

For me to live is Christ

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[0 : 00] We're to consider words we read in Philippians chapter 1 and particularly verse 21.

The epistle to the Philippians chapter 1 at verse 21. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. The apostle Paul was in prison in Rome because of his faithfulness in his testimony to Christ. And he's writing this letter to the Philippians from prison. And you notice that there is very little about his physical conditions in the prison.

What he is more concerned about are the spiritual implications of his imprisonment and the effect of his imprisonment upon the cause of Christ.

[1 : 22] And upon the glory of Christ. And that is just typical of the apostle. He went through so many trials. And when you read a list of his trials.

You can feel that any one of them would have been enough for one man to endure. And yet he was not complaining about his troubles.

His concern was what effect will these experiences of mine have on the cause of Christ.

In what way will they contribute to the glory of Christ. And he tells us here that in response to the prayers of God's people.

And by the enabling of his Holy Spirit. He expects and he hopes that Christ will be glorified in his body.

[2 : 27] Whether he lives or whether he dies. This is what he is longing for. And this is what he was expecting by the grace of God.

That Christ would be magnified. By every member of his body as well as by every faculty of his soul. By everything that happened to him.

In his experience here. By his life. And by his death. And isn't that the expectation and the hope that should be entertained.

By every one of God's people. That whatever happens to us. That all our experiences. Would contribute.

To the honoring. Of the name. Of Christ. Now. Now. He entertained that. Desire. And hope.

[3 : 33] Because he says. To me. To live is Christ. And to die. Is gain. This is what. Encourages him.

To hope. That Christ will be magnified. In his life. And in his death. Christ. Is so precious to him. That his whole life. Is bound up with Christ. And death. Itself is gain to him. Because death.

Will give him more of Christ. And death will enable him. To glorify Christ. In a way that's beyond. His experience. Here.

Now. There are one or two things. That we would like to. Look at. From this expression. To me. To live. Is Christ.

[4 : 28] And to die. Is gain. And in passing. We might notice. First. How close. Is the proximity. Of life.

And death. In the thought. Of the apostle. People. And how true to. The reality that is. There is but a step.

Between us. And death. And it's very striking. When you look at the. Biographies. Or. Notes. Concerning people. Who have. Gone before. You see the name. And in brackets afterwards. Something like. 1811. Hyphen.

1870. And there. With a hyphen. Between them. Is the year. Of birth. And the year. Of death. And how.

[5 : 24] True. When one looks at it. From the perspective. Of time. And especially. From the perspective. Of eternity. How close. Are birth.

And death. How near. Always. In our thinking. Our life. And death. Another thing. That we notice. Just in passing is. That. The kind of. Death. We die. Is. Dependent upon. The kind of life.

We live. There is a direct. Connection. Between. The life. We're living. And the death. We will die. Not as far as the. Temporal aspects. Of that death. Are concerned. For one event. Happens to all. And some of the Lord's people.

[6 : 23] Pass through. Much more. Trying circumstances. In life. And in death. Than many of the ungodly do. Don't let that. Trouble us. In the least.

As far as these things go. It makes no difference. Whatsoever. To the fact. That the life. Of the Christian. Leads to a death.

Which is. Infinitely. Blessed. And which leads on. To eternal. Glory. There is a version. In the book of Revelation.

Which says. He that is unjust. Let him be unjust still. He that is filthy. Let him be filthy still. He that is righteous.

Let him be righteous still. He that is holy. Let him be holy still. Pointing out to us. That there is a. Continuation.

[7 : 21] Between. What we are in our lives. And what we shall be. In our death. And in our eternity. As we live.

So will we. Die. But. We might pass on to notice. What. Kind of life.

It is. That leads. To. A death. Which is gain. The apostle says. To me. To live.

To live. Is Christ. And to die. Is gain. And here he indicates. The kind of life. That live.

That leads. To a death. Which is gain. To me. To live. Is Christ. And. How.

[8 : 16] Closely. These words. Are found. In our text. To live. And Christ. There's not even. The word. Is. Between them.

You notice in the authorized version. How the is. Is in italics. And that's one of the. Great. Benefits. Of the authorized version.

That it does. Indicate. Those words. Which are put in. For the sake of. Conveying. Meaning to us. And it shows us. That literally. What it is saying is.

To me. Life. Christ. Life. And Christ. Are. Synonymous. To the apostle Paul.

The life. Of the Christian. Is. A life. Bound up. With Christ. A life.

[9 : 15] Of union. With Christ. That is true. Of the. Covenant. Of grace.

