

# Gospel Partners Love to Magnify Christ

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 20 November 2022

Preacher: Dave Nannery

[ 0 : 00 ] Okay. Before we get started, just to make sure that you guys are able to follow along as I'm preaching this morning, I want to make sure that you guys all have a copy of the Bible in your hands.

And that's important because we're going to be spending most of our time in Philippians chapter 1 today, in one passage of Scripture. And I want you to be able to see it right in front of you. I don't want you to just depend on what I'm telling you.

I want you to be able to see what I'm telling you and see how it is drawn from the words of Scripture. So if you don't have a Bible with you, our ushers have them, just raise your hand if you don't have a Bible with you, and they'll be happy to come up and hand a copy of God's Word to you.

So let me pray for us as we prepare to hear God's Word, and then we'll get going. Father, I thank you that we have this amazing opportunity to read your Word, to study it.

Lord, may our hearts be like the hearts of the psalmist who said, Oh, how I love your law. It is my meditation all the day. And we need that. And Lord God, I am asking that you may give us eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to understand your Word.

[ 1 : 22 ] I know how easy it is to sit in church for weeks, months, years, decades, and never really understand what we're hearing, not be able to take to heart and receive it.

Lord God, break through our defenses, break through our hardened hearts. Let us understand this. And Lord God, as for me, may I speak the Word of God clearly and boldly.

May I represent you well. May you hold me back from saying anything that is not helpful and constructive in building people up to make the most of Jesus Christ, to magnify his name.

Amen. But we just sang that song, magnify the Lord with me. Let us exalt his name together. Boy, that just two lines.

I could probably just sit down. And that is, that essentially summarizes everything that I'm going to say to you today. We are here to magnify the Lord, to exalt his name together.

[ 2 : 28 ] Now, a few weeks ago, we enjoyed the opportunity to join the Rock Church, to join Church of 99 for that Fall Fest that took place. And I know a number of you were there.

And if you were like me, you had a really great time. Just had, I saw a lot of smiles on your face, unless you guys were faking it. But I don't think you were. We love events like that.

I find that almost everyone comes away thinking, that was so great. You know, it was so refreshing, encouraging. And most of the time, it's, I've just felt so refreshed, so encouraged to be around fellow Christians.

To be, to see that we're part of a larger community here in Squamish, among several churches where there are true believers in Christ. And that's so meaningful in a town where that is few and far between.

One thing that we want to consider when it comes to things like that is, what brings us together? What brings us together? Why are we doing this church thing?

[ 3 : 28 ] And I find sometimes what can happen is people come to church, they show up at church for reasons that maybe are not the reasons that God has called us to show up to church.

I've seen people who will come to church because they're looking for a spectacle. They're looking for the smoke machines and the laser light show and the great band. And, you know, I'll admit it's awesome to see the whole band together this morning.

It's a lot of fun. But are we coming here to see a spectacle? And the thing is, what you win people, bring people in the doors with, is what you will have to keep doing to keep them there.

If our goal is to win people with a spectacle, we will have to keep producing bigger and better spectacles. Some people come to church because for the first time in their life, they're surrounded by people who are kind and who are loving and treat them like family.

A place where they have the healthiest relationships in their lives and that's what they're there for. Some people come to church because it makes them feel better about themselves.

[ 4 : 35 ] It has sort of this therapeutic value to them. Some people come to church because it gives them a social network they're looking for. You know, hey, there's a potential business partner over there on the other side of the room.

Some people come because, oh, finally, someone, a place where people share my views about how this country is going down the toilet. And maybe we can get together and band together and become politically active and change things in our community, in our town, in our country.

And we can go on and on and on about what the purpose of our partnership is. Is there a better reason?

And a lot of those things are good. A lot of those things are valuable. A lot of those things are present in the church. But is there a better reason why we are partners in the gospel? Is the church here for something that no other organization in the world is here for?

No other institution. This morning we're studying a passage from the Apostle Paul's letter to the church in Philippi. This is what we call the book of Philippians in our Bibles.

[ 5 : 43 ] And Paul's letter, the book of Philippians, is all about how we partner together in the gospel. And what the purpose of our partnership is.

