



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - Philippians Study

Week 2 - Day 2

Approaching God

Read Matthew 10:17-20 - "Beware of them, for they will hand you over to councils and flog you in their synagogues; and you will be dragged before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them and the Gentiles. When they hand you over, **do not worry** about how you are to speak or what you are to say; for what you are to say will be given to you at that time; for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father speaking through you."

In Matthew's gospel, Jesus paints an uneasy picture, one that Paul had become familiar with as evidenced in his words yesterday. The Good News is not always welcomed with open arms. The right thing is not always the easy thing. Are you afraid that you may be rejected or ridiculed? Or are you afraid that you might not have 'what it takes' to bring God's love to others. As you read the words of Jesus again, hear his response, "do not worry." You may feel anxious, but here is God's love. You may feel unable to act but, see, God is guiding you. You may feel alone, but here is the Father's Spirit resting in you. Bring your heart to God & allow that reassurance to heal and restore where it is needed as you begin this day in prayer.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Philippians 1:18-26

Paul contemplates death or acquittal as the outcome of his impending trial with equal equanimity. His own preference would be to depart this life and be with Christ, but he knows that it is important for his friends' sake that he should be spared to be with them a little longer. As you read this passage, think about how he arrives at that perspective.

Use this space to write out some key words that jump out to you as you read.

Philippians 1:18-26 - **18** What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I rejoice. Yes, and I will rejoice, **19** for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, **20** as 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. **21** For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. **22** If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. **23** I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. **24** But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. **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 in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

Start with Engaging the Text: Take a few minutes to highlight, circle, or underline key words.

Daily Study Questions

You may find it helpful to read through the commentary in “Resources for Further Study” at the end of today’s study to answer these questions.

- How could Paul be so confident of fruitful labor? (see John 14:12-14; 15:16)
- What does Paul mean in verse 21 when he says, ‘to live is Christ and to die is gain.’? What connection does this verse have to verse 20?
- What does Paul dream about? What can we learn about Paul’s view of his life according to verse 20? What are the things his heart is most passionate about? How do you see that in this text?

Meditation & Reflection Questions

- How can Paul’s attitude in this passage serve as a model for us in times of waiting?
- Why might the Lord be showing you this passage today? What might he be putting his finger on in your heart? How does your view of Christ and your life compare to Paul’s example in verses 20-21?

Close in Prayer:

Take some time to think about some of your toughest problems in life right now. After you’ve named them, ask God to help you wait eagerly and full of hope because nothing is going to put you to shame. (Phil 1:20)

Commentary on Philippians 1:18-26

vs. 19 - When he says that the present state of affairs will work out for his **deliverance**, he is not so much thinking of immediate acquittal and discharge from custody but (like Job) of his vindication in the heavenly court, his final salvation. This is assured whether he receives a favorable or unfavorable verdict before Caesar's tribunal. 2 Tim. 4:8

vs. 20 - Paul's **eager expectation** and hope is not for his own safety but for the progress of the gospel, the perseverance of his converts, and the accomplishments of God's redeeming purpose. This is one of two times Paul uses the noun "apokaradokia" which is translated eagerly expect. The other use occurs in Rom. 8:19 for the eager longing with which all creation waits for God to reveal his sons. In that context it is coupled with repeated mentions of the realization of the hope of the ages, "that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the glorious freedom of the children of God."

that I will in no way be ashamed. The only thing that could put Paul to shame would be failure to win his Lord's approval; that is why he kept "the day of Christ" before him in all that he planned and did. Personal humiliation is not what Paul fears, he had endured plenty of that already in the service of Christ and was likely to endure more. What he needs is sufficient courage to make known the gospel fearlessly. To proclaim the gospel with courage is the antithesis of being ashamed of it. (Rom. 1:16)

vs. 21 - To die is gain. To die could be nothing but sheer gain to anyone for whom to live meant Christ. But it begs the question: "The gain of what?" The answer could only be, "To gain Christ." Paul's existence was life in Christ, with Christ living in him (Gal. 2:20); death would bring no cessation or diminution of that existence but would rather enhance it with the experience of being with Christ (vs. 23) in a closer communion than he had known while still in the body. Further, if such a death in the service of Christ crowned a life spent in service to Christ, it would be gain not to Paul alone but to the cause of Christ throughout the world.

vs. 22-23 - A continuation of mortal life would mean fruitful labor for him, an opportunity to reap more fruit from the work that had been interrupted by his arrest and imprisonment, as well as from the work that he had been doing during his imprisonment. So, early death and continued life alike had their attractions, and if the choice between the two were left up to him, he would find difficulty in making up his mind. The choice, however, did not lie with him.

The same hope that Paul shares in 2 Cor. 5:1-20 regarding the resurrection of the body for all believers finds expression here in Philippians as well. One who enjoys the presence of Christ in this life is not to be deprived of it when this life ends, for Christ is alive on the other side of death and because he lives on, his people will live on. Life with Christ after death is no problem for the apostle; it flows like a pure spring from the victory of Easter.

vs. 24 - Paul was the last man to put his own interests or preferences before the advantage of others. He enjoins on his readers consideration for the good of others in 2:4; the injunction would not have carried as much weight if they had not known of the example that he set for himself. He knew it was "more necessary" for his converts that he should continue to be available to them on each.

vs. 25 - His knowledge that his survival would be for the benefit of his fellow Christians, and his confidence that God would do whatever was necessary for their growth in grace, combined to give him good hope that he would indeed be granted a further spell of life and apostolic activity for their progress and joy in the faith.