

# Philippians 1:20-29 | 8/21/16

- **Read Philippians 1:20-27a**
- To live is Christ
  - Paul's perspective of his relationship with Jesus is made very clear in this passage of Scripture.
  - We saw from Paul's opening verse in this letter that he saw himself as a slave to Christ.
    - We talked about how this showed that Paul saw Christ not just as his friend but as his Lord.
    - Paul sought to live his life in submission to Christ.
  - This perspective is made abundantly clear in these verses. **Paul sees that the whole purpose for living this life here on Earth, is solely to glorify Christ.**
    - **"...as always, with all boldness, Christ will be highly honored in my body..."** – Philippians 1:20b
    - **"For me, to live is Christ..."** – Philippians 1:21a
    - **"Just one thing: Live your life in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ..."** – Philippians 1:27a
  - These verses show us how Paul's perspective of Christ has shaped his life.
    - Jesus Christ was absolutely everything to Paul, his fleshly desires and passions were completely put aside.
      - His life wasn't about what can I do to uplift myself or to make my life better.
    - **His sole purpose for LIVING was to be an obedient and submissive servant to Jesus Christ. Paul saw Christ truly as his Lord.**
      - **This is in direct contrast to how the world (enemies of the cross) sees life.**
        - Philippians 3:18-19
          - "For I have often told you, and now say again with tears, that **many live as enemies of the cross of Christ.** Their end is destruction; their god is their stomach; their glory is in their shame. **They are focused on earthly things,**"
    - We read these passages of Scripture and we may ask ourselves well how can we do this, what does it mean to honor Christ with our body, to truly live a life worthy of the Gospel of Christ?
      - Does it just mean to simply obey the commandments?
      - Does it mean to go to church every Sunday and read our Bibles?
      - Does it mean to serve?
      - Does it mean to just simply look the part of being a Christian?
    - **How does one live their life worthy of Christ?**
  - Paul presented himself as a living sacrifice to God.
    - If we look in the Book of Romans, we can see another passage of Scripture that can help bring clarity.
      - Romans 12:1
        - "Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship."
      - Paul tells us that our bodies are to be a living sacrifice that is holy and pleasing to God. And that by doing this it is our spiritual worship to God.
      - **A living sacrifice is to commit our total person to Christ.**
        - All that we have, all that we are must be used for Christ.
        - Not just a small portion of ourselves but the whole thing.

- **We cannot compartmentalize Christ, and also commit out total person.**
      - Christians all too often only give a portion of themselves for Christ or godly living.
      - We give God what we think is enough to make us “good”, but we are unwilling to give Him everything.
      - We give a very small portion of our lives over to Him. We still have a part of ourselves that we do not want to turn over to Him.
    - **To sacrifice ourselves to Christ and commit our total self, IS living our lives in a manner that is worthy of the Gospel of Christ.**
    - **What are common reasons that Christians compartmentalize Christ? Why do we only give Him a small portion of ourselves?**
  - The value of an Old Testament sacrifice
    - If we want to take this further and understand what God sees as a proper and worthy sacrifice, we need to look at the Old Testament.
      - A traditional sacrifice in the Old Testament was **about giving up one’s possessions that were precious and of great value. To turn them completely over to God.**
        - These sacrifices were their first fruits that were without blemish, the best of their crops, the pure and perfect animal.
        - Deuteronomy 15:19a
          - “You must consecrate to the Lord your God every firstborn male produced by your herd and flock...”
        - Deuteronomy 15:21
          - “but if there is a defect in the animal, if it is lame or blind or has any serious defect, you must not sacrifice it to the Lord your God.”
        - Numbers 28:26a
          - “On the day of firstfruits, you are to hold a sacred assembly when you present an offering of new grain to the Lord at your Festival of Weeks...”
        - Proverbs 3:9
          - “Honor the Lord with your possessions and with the first produce of your entire harvest;”
      - Their sacrifices had to actually BE a sacrifice.
        - When God desired sacrifices these had to be the first produce of their harvest, the first of their animals and they had to be of high quality.
        - They could not sacrifice the old lame bull or lamb that was blind and about ready to die, because this wouldn’t cost them anything.
        - **God desired that they take the BEST that they had and give it to Him.**
    - The “living sacrifice” of the Christian.
      - This same requirement that God had for the Israelites and their sacrifices is the same that God desires from the Christian.
      - When **Paul said** that he would honor Christ in his body and make himself a living sacrifice he was going to give God not only his **total self but the best that he had.**
        - **Paul gave God the BEST that he and the FIRSTFRUITS of all he had to offer.**
      - Christians must also see Christ as Lord and give Him the best that they have to offer.
        - All too often we give Christ the leftovers of what he has given us.
          - We give him the last of our time, our resources, our energy, our thoughts and our love.

