

Philippians 1:18b-26 — To Live Is Christ. To Die Is Gain

May 17, 2020

People will do almost *anything* to avoid death. Today, people are wearing masks and staying at home to avoid the coronavirus because they are afraid of death. Fear of death has led people to do things far crazier things than wear a mask.

In 1993, Bill Jeracki was fishing St. Mary's Glacier. He stepped on a rock that spun a bolder which landed on his leg. He was crushed and pinned to the ground. Far from civilization, with snow in the forecast and not having a jacket or phone, in a desperate attempt to survive, he used his shirt as a tourniquet. Then, using his fishing knife, he cut off his own leg at the knee joint. He then crabbed walked half-a-mile to his truck and drove himself to the hospital.¹



A similar situation happened to Aron Ralston in 2003. While hiking in Utah, a boulder fell on his arm. After his arm was crushed by the boulder for six days, using a pocket multi-tool, he cut off his arm. With one arm, he rappelled down a 60-foot cliff then hiked 8 miles before meeting a family who called in a rescue helicopter. His famous story is told in the movie *127 Hours*.²



¹ <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/ct-xpm-1993-10-08-9310080228-story.html>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aron_Ralston

These stories remind us that people will do almost anything to live. Nobody wants to die. Everything in us tells us that death is our enemy. God created us for living. He didn't create us to die. The problem is that it doesn't matter what radical steps we take, unless Christ returns, death will eventually get all of us. It doesn't matter if we live in quarantine. It doesn't matter if we take our vitamins. It doesn't matter if we eat organic and exercise at the YMCA on a daily basis. Death, our great enemy, will eventually get all of us. That leaves us filled with fear.

Wouldn't it be great if we could peer behind death's door and know for sure what lies on the other side? Wouldn't it be great if we knew with absolute certainty that we have nothing to fear when we die? Wouldn't it be amazing if we knew death was actually better than life? That would not just take away our fear of death but it would change the way we live today.

That is what we are doing this morning. We are going to peer behind death's door to see what lies on the other side for a Christian. When we find the answer, it will completely change the way we live. This is going to be a great study!

As a church, we are studying the book of Philippians. One of the themes of the book is that we can have joy in the midst of difficulty. Paul wrote this letter while under house arrest in Rome. He had many reasons to be depressed. He was chained to a Roman soldier. He was lonely. He missed his friends. He was jailed for almost five years for a crime he didn't commit. Paul also had the anxiety of not knowing what the outcome of his trial would be. He could have been freed

or he could be executed. He didn't know which way things would go. Knowing you are on death row and any day could be your execution would give anyone mental stress. Yet, in spite of all these stress points in his life, Paul was filled with joy. The one thing that mattered in life was doing quite well — the gospel was making progress in spite of the difficulties of prison. So even though Paul was imprisoned, he was filled with joy.

Last week, we saw how the gospel was making progress while Paul was imprisoned. Paul was chained to soldiers of the elite Praetorian guard. They typically worked four six-hour shifts a day. These elite soldiers were chained to Paul for two years. Chaining these elite soldiers to Paul was intended to make it impossible for him to get away. In reality, it made it impossible for them to get away from Paul. In six-hour shifts, Paul told these soldiers about Jesus. One by one, over time, they were coming to Christ. They were born again. The gospel was spreading in this elite military unit. Last week, we learned the power of the Praetorian soldiers, also known as the imperial guard. They served in key leadership positions of the Roman empire. They were the personal bodyguards of Caesar himself. They were the ones who elected the rulers of Rome. The chaining of these soldiers to Paul, a man with such a strong evangelistic gift, led to the gospel spreading in positions of power within the Roman Empire. Paul was thrilled with the way the gospel was making progress in the most unexpected ways while he was in prison.

In addition, the conversion of the Roman guards in prison inspired the average Roman Christian to share the gospel with great courage outside of

prison. If Paul could lead hardened Roman soldiers to Christ inside the prison walls, they could certainly lead others to Christ outside the prison walls. This filled Paul with more joy because the gospel was advancing in people's lives.

