

Christ Our Life
Phil 1:21-30
Nov 8, 2020

Life or death (Phil 1:21-26) Paul vacillated in choosing life or death

Phil 1:21-26 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. 22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. 23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. 25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, 26 so that your proud confidence in me may abound in Christ Jesus through my coming to you again.

“to live is Christ” If he were to live – it meant to serve the purposes of Christ (v. 21).

This meant at least five things.

1. He would present his body as a living sacrifice

Rom 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.

2. He would present himself to God, alive from the dead, as an instrument of righteousness.

Rom 6:13 and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

3. He would take control of His thinking.

2Cor 10:5 We are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ,

4. He would live by the law of love. (Rom 13:8-10; Mt 7:12)

Rom 13:10 Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.

5. He would have “fruitful labor” - seek to reach as many people as possible. (v. 22)

Rom 1:13 I have planned to come to you ... so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. (Rom 1:13-17)

Paul’s purpose for living was to please Christ Jesus in everything and to reach as many people as possible with the gospel (v. 22). What is your purpose in life? There are many possibilities:

Living for wealth (money, possessions clothes, house, cars, property)
Living for power (position, recognition, honor, popularity)
Living for pleasure (comfort, recreation)
Living for family and friends

“I am hard-pressed” [*senechomai*] (v. 23)

The word describes a traveler in a narrow passageway, with a wall of rock on either side, unable to turn aside and only able to go straight ahead.

To live and remain was beneficial for them [the church] (v. 24).
So, he chose to live.

This would be beneficial in three ways:
Their faith would progress (v. 25).

They would have more joy (v. 25).

He would be able to be with them again (v. 26).

If he were to die – it meant personal gain for him (v. 21).

His personal desire was to depart and be with Christ (v. 23).

“**to depart**” [*analsia*] The word was used for breaking camp, loosening the ropes, pulling up the Tent stakes and moving on. It was also used for loosening the mooring ropes, pulling up the anchor and setting sail.

To die and go to heaven was better than continue in ministry and live.

Going to heaven will be a glorious day of union with our wonderful Savior and Lord Jesus Christ; and a glorious day of reunion with our loved ones who have gone on ahead of us.

Worthy Conduct (Phil 1:27-28)

Phil 1:27-28 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; 28 in no way alarmed by your opponents—which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God.

“**conduct yourselves**” = To be a good citizen (to conduct oneself according to the laws and customs) of a state; to live or to order one’s life and conduct in accordance with a certain rule.

Phil 3:20 For our citizenship is in heaven,

Eph 2:19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens ...

“**in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ**” our conduct should reflect our heavenly citizenship.

Eph 4:1 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called,

Col 1:10 so that you will walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God;

1Thes 2:12 so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

“**standing firm**” = to continue to stand. (1Cor 16:13; Phil 4:1)

Eph 6:13-14 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. 14 Stand firm therefore, having ...

The church must stand fast in unity – “in one spirit, with one mind”

Those who don’t know Jesus may be split and divided, arguing and fighting, warring and killing, seeking and grasping, but the church is not to live that way . The church is to be unified; it is to be one in spirit and one in mind; one in heart and one in purpose.

1Cor 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

2Cor 13:11 Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

1Pt 3:8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

“striving together for the faith of the gospel”

This word is taken from an athletic contest; it is the picture of a team working and struggling together against strong opposition. Every member of the church is to help to further the gospel.

“alarmed by your opponents”

Means to be fearful as the result of being intimidated.

Our opponents are those who oppose the gospel. There are many forms of persecutions and intimidations:

being avoided, ridiculed, mocked, isolated, ignored, neglected, overlooked, by-passed, cursed, questioned, slandered, etc.

Suffering for Christ (Phil 1:29-30)

Phil 1: 29-30 For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, 30 experiencing the same conflict which you saw in me, and now hear to be in me.

Jn 15:20 “Remember the word that I said to you, ‘A slave is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

1Thes 3:3 so that no one would be disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this. (Ac 14:22 ...“Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.”)

2Tim 3:12 Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

References Used:

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