It's all about partnership in the gospel. You'll see this on Philippians chapter 1, verses 12. We'll read verses 12 through 26 together. If you're using one of the blue Bibles our ushers handed out, that's page 980.

Page 980. And let me read Philippians 1, verses 12 through 26. Follow along in your copy of the scriptures. Here's what Paul writes in his letter to the church in Philippi.

And Paul is writing this from a jail cell probably in the city of Rome. Where he has been imprisoned for preaching the gospel. For preaching God's work. Paul writes, I want you to know, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel.

So that it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest that my imprisonment is for Christ. And most of the brothers, having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

[ 7 : 05 ] Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry. But others from goodwill. The latter do it out of love. Knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel.

The former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition. Not sincerely, but thinking to afflict me in my imprisonment. 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.

For I know that through your prayers and the help of the spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance. 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.

[ 8 : 10 ] For to me, to live is Christ. And to die is gain. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me.

Yet which I shall choose, I cannot tell. I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ. For that is far better.

But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all.

For your progress and joy in the faith. So that in me, you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus. Because of my coming to you again. This is the word of the Lord.

Today we are focusing our attention on that last phrase in verse 18. Yes and I will rejoice. And then following that through to the end of verse 26.

[ 9 : 12 ] Here's the big idea in this passage of scripture. Gospel partners love to make much of Christ. Gospel partners love to make much of Christ.

They love to say, magnify the Lord with me. Let us exalt his name together. This is sort of an odd section of Paul's letter to the Philippians.

Because Paul is, when he's talking about, there's sort of this ominous sense that there's something coming up. A life and death situation. And what seems to be happening is that Paul has a sort of, he has his date in court before the emperor of Rome, Nero.

Paul is going to be tried before Caesar himself, the most powerful man in the world. And so on the one hand, Caesar Nero could have him executed as a criminal for preaching the gospel and for causing a disturbance by preaching the gospel.

And then on the other hand, Caesar could choose to release Paul. One thing is clear. Paul is okay with either outcome.

[ 10 : 25 ] Paul is okay with either outcome. And that is astonishing. I mean, let's say you were put in a situation that's a lot less deadly than Paul's. For example, let's say you are at a workplace, you know, where you've been at for many years and you've heard through the grapevine at work, but the company you work for has begun a round of layoffs.

And then one day your boss says, I'd like to see you at three o'clock this afternoon. It's a Friday. You don't know which way this meeting is going to go.

Will you get to keep your job or will you be fired? If you're like me, I doubt that you're going to respond by saying, either way is okay. All good.

At least not unless you really hate your job. Maybe it is okay either way. But even when Paul's own life is at stake, and this is orders of magnitude bigger than losing a job, Paul still finds himself debating, mulling over which option he prefers to live or to die.

And this guy is living in a whole different headspace than you and I tend to live in. Let's ask this question. What is it about Paul? What is going on in his head and his heart that would override that fundamental human instinct for survival?

[ 11 : 50 ] Well, we find the answer in verse 20. He says, 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.

Now, in Paul's letter to the Philippians, he is writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. These are Paul's words, and they are also God's words.

Paul has been emphasizing that partnership in the gospel he has with the church in Philippi. They've supported each other in bringing the good news of God's anointed king, the good news of Jesus Christ, to a world that desperately needs Jesus Christ to rule and to reign with justice and peace.

This gospel partnership that he has with this church, that's the central theme of the letter. Over and over throughout his letter, Paul is communicating, here's the sort of mindset that you need to have to be in this gospel partnership.

Here's the mindset of someone who is a partner in the gospel. And here's the mindset that Paul is communicating. Gospel partners love to make much of Christ.

[ 13 : 12 ] If that is not your mindset, at some point or other, this gospel partnership is going to stop working for you. And when it stops working for you, you're going to abandon it.

Gospel partners love to make much of Christ. That is the idea that Paul has in mind in verse 20. And that's why Paul is still staying true to this gospel partnership, even when his own life is at stake.

He's talking about Christ being honored in his body, whether by life or by God. Even the way that Paul phrases this sentence shows how he makes so much of Jesus Christ, how he exalts and elevates and magnifies Jesus Christ.

Christ. When I went through school, my writing teachers in high school and just really at all levels of schooling would always teach, you know, you don't use passive voice.