- “If I can fit it into my busy overflowing schedule, then I will commit myself to God”
  - This is NOT making ourselves a “living sacrifice”, this is NOT living for Christ.
  - **The LAST and LEAST of what we have is NOT a sacrifice.**
  - We must give Christ the FIRST and BEST of all that we have to offer.
    - **If we are truly living for Christ, then we will sacrifice ourselves for Him.**
    - A living sacrifice makes Christ a priority.
  - What are the benefits of being a “living sacrifice” for Christ and giving Him the best of what we have?
  - Why is this hard to do? What are the roadblocks that prevent us from living it out daily?
- Paul’s Christ-centered perspective of life.
  - Paul had a unique perspective on life, while the average person may have been worried about being imprisoned and be purely focused on their immediate circumstances, Paul only had one priority and that was to glorify Christ.
  - **Paul looked at his life and removed his personal desires and needs, he instead replaced it with obedience and a complete commitment of his entire self to Christ.**
  - **This changed his ENTIRE outlook on what the purpose of his life was.**
    - No longer was his life his own, but it was to serve God.
  - To Paul it didn’t matter if he lived or if he died because either way Christ was going to be glorified
  - We see this as Paul discusses the pros and cons of either living or dying.
    - To live is what it means literally for him to not die in prison but to be released and to go back into the world and continue his ministry.
      - **As long as there was breath in his body, Paul would proclaim Christ and submit himself.**
      - He would do whatever it took, regardless of any obstacles or sufferings he may encounter.
    - To die on the other hand, Paul would be a martyr and the work that he had accomplished would continue on without him.
      - Paul also considered it a **greater gain** to die.
        - There was no question in Paul’s mind as to what would happen to him when he died. He knew for a fact that he would spend an eternity with Christ in Heaven.
        - This is why to die for Paul was actually to gain, because he would leave this life here on earth and would go on to glory.
          - 2 Timothy 4:6-8
            - “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time for my departure is close. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. There is reserved for me in the future the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me, but all those who have loved His appearing.

- “He will transform the body of our humble condition into the likeness of His glorious body, by the power that enables Him to subject everything to Himself.”
    - **Paul’s priorities were now to simply do all that God had called him to do. He didn’t worry about the worldly consequence for his obedience to Christ.**
  - If given a choice Paul would choose to continuously sacrifice himself to further the kingdom of Christ.
    - Not that Paul could choose when he would go to see Christ in Heaven, but he would willingly sacrifice himself and suffer the worldly persecutions to help others.
    - Paul saw what was at the end of his race, he didn’t mind to endure more temporary pain if it would help others. His heart was that of Christ to love others.
  - This attitude and perspective of Paul should be imitated by all Christians.
    - **If we see our lives in this way, it will change how we see the world and will put what is truly important into focus.**
    - **A total commitment of ourselves to Christ will give us a Christ centered worldview.**
  - **If seeing Christ exalted really was the most important thing in our lives, how would that change our priorities and perspective?**
  - **What would it do to our outlook for the future?**
- The external effects of living a life worthy of the Gospel | Philippians 1:27-30
  - ***Read Philippians 1:27-30***
  - When Paul made this statement he was encouraging the Christians in Philippi to live a life worthy of the Gospel.
  - **If you live your life worthy of the Gospel others will notice and it will have an impact on the world.**
  - Paul knew that if they did live their lives in this way that the results would be visible.
  - Paul said that even if he does not physically see them again, that he will hear about them.
    - This is because it is impossible to live your life for Christ and for their NOT to be any fruit or for there to be lives that are positively impacted.
    - When Christians truly live this way the world is changed.
    - There is visible fruit from our obedience and service to Christ.
  - The effect of living a life worthy of the Gospel is to give us Paul perspective on life, where Christ is Lord and we will obey regardless of our circumstances.
  - That during our times of trials and struggles that we will keep that Christ focused mindset.