This morning, as we continue in Philippians, Paul moved from joy because the gospel was advancing in his present circumstances, to confidence he would have joy in the future even if he was executed, because the gospel would continue to make progress if he lived or if he died. No matter what the future held, Paul was confident he could face it with joy because no matter what happened to him, the gospel would continue to make progress. This is what changed the way Paul looked at death as he peeked behind death's door. Let's read the text.

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. 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. Philippians 1:18b–26 (ESV)

Paul's joy in life was when Jesus was getting glory and the gospel was spreading. As Paul looked at the possibility of his death or release from prison, he weighed the options in front of him. He told the Philippians, "Either way the outcome of my trial goes, live or die, the gospel will make progress so I will have joy." If Paul lived and was freed from prison, that would mean the opportunity for

more fruitful labor for Jesus. If Paul died, that would mean going to heaven to be with Jesus. Either way, it went, Paul was content.

This applies to us. As Christians we do not need to fear death. Death means we get to be with Jesus. Life means we get to continue bearing spiritual fruit for Jesus. This is the good news of being a Christian. Death or life, we win.

When we lose a brother or sister in Christ death, as Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:13, we grieve, but we do not grieve without hope.

But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 1 Thessalonians 4:13 (ESV)

As Christians, we grieve for those who are left behind. We grieve for the spouse that is alone, the parent that loses the child, and the brother that loses the sister. We do not grieve for Christians who die. They have gone home to be with Jesus, which is far better than life.

Let's look at the text.

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... Philippians 1:18 (ESV)

I begin with verse 18 because it shows us the change in tense Paul made. He was rejoicing because the gospel was making progress with the guard. Then he talked about how he would rejoice no matter what happened to him in the future. He moved from, "I rejoice now" to "I will rejoice then, even if it means I die."

The rest of the verses divide into two sections with Paul giving us his theme statement in the middle. In the first section, Paul talked about the rescue Jesus gives us from trials and death.

Jesus rescues us from trials and death.

Paul was confident his sufferings were temporary.

...for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance... Philippians 1:19 (ESV)

Paul said “for I know.” The word for “know” in Greek is a strong word. It means to know something with absolute certainty. Paul had absolute certainty about something. What was it? Let’s jump to the end of this verse to see what it is. He knew for sure that what he was going through would come to an end. He would eventually be delivered from his sufferings in jail.

What did he mean by deliverance? The word deliverance makes it sound like he was confident that he would be set free. Some of your translations may say “this will turn out for my salvation.” That translation makes it sound like Paul would be executed and go home to heaven. Which option was it?

What kind of deliverance was Paul certain would come his way? Would he be delivered from prison or would he be delivered from prison by execution going home to heaven? Exegetically, it could go either way in the Greek. Bible scholars argue the text both ways. Many scholars feel the way Paul worded this was intentionally ambiguous. Paul was saying that either way his case went, whether he lived or he died, he was confident he would be saved from his sufferings.

The point is that Paul realized his suffering was only temporary. That is a good way for us to look at our troubles. All of our troubles in the Christian life are only temporary. Either way things go in our lives, they will get better. Either life will get better and we will praise Jesus, or life will get worse and we will die and

go home to be with Jesus, which is also a good option. Either way, all Christian suffering is only temporary. It will always get better.

As I say this, I know many of us have gone through difficult trials. Some of us are battling cancer or we have battled cancer. The pain of chemotherapy is real. The good news is that it is temporary. Either we will get better from the cancer and enjoy a few more years of life to God's glory or we won't get better from the cancer. It will take our lives but we will go home to be with Jesus, which is a good thing. Either way, the pain is always temporary.

I think of others who are in financial trials and monetary bondage in this life. There seems to be no way to pay the debts. That suffering is temporary too. Either God will unexpectedly release us from those financial burdens in this life or we will die and go home to be with Jesus but have no financial burdens in the next life. Either way, the suffering is temporary.

All Christians will one day be delivered from their suffering. For Christians, this life is the closest we will get to hell. For those without Christ, this life is the closest they will get to heaven. All our suffering is always temporary. Things will always get better with Jesus as our savior.