In other words, you don't say, the ball was hit by me. You say, I hit the ball. It sounds a lot more assertive to place yourself as the subject. You say it directly. Paul ignores that advice.

[ 14 : 25 ] He's willing to lose a letter grade on his English paper. He doesn't say, with full courage, now as always, I will honor Christ in my body.

He says, Christ will be honored in my body. Christ is the subject. Paul shrinks himself to the background. And that is so typical of him.

He tries to minimize himself as much as possible in order to make much of Jesus Christ. Paul wants everyone to know that Jesus Christ is what it's all about.

Christ is central. Christ is what's important, not Paul. Paul is utterly determined not to place himself at the center of his life story. Jesus is at the center.

Jesus is at the center of this partnership. And he wants everyone to know that Jesus Christ, he is worth devoting your total, your entire life to.

[ 15 : 26 ] Without reserve, without holding anything back for yourself, your own agendas, your own goals, your own dreams, Jesus Christ is what is worth it. That is what this is all about.

That's the way gospel partners think. That's the only mindset that works in a gospel partnership. Gospel partners love to make much of Christ. They love to magnify Christ.

It is their very mindset. Now, how does Paul expect Jesus Christ to be honored in his situation? How is Christ going to be magnified? How is that going to happen?

Paul expects that Christ will be exalted through human and divine help. It'll happen through human and divine help. And this is helpful for us to see that this is the work of God.

And at the same time, we play a part of this. To find out how that works, we need to backtrack to the beginning, to verse 18. This is where we find that.

[ 16 : 28 ] Paul writes, Yes, and I will rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance.

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.

So why is Paul filled with joy? Why does he say, Yes, I will rejoice? Why does he cultivate a sense of pleasure, a sense of satisfaction, even in the middle of these terrible, life-threatening circumstances?

It is because, Paul writes in verse 19, I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance.

I think the English Standard Version could probably do a little bit of a better job of handling this passage because that word deliverance, this will turn out for my deliverance.

[ 17 : 33 ] Paul is actually quoting a passage from the Old Testament. He's quoting the book of Job. And if you read the book of Job, you will recall that Job has experienced a tremendous amount of suffering.

Job lost all his wealth, all his livestock, his children, even in his own health, and you're not even out of Job chapter 2. Job has no idea why God has decreed that he should suffer.

And then he has several friends come by to comfort him, and boy, his friends think they know why Job is suffering. They're convinced, somehow, in some way, this righteous man, he must secretly actually be a bad man.

He's secretly doing bad things because, oh no, God would never allow a righteous person to suffer like that. But they're wrong. Job knows that he hasn't been harboring any sort of sin that has warranted that response from God.

So Job, throughout the book, expresses a desire. He wants to stand before the Lord God in his heavenly court. He wants to plead his case before God.

[ 18 : 42 ] And Job is confident that he can appear before God and it'll turn out well. In Job 13, verse 16, here's what he says. This will be my salvation, that the godless shall not come before him.

This will be my salvation. Guess what line for the Old Testament Paul quotes? That one. What Job has in mind, what Paul has in mind, is they believe that in the end, they are going to be vindicated before God.

Paul is not worried about whether Caesar will vindicate him. He's worried about will I be vindicated before God. You want to talk about a guy who was liberated from the fear of man because of his fear of the Lord.

The fear that overcomes all other fears. What Job and Paul have in mind is that in the end, whatever other human beings say about them, it is God who will recognize their innocence or their righteousness.

It is God who will judge them accordingly. And that is true for each one of us. Do not fear what other people will say and do to you. It is the Lord that you answer to.

[ 19 : 59 ] Gospel partners know that. Here's what Paul is not saying. Paul isn't saying, you know, I know in the end God is going to get me out of jail. I'm going to get released. He'll hand me a get out of jail free card and everything's going to turn out great for me and I'll be healthy, wealthy, and successful in the end.

That's not what he's saying. What he's saying is that this situation, all that he's going through is going to turn out for his vindication. When he stands before Caesar, when he makes his defense for the gospel, Paul is planning to honor Jesus Christ as Lord.

