

Philippians 1:18-30

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[0 : 0 0] lot of you guys know we're in Philippians. So turn to Philippians. I will be preaching out of Philippians 18 to the end of the chapter. But I'm just going to give a brief overview of the chapter, everything that is the priest on already. I'm going to get into it. So just note on verse 1, Paul and Timothy, you can find where Paul meets the Philippians in Acts chapter 16.

A great thing also is that you can find where Paul meets Timothy in Acts chapter 15. Paul and Timothy together, the first church planting that they did was the Philippians church, which is amazing because now Paul and Timothy can ride back together to the Philippians church.

Philippi was a hub in Alexander the Great's empire. Then it was conquered by the Romans and now it's a very militaristic place. It was almost a fort. It was a colony. It was where a lot of Roman soldiers went to retire. It's a colony of the Romans. And so you're sending people there to start the city, basically, to start a village, right? A lot of prominent people there.

Chapter 16, you learn of Lydia, who's a dealer in purple cloth, which is mainly with kings and nobles. You learn of the jailer who gets saved. So the letter of Philippians, bring all that up because Paul uses a lot of militaristic language whenever he's addressing the Philippians. And then when Seth was preaching, one of the things that he highlighted was partnership. We see that in verse 4, the partnership in the gospel. Then onward, I have you in my heart. You are all partners with me in grace. Partnership is littered throughout this letter because this is a modern day missionary support letter, right? The Philippians is providing funds to Paul so that he can further his mission. And Paul, in turn, is also praying for them and partnering with them in this regards as he prays for them there and as he prays for them in the section that

I'll read from. And then what Sam preached on is the advance of the gospel. The gospel is going forth. Paul is in prison. Sam challenged us in how are we also not in chains, advancing the gospel.

[3 : 0 7] So it's a brief introduction. Now we get to my section. I'll start reading from verse 18 onwards and then begin. What does it matter? Only that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ has proclaimed. And in this I rejoice. Yes, I will continue to rejoice because I know this will lead to my salvation through your prayers and help from the spirit of Jesus Christ. My eager expectation, hope, is that I will not be ashamed about anything, but that now, as always, with all courage, Christ will be highly honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. Now, if I live on in the flesh, this means fruitful work for me, and I don't know which one I should choose. I'm torn between the two. I long to depart and be with Christ, which is far better, but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. Since I'm persuaded of this, I know that I will remain and continue with all of you for your progress and join the faith so that because of my coming to you again, your boasting in Christ Jesus may bound. Just one thing, as citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then whether I come to you and see you or am absent, I will hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit, in one accord, contending together for the faith of the gospel, not being frightened away by your opponents.

This is a sign of destruction for them, but of your salvation, and this is from God. For it has been granted to you on Christ's behalf, not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him. Since you're engaged in the same struggle that you saw I had, and now hear that I have.

What a great passage. It's kind of like two porterhouse that I was given to preach on. It's so rich.

So we might be spending a lot of time on this. Hopefully not. So verse 18b, starting in yes, I will continue to rejoice. To verse 19. Yes, I will continue to rejoice because I know this will lead to my salvation through your prayers and help from the spirit of Jesus Christ.

In Paul's life right now, he's in chains. He is under house arrest. He is awaiting trial in front of Caesar, either to be free or to be executed. So he writes this asking for prayer. But he also says, I know this will lead to my salvation through your prayers and help from the Holy Spirit. This shows two different things. One is, Paul is asking for prayer as the elite apostle, but also saying that the Holy Spirit works through our prayers. It's not like God can freely act however he chooses, but one of his modes of acting is by our prayers. Paul knows this. Say, I need your prayers because it's how God acts. The word there, salvation or deliverance is not a means of being saved, right?

[6 : 42] Paul's already saved. Whenever the Lord is revealed to him, he is saved there. But this is just deliverance from his chains, from his house arrest, right? From prison is what he's meaning.

And this is reminiscent of many that have gone before Paul for the sake of God, such as Daniel in the lion's den, right? Daniel, betrayed by some of his fellow co-workers in a law that he could only pray to the emperor. He prays to God and then is thrown into a den of lions. But the Lord delivers him.

