if it is for Christ. Christians will suffer if they are going to remain in and express their faith, since by their commitment to Christ they put themselves in opposition to Satan and to the world which is under his influence.

To think about: Am I prevented from effective Christian witness or evangelism by my present circumstances or am I able to have an influence despite them?

To dig deeper: Read as many commentaries as you can on verse 21: *For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*