In this verse, there is some interesting wordplay Paul did in the Greek. When Paul said, "this will turn out for my deliverance," Paul was actually quoting Job 13:16 in the Greek version of the Hebrew Old Testament. Other Christians who knew their Greek Old Testament would recognize those words as a quote from Job.

Why did Paul do that? Paul said he could identify with Job and his suffering. Job was a righteous man who suffered a great deal because of his righteousness before God. As Job was going through his suffering, in Job 13:16, he said, "I know this will turn out for my deliverance." Job did not know if the deliverance would be by a reversal of his circumstances in this life or if he would be brought home to see God in the next life, but he knew his suffering was temporary. It would be reversed.

Paul, in a similar way, was also a righteous man. He was also facing extreme suffering because of his relationship with God. At this point, Paul was in prison four years for crimes he never committed. 2 Corinthians 11 tells us he was also beaten five times with 39 lashes. Three times he was beaten with rods. He was stoned and left for dead. He was shipwrecked. All this happened to Paul because of his faithfulness to Christ.

Paul said, "I can identify with Job and his suffering for righteousness." Just as Job was confident his sufferings were only temporary, Paul was also confident his sufferings were temporary. God would either reverse his circumstances or bring him home to heaven. Either way was a win.

As Christians, we can say the same thing. All our sufferings are only temporary. God will either reverse our circumstances of suffering or bring us home to heaven. Either way, we win.

In the middle of this verse, Paul gives us two ways he was confident that God would bring about his deliverance.

Paul knew God would use the prayers of the Philippians to help him.

Paul said to the Philippians, “I know God will use your prayers to deliver me from my trial.” Don’t think our prayers for other Christians in their times of need are useless. Don’t presume people will always have all the strength they need to face every challenge in their lives without the help of our prayers. Paul told the Philippians their prayers for him would be used by God to help deliver him. God used the prayers of the Philippians to give Paul the strength he needed to serve Christ in prison. The prayers of the Philippians moved the hand of God.

Let’s just admit it — for all of us, it is easy to underestimate the importance of prayer. Paul was adamant that the prayers of the Philippians would make a difference in his life.

Our prayers for our brothers and sisters in Christ are also used by God to make a difference in their lives. Christians praying for other Christians is the normal way God brings his help to believers. When we fail to pray for the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ, in some way we deprive those we love from the power available to us from God’s hand. Look how the Scripture talks about this.

...The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working. James 5:16 (ESV)

You also must help us by prayer, so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted us through the prayers of many. 2 Corinthians 1:11 (ESV)

Paul genuinely believed God would respond to the prayers of his people to provide strength and rescue for his people.

This applies to us. One of the benefits of being a church family is we can pray for one another. This is why we have a mid-week prayer meeting on Zoom. Our prayers for one another and for our missionaries are important. They move the hand of God to make a difference in people's lives. This is why we have Life Groups. One of the most important parts of Life Groups is praying for the needs of one another. Prayer is the way God has chosen to work much of his saving intervention in people's lives. As it says in James, "You do not have because you do not ask."

Prayer is not just beneficial for others. It is beneficial for us. One of the best ways to develop spiritual maturity in our own lives is to set our hearts to praying for people's needs. That is the fast-track to spiritual maturity.

Paul didn't just request the Philippians pray for him. He requested other churches pray for him. He was convinced prayer makes a crucial difference. We see him asking for prayer in Romans 15:30-31, Ephesians 6:18-19, Colossians 4:3-4, 1 Thessalonians 5:25, and 2 Thessalonians 3:1, and those are only a few references.

Paul knew the Holy Spirit would provide supernatural strength for him.

Paul said there was another way he would experience deliverance. That was through the help of the Holy Spirit. If anybody should have had confidence in his own ability and not need God's ability, it would have been Paul. He wrote most of the letters in our Bible. He was super smart. He was chosen by God. He saw Christ three times. He had incredible ability. If anybody had a mind that could pierce through the complexities of life's problems, it would have been Paul.

As we look at Paul in the Bible, he wasn't boasting about his strength. He was cataloging his weaknesses. He was so weak he told us sometimes he despaired of life itself. Paul also told us that when he was weak, the good news was that was when the Spirit of God was strongest in his life. In fact, the weaker Paul became, the stronger the Holy Spirit became in his life.