Right? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego commanded to bow before a golden idol. But the Lord delivers them in the fire. In the New Testament, the apostles are imprisoned, but then freed by an angel. And then Peter is thrown into prison, but then freed by an angel again, comes, knocks on the door. And in their joy, the people greet him and rejoice. This isn't abnormal to happen of someone being thrown into prison.

And Paul knows that he can be delivered by the help of the Spirit because it's happened before many times. This form and Paul wanting prayers from these sins, right? Paul desiring their prayers to be saved from his chains should drive us also to our knees to pray for God as well, to pray for ourselves, to pray for fellow believers. Because it's how God chooses to act. Right? Prayer is how God chooses to act. I would rather you all pray for my marriage, my kids' salvation, my leadership, freedom from sin, than to be invited to your house for a meal. I would much rather that. Because it's how God chooses to act.

It's what I need. I need my marriage to be secured. I need you to be praying for me. I need that more than I need a free meal. Of course, I love fellowship.

[9 : 19] So keep inviting me. But my encouragement is to you to pray. And if you're already praying for the saints on a daily basis, praise God.

Please keep doing that. I need that. We all need that. But if you're convicted because you haven't been praying, please pray. This is a new church plant. We need prayer.

And then keep on moving. Moving on to verse 20. Again, Paul's under house arrest.

There's either salvation to come or death to come. That I will be highly honored, whether that Christ will be highly honored, whether by life or by death.

Christ's greatest desire is not necessarily freedom. It's not his greatest desire. He says it right there, Mike. His greatest desire is that Christ will be honored in this body. Right?

[10 : 30] That Christ, supreme, would be honored. That we would all forget about Paul, honestly. And that Christ would be going forward. As he says, even in the advance of the gospel.

Like, some preach out of just wanting to gain money. But he rejoices because the gospel goes forth. Because Christ is proclaimed. We'll explore more of what Paul kind of means by life.

But if Paul dies at the hands of Caesar, he honors Christ in his martyrdom. Right? Whether by life or by death.

Because if we think about persecution, martyrdom, the gospel always spreads even more because of persecution and martyrdom. Think about Stephen.

Stephen is preaching against and for all of these Jews. Um, he, he, he's like, he's tearing them a new one, basically.

[11 : 37] Um, but he, he wants them to repent and believe in the gospel. Right? Uh, but he is, they're enraged. Right? They cover their ears, rush Stephen and stone him to death.

And then in Acts it says, devout men buried Stephen and made great lamentations over him. But Saul was ravaging the church, entering house after house.

He dragged off men and women and committed them to prison. Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. The martyrdom of Stephen caused the word to go forth.

It caused, uh, Philip, Philip the evangelist to preach to Ethiopian eunuch to be saved. Paul's death honors Christ because it will, it will spread the gospel.

So, on to verse, uh, 21. Don't forget. I'll, I'll, I'll, I'll preach more on life. For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.

[12 : 40] So much to unpack in these 11 verses or words. For me to live is Christ and to die is gain. Uh, the first thing I want to note is that in the original language, uh, there's no verb used in, um, this verse.

Uh, it's just, uh, they added a verb, which is the word is to better help, uh, the reader. So it should be read for me to live Christ and to die gain.

Um, make this a note of is because one signifies purpose. Like you could say for me to live is my family, uh, which signifies my purpose is my family.

I live to work for my family. I live to provide for my kids. If you said to live family. It's, it's weird.

It doesn't make a lot of sense. But when Paul says that he signifies existence, whole being to live Christ, right?

[13 : 55] Paul exists because of Christ. He acts beyond the behalf of Christ. He does everything because of Christ. It's not merely purpose. I'm just, you know, doing all these things for Christ.

It's in all of life, Christ. One commentator says to live Christ, the absence of the verb may be filled in many ways.

To live is Christ. To live means Christ. To depend on Christ. To live honors Christ. The foundation, center, purpose, direction, power, and meaning of Paul's life is Christ.