He is confident that he is going to acquit himself well in the eyes of the Lord. And whatever then happens to him happens. Paul writes in verse 20, 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.

Paul knows that he will one day hear these words from his Lord, those precious words every Christian is longing to hear. Well done, good and faithful servant.

You have been faithful over a little. I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master. Whether he lives or dies before Caesar, Paul will be saved by the faithfulness of God.

[ 21 : 27 ] And Paul is convinced that he will make much of Christ, not merely through his, not through his own wisdom and abilities, but through human and divine help.

We see this in verse 19. He writes, I know that through your prayers and the help of the spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance.

His vindication doesn't come from his own abilities. Gospel partners love to make much of Christ through human and divine help. In Paul's case, the human help comes through the prayers of his gospel partners, the Philippian church.

This is one way that gospel partners that we can imitate the example of the believers in Philippi. How often do you pray for the people of this church, for the leaders of the church?

Are there a regular part of your prayers before God? Do you know what they're going through and wrestling with? Do you know how to cry out to God on their behalf and ask, Lord, may they acquit themselves well before you?

[ 22 : 38 ] How often do you pray that they would faithfully honor and make much of Jesus Christ through the difficult situations they are facing right now? Your brothers and sisters, the people sitting in this room, they need your prayers.

They need your help. If you've ever been in a situation where another believer tells you about the suffering he or she faces, this is so important. It could be a friend whose elderly father is in the hospital.

It could be someone who's troubled because her son is walking away from the Lord. It could be someone who is suffering from chronic pain. Our stock response is often, oh, I'll be praying for you.

I'll be praying for you. And I'm ashamed to admit, in the past, I've said that to people and then walked away and then forgotten, never actually bothered to pray for them like I said I was going to do.

But good intentions don't mean anything unless they're accompanied by action. You can write down that prayer request right there, right down there to remember it. If possible, I encourage you to drop everything and pray for them right there.

[ 23 : 42 ] Ask, what's overwhelming? What's hard for you about this? Okay. Why do I pray for you? Can I pray for you? I've never had anyone turn me down on that offer, by the way.

Not even people who aren't Christians. I've prayed in the weirdest places. It really encourages people when you actually pray with them. You don't have to be that articulate.

It doesn't have to be a long prayer, just a short one. Because it's not about you. It's about making much of Jesus Christ. And there are people here who need your help.

And they need the help of the Holy Spirit because your prayers by themselves are nothing, right? Unless the Spirit is at work, our prayers are just wishful thoughts and pointless words.

They're just good vibes and that's it. It's not our prayers that make a difference. It's the God whom we pray to. He is what makes a difference.

[ 24 : 41 ] Paul believes that it will be the Holy Spirit who will protect him through this trial. It is the Holy Spirit who will help him communicate the message of Jesus Christ with full courage now as always.

Paul knows that he can't do that on his own. That's why we shouldn't be ashamed by being clumsy and inarticulate in our prayers. It's not a clever wording.

It's the God you're praying to. Paul believes that the Holy Spirit will respond to the prayers of the Philippian believers, that the Spirit will give him strength and wisdom to stand firm through Caesar himself.

And Paul is prepared no matter what consequences he's going to face. Verse 20, he says, Christ will be honored in my body whether by life or by death. And that is the mindset of gospel partners.

Bottom line, gospel partners love to make much of Christ through life or death. through life or death. Now, the next few verses, Paul lets us into that kind of inner dialogue that's happening inside of his head.

[ 25 : 48 ] He's going back and forth. Which is a better outcome, living or dying? What a funny debate to be having in your head. The very fact that he's holding this debate with himself is quite remarkable.

We're used to people holding this debate in their head when life has become so miserable and so awful they're contemplating maybe death would be better. But that is actually not the way that Paul is thinking at all.

He is not thinking life is horrible and awful and maybe I'd just be better off dead. He gives a very unique explanation for why each outcome would be a good thing.

Verse 21, for to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. to live is Christ. By itself it's not very clear what he means by that.

But fortunately Paul explains it. Verse 22, if I'm to live in the flesh that means fruitful labor for me.

[ 26 : 50 ] And verse 24, to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. So in other words the reason Paul thinks staying alive is a good thing is because it will give Paul opportunity.

