

The Joyful Prisoner

Part 2

Introduction:

- A. Banners (Pictures)
- B. [The Christian banner]
- C. Philippians 1:19-26 (21)
- D. “Like Paul, Christians need to have the right outlook on life.”
- E. FOR ME TO LIVE IS CHRIST AND TO DIE IS GAIN!
- F. What is so great about that?
- G. In our passage we find 3 joys found in the life of a Christian.

I. The Joy of the Christian life!

- a. What is so great about the Christian life? (21a)
 - i. It is a life that is to be fully focused on Christ.
 - ii. Christ should be the most important person and priority in the Christian's life.
 - 1. Think of all the stuff pulling for your attention in life!
 - a. Family
 - b. Health
 - c. Career
 - d. Etc.
 - 2. So many of us forget to make Christ as our passion.
 - a. That affects our lives...
 - b. Late Friedrich Nietzsche - “[Jesus’] disciples will have to look more saved if I am to be believed in their Savior”
 - c. But when Christ is first everything else has its proper place of priority.
- b. So what does life in Christ look like?
 - i. It's a life that bears fruit (22a)
 - 1. Paul knew that if he were to continue to live, he would reap the benefits of his work.
 - 2. To see souls saved, the gospel spread, fellow believers encouraged, etc...these are the fruits of living for Christ.
 - ii. It is a life that is needed (24)
 - 1. Paul his life was well needed at the present time.
 - 2. Christians we need to realize that the reason that aren't in Heaven yet, is that it is more needful for us to here...
 - a. If we ever start to doubt our worth, remember this.
 - b. God has a purpose for you here and now!
 - iii. It is a life that ministers to others (25-26)
 - 1. Notice how Paul's focus is not on him but on them.
 - 2. The Christian life is one that focuses off ourselves and on to others, especially when pointing them to the Lord.

“This brings us to the next joy...”

II. The Joy of the Christian death!

- a. What is so great about the Christian death? (21)

- i. In Christ, the only true gain is in death!
- ii. It was hard for Paul not to choose it! (22b-23a)
 - 1. “Tell” (22)
 - a. “Wot” – KJV
 - b. This was hard for him.
 - 2. “Hard-pressed (23a)
 - a. “Strait betwixt two” – KJV
 - b. {Between a rock and a hard place}
 - c. Paul know what was before him if he lived, but he knew what he would gain if he died.
- b. What do we really gain in death?
 - i. We gain departure. (23b)
 - 1. Military term – To take up the tent and move on.
 - 2. Paul was ready to move on from the hardships of this life.
 - 3. When we die in Christ think of the real freedom we gain.
 - ii. We gain the presence of Christ (23c)
 - 1. This is the anticipated goal of the Christian life.
 - a. This is the blessed hope of our salvation.
 - b. {Just imagine when we see Jesus...}
 - 2. There will be no waiting on this.
 - a. *“So we are always confident, knowing that while we are at home in the body we are absent from the Lord. For we walk by faith, not by sight. We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body and to be present with the Lord.”* – 2 Cor. 5:6-8
 - b. There’s no soul sleep, just Jesus!
 - iii. We gain the superior part of life (23d)
 - 1. It is far better! – How?
 - 2. Thank of all you gain.
 - a. Again, we are present with the Lord.
 - b. But it a glad reunion day!
 - c. We will gain the wonderfulness of Heaven.
 - d. We will be rewarded for our faithfulness.

“This brings us to the final joy...”

- III. The Joy of the Christian perspective!
 - a. What is so great about the Christian Perspective? (19-20)
 - i. It’s a perspective full of assurance.
 - ii. It is a perspective of confidence.
 - 1. It is a perspective that is unshakeable.
 - 2. It is to be evident in the life of the believer.
 - 3. {Deer hunting}
 - 4. But the Christian is 100% confident.
 - b. What is a Christian to be confident in?
 - i. Confident in our deliverance (19)
 - 1. “Deliverance”

- a. “Salvation” – KJV
- b. To rescue
- 2. Situations in life
 - a. No matter what is thrown at you...
 - b. *“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.”* - Rom. 8:28
 - c. Notice what brings to this deliverance.
 - i. Prayer and work of the Holy Spirit. – (19b)
 - ii. What a great and wonderful mystery!
- 3. Final deliverance
 - a. Paul knew that even in death there was deliverance.
 - b. His salvation would come to completion.
- ii. Confident that we will not be ashamed (20a)
 - 1. Confident that what I do, it will not be shameful.
 - 2. But face any trial with boldness.
- iii. Confident in the magnifying Christ (20b)
 - 1. “Magnify” – To make great.
 - a. [Telescope & Microscope]
 - b. Whither in life or death, Paul wanted to make Christ bigger in people’s eyes.
 - 2. Do we have the confidence to face even death, in order to magnify Christ?
 - a. {Al – Praying in Tower 1 on 9/11 }
 - b. Verse 21 is the ultimate test.
 - i. For me, to live is _____ and to die is _____.
 - ii. For me, to live is money and to die is to leave it all behind.
 - iii. For me, to live is fame and to die is to be forgotten.
 - iv. For me, to live is power and to die is to lose it.
 - v. **BUT FOR THE CHRISTIAN, TO LIVE IS CHRIST AND TO DIE IS GAIN!**
 - vi. {The Taliban have nothing on us!!}
 - vii. What JOY!!!

Conclusion:

- A. Have you found the real joy in being a Christian?
- B. Have you found the real joy in Christ?