

Sermon: The Christ-centered Life; delivered by Dan Hiben, junior high pastor, on March 8, 2020

Bible text explored: Philippians 1:18b-26

¹⁸Yes, and I will rejoice, ¹⁹for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, ²⁰as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. ²¹For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²²If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ²⁵Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, ²⁶so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again. [ESV]

Review and application:

1. On the surface, what (*Phil. 1:12-18*) about Paul's situation appeared depressing?
2. During this imprisonment — as opposed to the following one (*2 Tim. 4:6*) — what deliverance was Paul tentatively expecting?
But what Christ-centered *certainty* (*vv. 18-19*) allowed Paul to *rejoice* in deliverance from sin and death?
(See also *Rom. 5:11*.)
3. What (*v. 20*) was Paul's *eager expectation*?
Do we, by his Spirit, also resolutely desire to remain bold for Christ?
4. How (*Phil. 1:9-11*) had Paul prayed for the Philippian believers?
How did he expect them to pray for him?
5. What alternate outcomes (*vv. 21-22*) did Paul see ahead?
What would be the upside of *departing* this earth?
(See *1 Cor. 15:54*.)
6. What would be the upside of *remaining* here on earth?
What "fruitful labor" would give meaning for *you* to remain here?
7. What (*v. 23*) did Paul say would be his personal preference?
(See also *2 Cor. 5:6-8*.)
Why does this choice sound strange to us?
8. If death would be gain, why (*v. 24*) did he still lean toward continued life on earth? (See also *Phil. 2:3-4* and *3:7*.)
Do fellow believers have reason (*vv. 25-26*) to be proud of Christ Jesus for what he's accomplishing through *us*?