



Sermon Discussion Questions

“To the Philippian Church: To Live is Christ, To Die is Gain” (Philippians 1:12-26) – June 7th, 2026 – Scott McCullough

Sermon Overview

Main Idea

Like Paul, can we say, “to live is Christ, and to die is gain?” Paul’s imprisonment advanced the gospel in a way he probably never planned or imagined. His suffering was a welcomed component in proclaiming the gospel. His experiences and encouragement show us that our adversities, sufferings, and trials have purpose. And they ultimately point to Christ’s suffering and purpose on the cross.

Sermon Outline

1. Paul’s Joy in Advancing the Gospel through Adversity and the Teaching of Others (v12-18)
 - a. Paul’s Imprisonment for Accomplishing a Ministry Goal: To Advance the Gospel in Rome (v12-14)
 - b. His Great Joy of Christ Proclaimed by Others (v15-18)
2. Paul’s Desire to Continue the Mission of Advancing the Gospel (v19-26)
 - a. Our adversity, suffering, and trials have purpose
 - i. Adversity can strengthen and refine our faith in Christ and cause us to be unwavering or steadfast
 - ii. Adversity takes us to places we would never go on our own
 - iii. Faithfulness in facing adversity encourages and strengthens others
 - b. Motives matter in ministry and in our participation in the church
3. Can we like Paul say, “to live is Christ, and to die is gain”?

Quotation(s)

“One believer on fire for God can embolden thousands with new courage.” – Steven J Lawson

“Paul’s suffering was neither corrective or instructive. It was simply a suffering permitted by God so the Gospel might spread to others.” – Dr. James Montgomery Boice

“The best moment of a Christian’s life is their last one, because it is the one that is nearest to heaven.” – Charles Spurgeon

“Redeem the time in my theology means it is a great blessing to be able to live a life of gratitude to God by doing stuff that tries to benefit your neighbor.” – Ben Sasse

Discussion Questions

Initial Engagement

- What is the main idea of the text, or what did the sermon focus on?



Sermon Discussion Questions

- What insight from the text or sermon stood out to you most, and why?

Deeper Reflection

1. Read verses 12-18. When was the last time you suffered for the gospel? Was it due to your actions, words, beliefs, or something else? How did you respond? What was your attitude during that time? If you can't think of a time you've suffered, why do you think that is?
2. Read the Steven Lawson quote above. Name some people (within your lifetime) that have "emboldened thousands" and how they accomplished this.
3. Read verses 19-26. Point 2a (above) was that our adversity, suffering, and trials have purpose. Can you think of a time when you went through (or witnessed someone going through) adversity, suffering, or a trial, that later displayed purpose? Which of the three reasons shown above did it display (strengthen faith, take us somewhere we'd never go, encouragement to others)?
4. Why do motives matter within the church? Are there roles within the church where the motives matter more than others? How do we balance discernment and "judging others" regarding their motives, when only God knows the heart?
5. What does Paul's attitude reflect about what his core values and beliefs are? How does his view on life/death differ from our culture today? How does his view on suffering differ from our culture (and even many churches) today?

Final Response

- What is one thing you want to remember or one way you hope to change in light of this sermon or discussion?