But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 (ESV)

As Paul faced the hardship of prison, and a possibility of an agonizing death, he was confident the Holy Spirit and the prayers of the Philippians would give him the strength he needed to face those difficult days. He was confident the Holy Spirit would give him the strength to suffer well if it was God's will for him to be delivered from prison by suffering and death.

This is a great application for us. The weaker we become in life, the more God's power will be displayed in our lives. None of us like times of weakness. None of us like times when we are brought to the end of ourselves. I don't like them. You don't like them. There is a good side in those times of weakness. When we are weak, that is when Christ is strong. When we don't have the ability to carry on, the Holy Spirit who dwells in us gives us supernatural strength to carry on.

Jesus is an illustration of this. I always wondered how Jesus was able to endure the scourging and the cross while only relying on his humanity. How did he not burst out in anger? The book of Isaiah says Jesus was quiet while suffering, like a sheep led to the slaughter. How did Jesus have that strength to

suffer well in his humanity? He relied fully on the same Holy Spirit. When Jesus was weak, the Holy Spirit was strong. Jesus' reliance on the Holy Spirit was given to us as a model to follow.

The same was true for Paul. Paul realized that if the deliverance from prison God had in store for him was death, the same Holy Spirit that empowered Jesus to suffer well in death would also empower Paul to suffer well in death.

Paul was confident Jesus would not let him down.

...as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed...
Philippians 1:20 (ESV)

When Paul talked about his eager expectation and hope, this is an important phrase. The Greek phrase for “eager expectation” is only found in one other place in the New Testament. It is Romans 8:19, where Paul talked about the creation described eagerly awaiting the revealing of the sons of God. The idea is intensely looking forward to something happening, like a child waiting for Christmas morning. The word “hope” in Greek is also important. The Greek word for “hope” carries a different connotation than English. Hope for us means something *may* be true. Such as, “I hope the weather is sunny.” That is not the way the word “hope” is used in the Bible. Hope in the Bible doesn't refer to something that may be true. It refers to something we confidently know is true.

Paul said that whatever the future held for him, whether it was to live or die, he eagerly looked forward to his future because he was confident Jesus would not let him down. The prayers of the Philippians would help him. The Holy Spirit would strengthen him. Paul was confident Jesus would rescue him. Paul confidently put all his eggs in the Jesus basket because Paul was absolutely

certain that when it came to rescue, Jesus would not let him down. All rescue in this life comes from Jesus. Rescuing God's people is Jesus' speciality.

This is so applicable for us. All of us will face trials in life. Some of us are struggling in job trials. Others of us are struggling with trials of sickness. Others of us are struggling with depression and loneliness. The one who delivers us from every trial is Jesus. Paul said, "Go to Jesus. He will not let you down. You will not be ashamed." Yes, have people pray for you. Yes, look to the Holy Spirit to provide strength in your weakness, but go to Jesus for rescue in your time of need. Call out to him. Put all your hope in him. He will never let you down. Jesus rescues us from trials in this life and the trial of death.

This reminds me of a passage in Jude.

Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt... Jude 5 (ESV)

Who was it that led the Israelites out of Egypt? Jesus! Who was it that brought the people of Israel across the Red Sea on dry ground and destroyed the Egyptians? Jesus! Who was it that provided manna in the wilderness when they were starving? Jesus! Who was it that provided water from a rock twice when they were thirsty? Jesus! Who is the one who rescued the Israelites from every trial they faced? Jesus! Who is the one who rescues us from the trial of death! Jesus! Go to him for rescue in your trial. You will not be ashamed.

...but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. Philippians 1:20 (ESV)

Since Jesus is the one who rescues us in the trials of life and in the trial of death, Paul said that means the focus of our lives must be honoring Jesus in life and honoring Jesus as we face death. Isn't that the summary of life? Jesus, you

are the one who deserves all our worship because you are the one who delivers us from every trial.

This brings us to the center in the cluster of verses we are studying. Here Paul gives us a short pithy saying that sums up his life. It should also sum up the focus of our lives.

Living means the joy of bearing fruit for Christ.