This life that we have this momentary time we have on earth under the sun that is here today and then gone. It is a window of opportunity for fruitful labor.

If Paul remains alive he will have opportunities to strengthen the Philippian church to make sure it is advancing in its knowledge and its obedience to Jesus Christ.

Paul wants to make sure the gospel is advancing in the church. That's why he's talking in verse 25 about your progress and your joy in the faith. He knows that the more time that he spends with the Philippians the more he can teach them.

The more he can give them an example. the more he can live with them and let them see a life that is controlled and consumed by Jesus Christ and take on that mindset for themselves and then pass it along to those who come after.

[ 28 : 10 ] They will learn to live so that Christ will be honored in their body too. And so when Paul says to live is Christ what he means is this his life is devoted to and centered on Jesus Christ his Lord if Paul remains alive he will have more opportunity to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ.

To him life is a time of incredible opportunity not to be thrown away not to be lost. That's a whole different mindset than what we're used to.

Why do your friends and family and co-workers want to keep on living? Why do they want to stay alive? It's often joked despite the high cost of living these days it still remains a popular activity.

There are a lot of different reasons people give. A lot of them boil down to a pursuit of pleasure. The pleasure of being with family new and exciting experiences the pleasure of wealth a carefree retirement.

Paul is also motivated by pleasure but the sort of pleasure he is pursuing is not some sort of short term pleasure that will evaporate when he dies.

[ 29 : 24 ] It is the eternal all-consuming joy of knowing Jesus Christ and serving him. That's why he writes in chapter 3 verse 8 I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

If you know him he is your joy your glory your boast. If Paul is going to live it will be to live for Christ and if he is going to die he considers that a gain for himself.

That's what he says in chapter 1 verse 21 to live is Christ to die is gain. Now that's not a statement that we're used to hearing outside of Christian circles.

If you worked as a counselor at a local school a student walked in and told you I'd be better off dead what would you conclude? You would almost certainly correctly conclude the student is in a lot of trouble possibly depressed.

We have hotlines to call. We have a lot of help for people who need the sort of help that that hopelessness requires.

[ 30 : 44 ] But that is we can't make the mistake of interpreting Paul's statement through our own culture's mindsets. We might make the mistake of concluding that Paul, oh man, he must be so suffering in prison.

He's been bullied by his fellow Jews, persecuted by the Roman government. Paul's self-worth, his self-love, his self-esteem, they must be at an all-time low. Paul's depressed.

He needs better medication. He needs people around him to affirm him. We'd be totally misunderstanding what Paul's all about. Paul doesn't view death as some sort of escape from the sufferings of this life.

Paul isn't like Hamlet thinking that by asleep we end the heartache. Our culture, which, especially in the Canadian government, more and more pushing and promoting medical assistance in dying, a way to get out of the suffering, a way to seize for one final time, some sense that I can get out of this.

Paul's not thinking the way that our culture thinks. It is not death itself that is attracting Paul. It is not relief from the afflictions of life.

[ 32 : 01 ] Paul is not just a relief seeker. What attracts him is what lies on the other side of the grave. Verse 23, my desire is to depart and be with Christ for that is far better.

Paul cannot wait to be with Jesus Christ to see him face to face. Paul's hope is not only that he will be with Jesus Christ at his death and then go to heaven, but that Paul's body too will be resurrected when Jesus Christ returns, when Jesus comes to fully and finally establish his kingdom on this earth.

And that is why Paul writes in chapter 3, verse 10, he says that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and may share his sufferings becoming like him in his death that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

I want us to spend some time considering this because it's easy, oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, the resurrection, you know, it's a lot harder to make this your mindset, to put it into practice.

If you've ever been to a funeral, a celebration of life in our culture, you find that most people do seem to agree, yeah, but yeah, there's some sort of existence after that. Maybe we all go to a better place, you get to see your loved ones again.

[ 33 : 34 ] Paul just wants to see Jesus. I think BK a few weeks back posed that question to us. If you were to die and go to heaven and Jesus weren't there, would you be happy?

Let me pose this question. If you were to die, go to heaven, and all was, let's just say you're in the interior of a whitewashed warehouse, the only people there were you and Jesus for the next 700 years, the next 18 million years, the rest of eternity, would you be happy?