When God. Thought about his people. From all eternity. When God. Purposed to bless them. When God. Planned.

Their salvation. All. His thoughts. Concerning them. Were. Bound up. With Christ. Jesus. He did not think.

Of them. Apart from Christ. And he didn't think of Christ. Apart. From them. Isn't that something. That. Underlines.

How. How firm. Is our salvation. It's grounded. In the fact. That from all eternity. In the thoughts of God.

[10 : 14] Christ. And his people. Were. Inseparably. One. That's what came to expression. When the son of God. Came into this world.

Why did he come. Why was he born. Why did he live. And why did he die. As he did. Not because of anything.

Personal. To himself. But because. Of his union. With his people. It's the union. Between Christ. And his people. That accounts. For the incarnation.

Of the son of God. For his life. Of obedience. And for his atoning death. And for his resurrection. And it's that same.

Union. Which is coming to expression. When a sinner. Is called. Effectually. By the grace of God. Effectual calling.

[11 : 08] The calling of the Holy Spirit. Which regenerates us. Unites us. To Christ. It makes the union. That's in the covenant. A personal.

And a living thing. In our experience. And that's what lies. At the foundation. Of the life we have. That Christ and us.

Are bound together. In bonds. Which can never be broken. Now. For a person. Of whom that is true. Christ.

And life. Are synonymous. To live. Is Christ. He means. I think. Three things. That he is living. On Christ.

And he is living. Like. Christ. And he is living. For Christ. And especially. In this context. The third. [12:07] Of these meanings. To live as Christ. Means. I am living. I am living. Upon him. I owe. My life. To him.

I owe. My justification. To him. And I owe. My sanctification. To him. And that's the life. Of the Christian. Summed up.

In these two. Great blessings. Justified. And made righteous. In relation. To God. Sanctified. By being given.

The spirit of God. And the new life. Of obedience. To him. We owe that. Entirely. To Christ. And the person.

Of whom that is true. Is living. By faith. Upon him. The life. That I now. Live in the flesh. I live. By the faith. Of the son of God.

[13:03] Who loved me. And gave himself. For me. It's a life. Of faith. On Christ. Trusting. In him. Relying.

Upon him. To be all. Our salvation. To be all. That we need. In relation. To God. And it's a life. Of communion.

With him. I think that's. The essential. Element. Of a Christian. Life. Whatever we have to do. Whatever we have to be. As Christians. What is at the very heart. Of the Christian life. Is a real. Personal.

Relationship. With Christ. A coming. And a going. Between ourselves. And Christ. By faith. By love. By desire.

[13:57] By prayer. By him. Giving us. The influences. Of his spirit. And the consciousness. Of his presence. The Christian life. Is not.

Something. Of mere. Routine. The Christian life. Is a life. Of living. Communion. And fellowship. With Christ.

The Christian lives. On Christ. Christ is. Everything. To him. And all his happiness. And all his hopes.

Are bound up. With the saviour. Christ. But also. When he says. To me. To live is Christ. He is saying. That he. Decires.

To live. Like Christ. Christ. And life. What is life. What is the kind of life. I ought. I ought. To live. What kind of person.

[14:51] Ought I to be. What kind of thoughts. Ought I to have. And what kind of words. Ought I to speak. And what kind of actions. Ought I to perform. And the answer.

To all these questions. Is found. In Christ. To live. Christ. That Christ. Would be formed.

In me. That. Christ. Would be the pattern. Of my life. That my life. Would reflect. His life.

That is what is required. Of Christians. And that is what. Christians desire. desire. Although. They bemoan. Continually. What a vast.

Distance there is. Between. Christ. And them. It makes us ashamed. Even to think of Christ. As our pattern. When we look.

[15:48] At what we are. And yet. That is the aim. That is the desire. And the endeavor. And that is what makes. Heaven. So attractive.

That we shall be. With him. And that when we shall see him. We shall be like him. Can you imagine. Being like Christ.

And yet. That is the. The expectation. And the hope. And that is the prospect. Before. Every poor believer. There's a day coming.

When there will be no difference. At all. In character. And in conduct. Between Christ. And you. And me. If we are Christians.

He'll be the infinitely. Glorious. Exalted. Son of God. Far removed from us. In his person. In that respect.

[16:46] As far as his manhood is concerned. He is the pattern. And that is what Christian life will be. When Christian life. Reaches. Its.

Fulfillment. To live as Christ. To live. On him. To live like him. And. To live. For him.

To live. For the glory. And the honor. Of his name. That's the main concern. Of the apostle here. That Christ.