It's nothing else. Certainly life so transformed and empowered by Christ's life is on a higher level and on a different quality than common, ordinary human life.

Right? Right? If your life is just for family or just for work, you're not, you're not different from anyone else. Right? But the spiritual man and woman whose life is Christ, whose life, Christ, exists, works, does all these things in light of Christ.

[15 : 10] To live Christ means that you must be dynamic and not static. What do I mean by that?

A good example is imagine you're talking to someone who went skiing. Right? I've never been skiing before. So I'm talking to them.

I'm like, how? How do you? Like, do you enjoy it? Like, yeah, I love it. They're like, I do like the double black diamonds. You know, I started at the intermediate and beginner.

It was kind of hard. It was a little scary. But I, I like, love the black diamonds. It's like expert level. So much fun. Then you're like, well, how's it like, like going down on the skis and stuff like that?

And then they're like, what do you mean? Like, well, aren't there skis involved that you have to like go down the mountain? He's like, no, I ride the gondola up. And then ride it back down.

[16 : 10] And you say, what do you mean? But I'm like, what do you mean by that? You just ride it up and down. It's like, yeah, so much fun. It's thrilling. You're like, what?

What do you mean by that? And what I'm trying to say by that is that the life of a Christian is not just riding the gondola up and then back down. It's dynamic and not static.

We're not just sitting there going through the motions of life. Right? There's intense and scary things about life. As a double black diamond is.

But we're meant to go down that hill, not back down with the gondola. Right? So what about us? Right? How are we living this Christian life?

Right? Are we going through the motions? Are we just reacting to stuff that happens? Sometimes we have to react because we don't know the future. But is our life just static?

[17 : 15] Like gestational? To live Christ, to die again. Is your life saturated with Christ?

Is it? Is your life saturated with preaching the gospel to those you know and those you don't know? Like we're commanded to God to preach the gospel.

New church plan. Right? Your wife. Right? To live as Christ is all of life. Your wife. Do you love her as you should? In an understanding way.

Seeking to live in a quiet and peaceful way with her. Your husband. What's your submission like to your husband? Christ-like?

Is it in a way that you can say to live Christ? Are you constantly nagging your husband? He might want to live in the corner of a roof. Your kids.

[18 : 23] Do you give them time of day? Do you love them? Fathers, are you exasperating your kids?

Moms, most of your times are spent with kids. Are you annoyed by them? Or are they a blessing from the Lord?

Kids. You kids. Are you obedient to your parents? Do you... Do you... Do you like say no when they ask you to do something?

Do you talk back to your parents? Obey your parents. Your work.

Are you lazy in your work? Are you lazy in how you work? Do you work too much to not take care of your family or not give them time as it ought to be?

[19 : 33] There's a balance in all of these things, but your life, Christ, is all of life. It's pervasive in everything. It's not church worship.

And then work is kind of like my own thing. That's not really spiritual. No, God created work. God created kids. God created you. So everything you do reflects Christ.

And if you call yourself a Christian, which is a disciple of Christ, which is a follower of Christ, then all of life is what you do. Reflects who God is.

Is it a good reflection of being a disciple of Christ? To die is gain, right?

As we live this life of suffering and hardship and toil and death, we receive what we've lived for.