Paul would be thrilled. Of course, the new heavens and the new earth are so much more than that, but for Paul, the singular joy of eternity is being with Jesus Christ forever.

Being able to say forever and ever, magnify the Lord with me, let us exalt his name together. Let us exalt his name forever. In our culture, we don't think like that.

For us, it's the here and now. That's important. Maybe there's some sort of afterlife, but here's the true life. This is the best we're going to get, so we try to make the most out of this life, because this is about the closest thing to heaven we're going to get.

[ 34 : 57 ] That's why we're so obsessed with transforming this present world into a paradise. We raise our children with a mindset, you have to have a good education, you've got to get a fulfilling and meaningful career, you need to make a lot of money, you need to get that pleasant and comfortable life, because who knows what will happen after you die.

Find that perfect person to get married to. Get that happy and fulfilling relationship, two perfect children, nice house with hardwood floors, granite countertops, manicured lawn.

Put together a bucket list of all the adventures you want to do before you die, because if you die without doing those things, oh, what a tragedy. I guess that's it.

If you listen to the songs being played on the radio for decades now, you know they encourage you, whatever desires or impulses you have, you need to express them and act them out to listen to your heart, pursue entertainment, parties, romance, sex, all that they refer to as paradise or heaven.

let us eat and drink for tomorrow we die. For those without Jesus Christ, this world, this present moment, this opportunity is the closest they taste to heaven.

[ 36 : 18 ] For those with Jesus Christ, this world and this moment is the closest we ever taste to hell. Don't buy any of those messages. it's all built in a lie because to depart and be with Christ is far better.

It really is. Paul writes in his letter to the church in Colossae, Colossians chapter three, he says, if then you have been raised with Christ, seek the things that are above where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

Set your minds on things that are above, not on things that are on earth. for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Here's the mindset that a Christian has.

You have died. because to be a Christian is to be united with Christ by faith. His death was your death.

[ 37 : 30 ] You have died to this world. You have died to the desires and obsessions and demands of an era that is passing away. And you have been raised to life with Christ.

You belong to a future kingdom, king, to a future king whose reign has already begun and who will reign forever and ever. Your life is hidden with Christ in God.

So if you are a Christian, it lowers the stakes for this life in a sense. You won't be absolutely crushed and ruined when life doesn't work out perfectly and wonderfully and all your dreams don't come true.

You won't obsess over having that amazing life. You won't be drowning in regret over experiences that you missed out on. You won't be consumed with anxiety over the money that you failed to make.

You won't cling to bitterness because someone or some event in your past ruined your life. What life of yours could they possibly ruin? Your life is hidden with Christ in God.

[ 38 : 39 ] When Christ, who is your life, appears, then you also will appear with him in glory. Your life is safe with Christ.

You can't lose it if you're a Christian and no one can take it away from you. So live for Christ. We embrace death not for what it is, but for what lies beyond it.

The Apostle John writes in 1 John chapter 2, do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

For all that is in the world, the desires of the flesh and the desires of the eyes and pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world. And the world is passing away along with its desires, but whoever does the will of God abides forever.

Gospel partners love to make much of Christ through divine and human health, through life or death. And then finally, gospel partners love to make much of Christ through their partnership.

[ 39 : 53 ] In verse 25, Paul comes to a conclusion. He resolves his dilemma of whether it is better to live or die in his situation. He says, convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all.

Paul sounds like he has some sort of sense, some sort of premonition that he is going to be released from prison. And on this occasion, it turned out to be true. Later church fathers tell us that following this period of imprisonment, Paul appeared before Caesar Nero and he was released.

He continued his missionary service for several more years. There were several more years of blood and sweat and tears before he was eventually once again brought before Rome and executed.

But those few years that Paul has left, he looks forward to them anyway. He continues this in verses 25 and 26. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus because of my coming to you again.

It is his partnership with the Philippian believers that makes Paul's life good and useful. Gospel partners love to make much of Christ and they do it through that partnership.

[ 41 : 22 ] partnership. You can't make much of Christ by being a lone ranger Christian, by living a life siloed off from other people where you are not in, you are not living together as part of a family and community of faith.