Shall be magnified. In my body. The Christian. Is the only person. In all the world.
 Who has an aim. In life. Which is sufficient for life. And which can be carried on. Without any amendment. Into eternity.
 [17 : 45] And be sufficient. In eternity too. As the shorter catechism. Tells us. Man's. Chief end. Is to glorify. God.

And to enjoy. Him. Forever. And as God. Has revealed himself. In Christ. The Christian. Wants. Supremely.
 To live. A life. Which honors. Him. And which shows. The world. Not how great. The Christian is. But how.
 Great. Christ is. That's an ambition. And a motivation. Which is. Greatly to be desired.
 So that. Whatever we do. And whatever we say. And whatever we think. We would be aiming. We would be aiming. At the Lord Jesus Christ.
 [18 : 42] Being. Exalted. And ourselves. And others. Coming to worship him. And serve him. And honor him. As God.

That should be our aim. When we come. To the public means of grace. That should be our aim. In our family worship. In our private worship.
 That should be our aim. When we eat. Or when we drink. Or whatsoever we do. That Christ. Would be manifested.
 As a great. God. And a great. Savior. And I think there's that. In every Christian's life. In every Christian's heart. In spite of all his failings.
 That makes him want. To see Christ honored. Whatever becomes. Of himself. That was the way with the Apostle Paul. He didn't care about his reputation.
 [19 : 45] People could say what they liked about him. They could do what they liked to him. They could put him in prison. They could tie him up with chains. They could call him. Whatever they wanted to call him.

But. He was very concerned. That he would do nothing. And say nothing. That would bring any reproach. Upon the name. Of Christ. But that rather.
 What he said and did. Would show. For. His praises. To me to live. Is Christ. I cannot. Live without him.
 He is all my salvation. He is the pattern. Of my living. And he is the one. Whose glory. Is what gives my life.
 Its meaning. And its direction. I think these are. Some of the things. That are involved in this. Expression. Of the Apostle. To me.
 [20 : 42] To live. Is Christ. Now. We noticed. Then. That for a person. To whom that is true.
 To die. Is gain. Now. Paul. Was a great realist. And. There was no. Mere. Sentimentality. About him. So easy to say things like this. Sometimes. Without. Really. Understanding. What they mean. And without really meaning them. Paul was not like that. Death. Was a. Great.

Invasion. Of human. Life. And experience. According to Paul. A horrible thing. Which has invaded.
 [21 : 39] God's creation. As a result of sin. And as a result of the curse. God. And there is nothing. Attractive about it. Whatsoever. And no.

Christian. Should ever think. That he has to try. Somehow. To imagine. Or believe. That there is something. Good in death. There is nothing. Good in death. It is the last enemy.
 It is a separation. Between. What God has joined together. The soul. And the body. Of his creature. It is something. That would have had no place.
 In human experience. Were it not for sin. And you remember. How. The apostle Paul. Brings that out. So clearly. Writing to the Corinthians.
 He is looking forward. To heaven. And he knows. He has to go through. The experience of death. To get to heaven. I am not wanting. To be unclothed. He said.
 [22 : 37] But clothed upon. That mortality. Might be swallowed up. Of life. There was nothing. Attractive about death. In itself. It is the king of terror.

It is the last enemy. But. The Christian. Can look at death. In the context. Of what Christ. Has done to death. And what Christ.
 Does through. The death of his people. And the glory. That that death. Leads to for them. Death is the great enemy. Which comes.

To intimate the curse. To the ungodly. To usher them. Into a lost eternity. What a terrible thing. Is the death. Of a Christless sinner.

One moment. Living without God. In the world. And the next moment. Cast away. From him forever. But oh.

[23 : 37] What a blessing. Death becomes. To the people of God. Because the death. Of the Christian. Is something. That is not able. To separate him.

From the love of God. Which is in Christ Jesus. The death of the Christian. Is something. Which has been given. To him. As a gift. By God. All things are yours.

Christ is yours. Life is yours. Death is yours. It's for your advantage. It's for your benefit. It is the messenger.

That is sent. To usher you. Into the presence. Of your Lord. And your Savior. To me. To live is Christ. And to die.

Is gain. It's great advantage. How can that be. Well of course. Death.

[24 : 31] Puts an end. To sin. And it puts an end. To temptation. In the experience. Of the Christian. That itself.

Is a wonderful thing. The poor Christian. Who has been struggling. Against temptation. And sin. All his days. Since he was converted. In the moment of death.

His soul. Is made perfect. In holiness. Perfect. In holiness. Not a spot. Of sin. About him.

Any more. The end. Of sinning. The end. Of temptation. The end. Of imperfection. The end. Of the weariness. The end.