- [20 : 36] Right? If we're living for ourselves, what we receive is hell. If we're living for the next paycheck, really what we will receive is hell.
- If we're living for the next experience, the next bottle off the shelf, the next hit, what we gain is hell.
- But if to live Christ, then to die is Christ. What we gain in death is Christ. In 1 Corinthians 13, it says, Of these, faith, hope, and love were made.
- But the greatest of these is love. Now, why is that? Why is the greatest of these love? Primarily because God is love. But when we die and go to heaven, our faith is realized.
- Our hope is realized. But the love of God still remains. And in this, I want you to realize this, that when we die, we will receive something.
- [21 : 46] Either eternal paradise with God or hell. Hell's a real place. But as we talked about earlier, in Paul's martyrdom, and in all of his hardships, he says to live is Christ and to die is gain.
- You would think someone who suffers hardship, like all the hardship Paul has suffered, would kind of want to die in that way.
- Paul has gone through multiple floggings. In Philippi, in fact, he had a severe flogging. He has been in shipwrecked. Right? He has been in countless trials.
- You would think that death, I mean, he believes in Christ, would be a freedom from all death. But in verse 22, he says, Now if I live on in the flesh, this means fruitful work for me.
- And I don't know which one I should choose. Guys, Paul has been flopped.
- [23 : 19] Flogged. Many times. Shipwrecked. Faced hunger. Toil. Deceit amongst the brothers. Right? And he says, I'm torn between the two.
- I don't know which one I should choose. A life full of hardship. Or death and be with Christ. I'm torn between the two. But he says, I live on in the flesh.
- This means fruitful work for me. And I don't know which one I should choose. Isn't that astounding? Right? In this, it's just a hard decision for him.
- And I want to just note on Paul's love for the Philippians and his partnership with them. Right? He's so torn in this because he loves them. But to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.
- Like... More necessary for the Philippians. That's such love and partnership. They are providing for him a means of which he can further the advancement of the gospel. But his love and partnership stretches so far that he would say, I want to be with Christ, but it's more necessary for me to be with you.
- [24 : 42] Because I love you. Because I'm a partner with you. Because it's necessary for your sake. And he's confident in this, that he knows that it would be fruitful work.
- And then partnership and the bonds of love. I almost cried just studying those verses because of how much he loves them. There's so much evidence, I think, in partnership in this letter, but I don't think anything like this.
- Of his love for them. Is there love like that for one another? Are we seeking to love one another like that?
- This is a relatively new church plant. Are we... I don't think we're there yet, but are we striving for that? Are we striving to love one another like that?
- Is most of our time spent with people outside of this body? It's not a bad thing. We're not a cult. But we're striving for strong partnerships and bonds of love.
- [26 : 03] Right? We're striving for this type of partnership, which we could also say, but to remain in the flesh is more necessary for your sake. Right?

What is our partnership like with one another? What does that mean to you guys? Does it mean that we just come on a Sunday? Like we make coffee? Like, is it just responsibility in those things on a Sunday morning?

Or is it all of life? Right? Right? Continue on to verse 27. Just one thing, as citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ.

In this verse, we should hear echoes of verse 20 and 21. It's keeping in Paul's theme of life and death. Right? 21, for me to live as Christ since die is gain.

20, Christ will be highly honored in my body, whether by life or by death. And then he says to the Philippians, just one thing, as citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ.

[27 : 15] And those other two, it's kind of his ethos, right? His goal, his way of life. And now this is a command that he's giving the church. And if we believe that all of God's word is God breathed, then it's a command from God.

For us to live as citizens of heaven, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ. Right? An imperative, a command from Paul and from God.

Just a note really quickly on the original language. There is, the word heaven is not included in that verse.

Some translator choose to add it due to Philippians 3.20, which says, but our citizenship is in heaven and we eagerly await for a savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But I think here, Paul chooses to admit the word heaven because of Roman pride in their citizenship.

[28 : 29] And really, their dual citizenship is what Paul is focusing on. to live their lives as Roman citizens worthy of the gospel of Christ, but also to live their lives as heavenly citizens worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Right? As we live here on this earth, we're to live our lives worthy of the gospel of Christ. in this United States of America where we have all the freedom that we can't, we're not to take pride in it, we're not to rejoice in this, but we're to live our lives worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Like, if persecution comes to the American church, like, would we be able to stand? As it is in the rest of the world right now.

Of course we will. Because Christ is our head. In verse 27, the end of it, then whether I come and see you or am absent, I will hear about you that you are standing firm in one spirit and one accord contending together for the faith of the gospel.

Paul is not threatening them in what he says. It's in regards to how they're living. He's more holding them accountable as adult children.

[29 : 56] He's talking to adult children in this letter. In Corinthians, he's talking to them like children.