Where the closest you get to partnership as the gospel is you show up here in this room on Sunday morning and maybe not even that. I used that illustration earlier involving you and Jesus alone forever in a warehouse.

Here's where that illustration falls short. Yeah. Jesus Christ is the central motivating figure of our lives. Yes, Jesus is the singular prize worth living and dying for. But if you want to make much of Jesus Christ, you cannot do it alone.

You need to be part of a partnership. Attempting to keep and sustain putting Jesus Christ first and central.

It is just not something a singular person can do. We need to be reminded and encouraged and remind and encourage one another. And that is the beauty of the church. This church must be a partnership in which the people of our church rally around one central unifying mission to advance the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[ 42 : 55 ] To tell people in Squamish the good news of Jesus Christ. To tell the people of the world wherever we have opportunity. To let the word of Christ dwell in us richly.

To learn this good news and how this transforms our lives. How it sets us free from the power of sin. How it sets us free from the power of shame.

How it releases us from the power that suffering has over us. The gospel of Jesus Christ speaks to all of those things into the uniting factor.

culture. Most people in our culture recognize that need for community. But here's the truth. For folks in our culture, what we want is community on our terms.

I want community but on my terms. Social media is great for that. I can block and filter and eliminate all the toxic people. I can make people behave the way that I want them to behave or cut them off.

[ 43 : 59 ] Many people live their lives filled with all sorts of mechanisms to manage and control other people. How do I get community on my terms?

That's not the church. The church is community on Jesus Christ's terms. There's community the way that he calls us to because there's community centered on Jesus Christ.

Our purpose here is to make much of him. Paul wanted to return to the church in Philippi, he writes, for your progress and joy in the faith.

He wants to help them mature and develop in their understanding of the gospel and their relationship with Jesus Christ. And the joy that they have because of the eternal perspective Paul can share with them, regardless of what circumstances they're facing.

Paul writes to this little church, he is going to return to Philippi so that you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus. Paul wants to give his gospel partners every reason, every excuse to praise and thank God through Jesus Christ, his Lord.

[ 45 : 18 ] Just to have Paul with them again. Such a wonderful, encouraging, Jesus centered man with them again. That would be reason enough, wouldn't it? There is such a sense of warmth and joy when you are around other believers who say to you, magnify the Lord with me.

Let us exalt his name together. It is a community like no other. It is the church that Christ built. Gospel partners love to make much of Jesus Christ through divine and human health, through life or death, through their partnership.

Dear friends, that is why Squamish Baptist Church and all other gospel centered, Christ centered churches in town come together united as partners in the gospel.

We do it. What is the first of our three values? To exalt Jesus as king. That's what holds us together.

We do it because we want the world to see that Jesus Christ alone is worthy. To see that this world was created not so that we would magnify ourselves, but so that we would magnify Jesus Christ as Lord.

[ 46 : 32 ] Our God and Father, help us to remember this community is about our Lord Jesus Christ. It is not about, we have a tendency, Lord, to put our own needs and our own concerns front and center.

Many of those are legitimate needs. Many of those are significant concerns. But we just, we tend to push Jesus aside and make it about ourselves.

Make it about our own comfort. Make it about our own ambitions. our own security. Lord, we are humbled by hearing from the Apostle Paul who was on the brink of bankruptcy, running out of money and food, in a Roman prison, wondering whether he would live or die for a gift and a friend came from the Philippian church.

we are humbled by the mindset of someone who seemed to understand and love and delight in Jesus in a way that seems so much deeper than we do.

We want to know Jesus the way Paul did, to understand him the way he did. Lord, let us see that your son, Jesus Christ, the one who created the world, the one through whom and for whom all things were made.

[ 48 : 06 ] Let us see who he is clearly and let us be able to turn to a world around us and say, this Jesus Christ is Messiah and Lord to say that every knee should bow and every tongue should confess and confess and confess Jesus as Lord.

May the people that we come in contact with see that we are not pitching a message that we ourselves do not believe. May they see that in our hearts, in our voices, in our very eyes, we have a delight for Jesus Christ.

Now, this is what brings us together. This is what holds together a wildly diverse partnership of people from every tribe, tongue, and language.

May we honor Jesus Christ as Lord.