

A
MATTER OF
LIFE OR DEATH

PHILIPPIANS 1:20-26

Philippians 1:20-26

20 According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

22 But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not.

Philippians 1:20-26 - continued

23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better:

24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.

25 And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith;

26 That your rejoicing may be more abundant in Jesus Christ for me by my coming to you again.

Introduction

A. Life or death awaits us everyday

1. God holds our breath in His hands

Daniel 5:23c

and the God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified:

2. We all have an appointment with death

Hebrews 9:27

And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

Introduction

A. Life or death awaits us everyday - continued

3. The young may die; the old man must die

Romans 5:12

**Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world,
and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for
that all have sinned:**

B. We need to be ready to live or die

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

“Christ shall be magnified in my body”

A. This had not always been Paul's goal

Philippians 3:4-6

4 Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more:

5 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee;

6 Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

B. Meeting Christ on the Damascus Road changed all this

2 Corinthians 5:17

Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

C. Now Paul endured great persecution for the cause of Christ

1. His physical dangers

2 Corinthians 11:23-27

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

C. Now Paul endured great persecution for the cause of Christ

1. His physical dangers

2 Corinthians 11:23-27 - continued

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

C. Now Paul endured great persecution for the cause of Christ

2. He accepted suffering to honor His Lord

2 Corinthians 4:7-11

7 But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

8 We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair;

9 Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

C. Now Paul endured great persecution for the cause of Christ

2. He accepted suffering to honor His Lord

2 Corinthians 4:7-11 - continued

10 Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body.

11 For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh.

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

D. Paul counted all things but loss for Christ

Philippians 3:7-10

7 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ.

8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

D. Paul counted all things but loss for Christ

Philippians 3:7-10 - continued

9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:

10 That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

I. Paul's Aim, Dead Or Alive (v 20)

**Magnifying Christ was the aim of
Paul's life**

II. Paul's Assurance, Dead Or Alive (v 21-22)

“To live is Christ, and to die is gain”

A. Paul was convinced he couldn't lose

B. Paul's assurance about living is Christ

1. Christ would be his confidence

Philippians 2:1

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies,

II. Paul's Assurance, Dead Or Alive (v 21-22)

B. Paul's assurance about living is Christ - continued

2. Christ would be his example

Philippians 2:5-7

5 Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ

Jesus:

6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

II. Paul's Assurance, Dead Or Alive (v 21-22)

B. Paul's assurance about living is Christ - continued

3. Christ would always enable him to rejoice

Philippians 3:1

Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

4. Christ would enable him to do all things

Philippians 4:13

I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

II. Paul's Assurance, Dead Or Alive (v 21-22)

B. Paul's assurance about living is Christ - continued

5. Christ would supply all his needs

Philippians 4:19

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

C. Paul's assurance about dying is gain

D. Paul found it hard to choose

III. Paul's Anticipation , Dead Or Live (v 23-26)

“I am in a strait betwixt two”

A. Paul's first desire was to depart and be with Christ

**“having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ;
which is far better:”**

B. Paul was also eager to keep serving Christ

“To abide in the flesh is more needful for you”

Another Matter Of Life or Death

No One Is Ready To Live Until Ready To Die