Here he's talking to them like adults. Right? And so he's holding them accountable. He's not threatening them. And I hope that distinction is clear. But he presents three things a life worthy of the gospel of Christ produces.

The first is that you're standing firm in one spirit. The Holy Spirit that we received means that we've believed in the gospel and that we've been sealed by the spirit.

Right? To stand firm in one spirit means to stand firm in the Holy Spirit. But this confidence can only be done if we're trusting in God and trusting in his spirit.

In Ephesians, it says, to put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. Take up the whole armor of God so you can withstand in the evil day.

[31 : 06] Stand, therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth and having put on the breastplate of righteousness. Right? standing in what God has provided.

Standing in the confidence of God. Are we standing in the confidence of God? Right?
Standing in the Holy Spirit. Trusting in the Holy Spirit.

Right? We cannot stand against cosmic powers if we are not standing in God's protection.
In the armor, in and with the armor of God.

And then the second one, with one mind, strive side by side for the faith of the gospel.
One mind can also be translated one soul or one psyche.

We need unity and we cannot get unity if we are not unified in the Spirit. Right? The Spirit is granted to us when we are believers, but this striving is an effort that we have to make.

[32 : 11] It's a toiling. To strive means to struggle or fight vigorously. Right? This is what Paul is telling us to do. But are we doing that?

Are we striving side by side vigorously? Right? Fighting, linking arms together. together.
The third one is, and not be frightened in verse 28 in anything by your opponents.

Imagine like an ancient battle line. Right? Kind of like Lord of the Rings or something.
There's one force that's like running with swords and spears towards another army that's just lined up and there's people just standing there.

They've got pipes or shields up or something. The battle line can usually fail because of one guy. Because everyone standing there is nervous at that force coming at them.

But one guy who starts running ensues mass chaos and everyone starts running. That's why you can see in the Old Testament and they fled before them.

[33 : 28] They're running away. Christ Church, there's some scary stuff out there. One of them is named Satan.

He is, his goal is to steal, kill, and destroy. And he does all of that. He steals, he kills, and he destroys. He destroys marriages, he destroys lives.

He whispers lies into the ears of believers. He kills, seeks to kill many babies in the womb.

He prowls around seeking whomever he may devour. And on our own, a Christian isolated will be frightened.

We need the Holy Spirit to stand and we need unity in the body to strive together to not be frightened. We cannot be, we will be frightened if we don't have the Holy Spirit and if we don't link arms with one another.

[34 : 40] A man isolated is not a good thing. A woman isolated is not a good thing. And continue in verse 28 it says, not being frightened away by your opponents.

We don't, we're not sure who the Philippians opponents are. And Paul, Paul calls them the dogs in Philippians 3-2. Not sure who they are.

could be the same people who flogged and persecuted Paul, but we're not sure. But the rest of that, this is a sign of destruction of them but of your salvation and this is from God.

Essentially saying, they will be destroyed and you are to be saved. This is from God. If you stand firm in the Holy Spirit, if you rely and depend on one another, you will not be frightened but not only this, they will be destroyed and you will be saved.

This is from God. That's a promise. And so, just application really quickly on that. We must be on the battle lines together.

[36 : 00] We can't be isolated doing this by ourself. holding firm to the promises of God, trusting in the Spirit and relying on one another. All necessary.

Can I rely on you to strive together? are we reliable? Like, if I call you and I really need you, will you be there?

Like, can I call you at any time? Like, I'm really struggling. Or do you pick up the phone and call and want to just fight by yourself? If we're not trusting in the Holy Spirit, if we're not relying on one another together and we're isolated, we will be terrified because Satan is a cosmic force.

Ephesians says we're not against flesh and blood, but against the cosmic powers. Do you know how vast the cosmos are? Can you grasp how vast the universe is?

Satan is a cosmic force. He's not like us, flesh and blood. We need God and we need each other to withstand. And then just verse 29-30, for it is granted to you on Christ's behalf not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him, since you are engaged in the same struggle that you saw I had and now here I have.

