

## Philippians – Week 3 – Life and Death – Bible Study Helps

**Sermon Summary:** This sermon explores the Apostle Paul's perspective on living for Christ and facing death, as expressed in Philippians 1. The sermon emphasizes that believers should view both life and death as opportunities to magnify Christ. It encourages Christians to see adversity as a platform for spreading the gospel and to consider suffering for Christ as a privilege. The sermon challenges Christians to prioritize Christ in all aspects of life and to maintain a joyful, steadfast faith even in difficult circumstances.

### Key Points:

- Adversity can be a platform for spreading the gospel
- Our life should be centered on Christ, not worldly pursuits
- Suffering for Christ is a privilege given to believers
- Death for a Christian is gain and promotion to be with Christ
- Believers should strive together for the faith of the gospel
- Our conduct should be worthy of the gospel of Christ

### Scripture Reference:

- Philippians 1:12-30

### Stories:

- The story of Joseph in Genesis 39, illustrating how adversity became a platform for God's greater purpose
- The account of early Christian persecution in Acts 8 and how it led to the spread of the gospel
- How car troubles can be viewed as opportunities for ministry
- References to martyrs singing hymns while facing death, as recorded in Fox's Book of Martyrs
- The example of the Apostle Paul's imprisonment in Rome and how it advanced the gospel

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A small group and Discipleship guide

"Life and Death - Living for Christ"

Opening Prayer

Key Takeaways:

1. Paul's life was a testimony of how the gospel spreads through adversity.
2. Our main concern should be advancing the gospel and magnifying Jesus Christ.
3. For believers, to live is Christ and to die is gain.
4. Suffering for Christ's sake is a privilege given to believers.

Discussion Questions:

1. The sermon noted, "Adversity really can be a platform if you look at it that way." How have you seen God use challenging situations in your life to spread the gospel or encourage others?
2. Reflect on Philippians 1:21: "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain." What does this verse mean to you personally? How can we cultivate this mindset in our daily lives?
3. The sermon mentioned that our life should "preach Jesus Christ every day." What are some practical ways we can ensure our lives are "becoming of the gospel"?
4. How does viewing suffering for Christ as a privilege (Philippians 1:29) change our perspective on difficulties we face because of our faith?
5. The sermon emphasized the importance of having the right mindset in adversity. How can we help each other maintain a Christ-centered perspective when facing challenges?

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### Practical Applications:

1. This week, identify one challenging situation in your life. Brainstorm ways you could use this "platform" to share Christ's love or encourage others.
2. Write down your answer to "For to me, to live is \_\_\_\_\_." Reflect on how you can make Christ more central in your daily life and priorities.
3. Practice sharing your testimony or a brief explanation of the gospel with a partner in the group. Discuss ways to naturally incorporate this into conversations with non-believers.
4. Choose a verse from Philippians 1 to memorize this week. Share with the group how this verse impacts your daily walk with Christ.
5. As a group, pray for believers around the world facing persecution. Discuss how their examples can inspire us to be bolder in our faith.

### Closing Prayer

Encourage group members to apply what they've learned and to continue reflecting on the sermon throughout the week.

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### Discipleship Questions

How can we practically apply Paul's mindset of 'to live is Christ, and to die is gain' in our daily lives, especially during times of adversity?

In what ways might our personal struggles or 'chains' become platforms for sharing the gospel, as Paul's imprisonment did?

How does viewing suffering for Christ as a privilege, as mentioned in Philippians 1:29, challenge our typical responses to hardship?

What does it mean for our lives to be 'becoming of the gospel', and how can we evaluate if we're living up to this standard?

How can we cultivate a perspective that sees death as 'far better' while still finding purpose and joy in our earthly lives?

In what ways might we be unintentionally hindering the spread of the gospel through our attitudes or actions?

How can we balance Paul's desire to 'depart and be with Christ' with his recognition of the need to remain for the sake of others?

What are some practical ways we can 'strive together for the faith of the gospel' in our local church communities?

How might our approach to adversity and suffering impact our witness to non-believers?

In what areas of our lives do we need to shift our focus from personal concerns to the 'furtherance and joy of faith' for others?

# Philippians – Week 3 – Life and Death – Bible Study Helps

A 5-day Bible reading plan and devotional guide

## **Day 1: Living for Christ**

Reading: Philippians 1:21-26

Devotional: Paul's declaration "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain" challenges us to examine our own priorities. How central is Christ in your daily life? Reflect on areas where you might be living for yourself rather than for Him. Consider how your perspective on life and death might change if you truly embraced Paul's mindset. Today, consciously make choices that put Christ at the center of your actions, words, and thoughts. Pray for God to help you see your life as an opportunity to magnify Christ in all circumstances.

## **Day 2: Finding Purpose in Adversity**

Reading: Romans 8:28-39

Devotional: Paul's ability to see his imprisonment as an opportunity for the gospel reminds us that God can use even our most difficult circumstances for His glory. Reflect on a current challenge you're facing. How might God be using this situation to advance His kingdom or develop your character? Remember that nothing can separate us from God's love, even in our darkest moments. Ask God to give you eyes to see His purpose in your trials and the courage to use them as a platform for His glory.

## **Day 3: The Gift of Suffering**

Reading: 1 Peter 4:12-19

Devotional: The idea of suffering as a gift may seem counterintuitive, but Peter echoes Paul's sentiment that sharing in Christ's sufferings is a privilege. Consider a time when you faced opposition or difficulty because of your faith. How did that experience draw you closer to Christ or strengthen your witness? Today, if you encounter any form of suffering for your faith, try to reframe it as an opportunity to participate in Christ's sufferings and to grow in your dependence on Him. Pray for the strength to rejoice even in trials.

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### **Day 4: Striving Together for the Gospel**

Reading: Ephesians 4:1-16

Devotional: Paul exhorted believers to strive together for the faith of the gospel. This unity in purpose is essential for the church's effectiveness. Reflect on your role within your local church community. Are you actively contributing to the body's growth and the advancement of the gospel? Consider one specific way you can support or encourage a fellow believer today. Pray for unity within your church and for God to show you how you can better use your gifts to build up the body of Christ.

### **Day 5: The Hope of Eternity**

Reading: 2 Corinthians 4:16-5:10

Devotional: Paul's confidence in the face of death stemmed from his assurance of what awaited him in eternity. This hope transformed his perspective on present sufferings. Meditate on the promise of being in Christ's presence and receiving a glorified body. How does this eternal perspective change the way you view your current struggles? Take time to thank God for the hope of eternity and ask Him to help you live today in light of that future reality. Consider how you can share this hope with someone who needs encouragement today.