Of the affliction. The end. Of the trial. Which he often. Experienced. In the Christian way. No more. Conflict. With the world.

[25 : 26] Or the flesh. Or the devil. The beginning. Of perfect. Communion. With Christ. Perfect.

Fellowship. With him. Perfect. Likeness. To him. Perfect. Service. Perfect. Worship. When we shall see him.

We shall be like him. And even in the moment of death. The soul. Of the Christian. Is brought in. To the presence of Christ.

You remember what the Lord Jesus said. To the thief on the cross. He said. Today. Thou shall be with me. In paradise. You're not going to go to sleep.

And be unconscious. For hundreds and thousands of years. To the resurrection. This very moment. This very day. You and I. Will be together.

[26 : 27] In the presence. Of God. Death is gain. Because. It makes Christ. More real to us. And more near to us.

Than he ever was. In our experience. Here. We can depend. More completely. Upon him. We can be perfectly. Like him. And we can.

Live. Perfectly. For his glory. Of course. There's a step. Beyond. Death. There's something even better.

Than the death of the saints. And that is. Their glorious resurrection. They shall rise. With bodies. Made perfect. And resembling. The glorified body of Jesus. As well as having souls. That are perfect.

[27 : 24] In holiness. In the day. In the day. Of his death. But. As far as. The present. Is concerned. As far as the experience. Of reality. In this world. Now is concerned.

The Christian. Loses nothing. In the day. Of his death. Other people. Lose everything. Everything. They lived for. Everything.

They worked for. Everything. They loved. Everything. They valued. Slips through their fingers. In the moment of death. Isn't that an awful thought. That people are living.

Their lives. In this world. For the things of time. And sense. And in a moment. The things they have labored. So much for. Slip from their grasp.

So that death is. Lost. To them. But it's gain. To the Christian. Because. What he loves.

[28 : 21] And what he values. And what he depends upon. He will have more of. In the world to come. Than he ever had.

Here. More. Of Christ. And more. Of the ability. To be. Like Christ.

And to be for Christ. Throughout eternity. We can't help. Looking at it. From this side. But. It's a wonderful thing.

To be able to look. Just beyond. The experience. Of dying. And to realize. That even. While Christians.

Here are sorrowing. Over those. Who fell asleep. In Jesus. In Jesus. These very passions. Are full. Of the joys. And pleasures.

[29 : 18] That are at God's right hand. Forevermore. To me. To live. Is Christ. And because of that. To die. Is gain.

There is nothing. That can separate us. From the love of God. Which is in. Christ. Jesus. Our Lord. Nothing. And that's what makes. It possible. To look forward. With hope. You remember. Hearing of the woman. Who. Told one of the old worthies. Of how she got. Deliverance. From. The fear. Of death.

She said. It's written in the Bible. He has the keys. Of death. And of hell. And if he has the keys. Then his face. Will be the first.

[30 : 19] That I will see. And that is something. To think of. Something to encourage. And strengthen believers. We shouldn't be worried.

Too much about. How it will be with us. In death. As long as Christ. Is our life. As long as. We're living on him.

And endeavoring by grace. To live like him. And for him. We can be sure. We can be sure. That we'll discover. In that moment. That the grace.

That brought us. To that point. Will carry us. Safely through. Well then. The question for us is. What does Christ.

What does Christ. What does Christ mean to us. What think ye. Of Christ. If he's all your salvation. And all your desire.

[31 : 16] You can leave yourself. In his hands. For time. And for eternity. But it's a different matter. If.

Christ. Means nothing. To you. Because what will you have. In that day. What will you have. When you go.

To meet God. If you don't have Christ. What think ye. Of Christ. What. Does life mean. To you. What does life mean. To me. Is our life. Really bound up. With Christ. That's the only life. That's worth living.

The life. In which Christ. Is central. And supreme. Let us pray. Gracious God.

[32 : 17] May the Holy Spirit. Enlighten. Our minds. In the knowledge of Christ. And may we be.

Able to rejoice. In the assurance. That if we have Christ. Christ. If Christ. Is ours. Then there is nothing.

That will ever enter into. Our experience. Not even death. Not even death itself. Which will be able to separate us. From that love.

We pray. We pray. We pray that we may be found. In Christ. That Christ. Would be. All our salvation. That he would be our righteousness.

That he would be our sanctification. That he would be our redemption. That he would be all. And in all. To us. And that we would face life.

[33 : 16] And death. In dependence upon him. Part us now with thy blessing. And take away sin. For Jesus sake. Amen.