[37 : 40] one of the great lies of the prosperity gospel, which is a false gospel, is you can get the crown of life without the cross.

Right? You can get the crown of life without the cross. It's a great lie. Do better. Right? Do better. Give more money and your life will be free of heartaches and trials and troubles, but that's not true because it's a false gospel.

We are to believe in him and the cross and suffer for him to live Christ to die gain. We're to take up our cross daily.

Right? Paul's just reiterating this. Not only to believe in him, but also to suffer for him. We're told to suffer.

The Christian life is a life of suffering. And to promise that we will suffer. Paul, and at the end, since you are engaged in the same struggle that you saw I had and now here that I have, the Philippians knows Paul's suffering firsthand and they have a similar struggle.

[39 : 04] Right? When Paul was in Philippi in Acts, this is what it says. Oh, there was a slave girl. Paul cast a demon out of her and pick up here.

But when the owners saw that their hope was of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace before the rulers. When they had brought them to the magistrate, they say, these men are Jews.

They are disturbing our city. They advocate customs that are not lawful for us Romans to accept or practice. The crowd joined in attacking them and the magistrate tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods.

And when they had inflicted many blows on them, they threw them into prison, ordering the jailers to keep them safe. Having received this order, he put them in the inner prisons and fastened their feet in stocks.

Paul says, you are engaged in the same struggle you saw I had and now hear that I have. Don't know everything that's happening in Philippi, but we can tell from that there's persecution happening there from people in Philippi.

[40 : 18] that's the struggle that Paul had there. That means that they're experiencing something similar, which is why the encouragement it's giving to live as Christ to die as gain.

A few last points and then I'll conclude. As we are living right now, I don't think that any one of us are threatened by death.

Right? A few last points for basics in holy living. Communion with God, right? The first is prayer. We need to be praying for one another.

If you aren't doing that, please start doing it. We need it. Price Church needs it. I need it. God's mercy is new every day. Yesterday's gone.

Tomorrow's here. I need to love my wife today, not yesterday. Fasting. Fasting. I'll say it. I don't know how it works, but it works. Whenever we deprive ourselves of food or of something and are depending on God, God's ears are open to us.

[41 : 31] It works. Meditating and studying God's word, not merely reading. I've read my Bible many times and just forgot what I've read.

How are we studying God's word, not just merely reading it, right? Like, are we trying to understand what the text is saying instead of checking off a box?

If you're just trying to check off a box and just read it, I don't think that you're going to get much. I don't get much doing that. You need to meditate and study God's word. What does it mean to study God's word?

If it means to just read and you're not getting anything, maybe you need to redefine what studying means. Listening and waiting on his word.

Sometimes we just do so much and podcasts are going, doing all of these different stuff that we're not just listening and sitting and waiting on the word to hear from him.

[42 : 33] We need to do that. The last thing in communion with God is obedience. We need to obey God. Obey his words. And then the next, does communion with God, union with God's people.

Love God and love people. We need to fellowship with God's people. We need to live in harmony with God's people. The psalm says, how blessed it is when brothers and sisters live together in harmony.

We need to love and sacrifice. We need to love one another, sacrifice our time, our finances, our possessions for one another.

We need to spend ourselves and be spent for unity within the body. Are we doing all that? Paul says three times, Christ will be highly honored in my body whether by life or death and then for me to live as Christ and die as gain and then says to us, live your life worthy of the gospel of Christ.

Brothers and sisters, we must live our life for Christ. If we're not living it for Christ, what we're doing is we're working for hell.

[43 : 54] And so I leave you with some verses from the song. What is our hope in life and death? Christ alone, Christ alone. what is our only confidence that our souls belong to him?

What truth can calm this troubled soul? God is good. God is good. Where is his grace and goodness known? In our great Redeemer's blood.

Unto the grave what shall we sing? Christ he lives. Christ he lives. And what reward will heaven bring? Everlasting life with him.

There we will rise to meet the Lord and sin and death will be destroyed. And we will feast in endless joy when Christ is ours forevermore.

Thank you. And we will