For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Philippians 1:21 (ESV)

This is the way Paul thought about the future. If he lived, he would have a chance to bring more honor to Christ. If he died, he gained being with Christ. No matter what the future held, it was a win-win situation. The gospel would make progress either way. Either more people would hear about Jesus or Paul would get to goal of his life and be with Jesus.

This is to be the summary statement of our Christian lives. As we live, we get to honor Christ. When we die, we get to be with Christ. No matter what we face, live or die, it is a win-win situation.

What Paul did next is he let us in on his thoughts as he weighed out his options for the future. Would he prefer to live or prefer to die?

Living means the joy of bearing fruit for Christ.

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... Philippians 1:22–23 (ESV)

Paul said the upside of living is the chance to bear more fruit for Christ. He would have the chance to encourage more people in Christ. He would have the chance to lead more people to Christ. For Paul living was all about working for Jesus no matter where he found himself.

That is also the way we must look at life. If God has not brought us home to heaven, the reason he hasn't brought us to heaven is not so we can make more of ourselves in this world but so we can make more of Jesus in this world. If God has you in construction, you are to make much of Jesus there. If God has you in finance and banking, you are to make much of Jesus there. If God has you as a teacher in the school, it is not to hide your light but so you can tactfully, yet brightly, shine your light.

The other option of dying to be with Christ was also a good option.

As Christians, this must be our mindset. We do not fear death. For us, it is the better end, not the bitter end. For us, death is a promotion, not a demotion. For everyone else, death is a terrible thing. For us, death is the better thing.

I like the way Paul said he was hard-pressed between the two. This was a tough choice. He was not sure which option he would like better, to live or to die. Both of them were good choices in his mind.

Death is better because it means being with Christ.

[My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. Philippians 1:23b \(ESV\)](#)

Now Paul let us in on his heart's desire. If it were up to him, he would have rather died and been with Christ. For the Christian, dying is better than living. Death, even though we lose our bodies, is still a great improvement compared to this life.

One time I saw a casket that was adorned in golf decorations. I imagined the pastor talking about the deceased playing golf courses in heaven that would be better than anything he played on earth. I am sorry. What makes heaven into

heaven is not the golf courses. It is being with Jesus. Sometimes we fall into the same trap. Occasionally we think the best part of heaven will be a reunion with our deceased loved ones. While that reunion will be good, much better will be being with Jesus. Being with Jesus is what makes heaven into heaven.

Paul said death for a Christian is departing to be with Christ. Departing is a nautical term. It was used for a boat letting loose its mooring and setting out to sea. Death, for a Christian, is like a boat leaving one shore as the sun goes down. You wake up the next morning to see a new shore on the other side of the sea. That is heaven.

Being with Jesus in heaven is pure joy.

You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. Psalm 16:11 (ESV)

Paul told us death is better than life in other portions of Scripture as well.

Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. 2 Corinthians 5:8 (ESV)

I love the way Paul described a Christian's death in 1 Corinthians 15. It is not a defeat. It is victory.

The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:56–57 (ESV)

Heaven is also described as a place of no more suffering and pain.

For the Lamb in the midst of the throne will be their shepherd, and he will guide them to springs of living water, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes." Revelation 7:17 (ESV)

Paul understood suffering and pain. He was whipped five times, beaten with a rod three times, stoned one time. I am sure heaven sounded good because of the absence of physical hardships.

In our Bible, Paul described death as far better than life. Unfortunately, that is masking the emphasis found in the Greek, where Paul used a rare triple modifier. Paul said death for the Christian is *much, more, better* than life. For Christians, death is far better than life in every way. Being with Jesus is better than any pleasure this world can offer.

Other portions of Scripture tell us heaven will continue to get better over time. Our presence in heaven is because of Jesus. All of heaven's improvements come from the hand of Jesus. We get to be with Jesus when we die. One day Jesus will return to earth. When he does, Jesus will resurrect our deceased bodies from the grave. Jesus will give us our bodies back. When he does, our resurrected bodies will be just like Jesus' resurrection body. For all of eternity, we are not just saved by Jesus but the being in the universe we most resemble is the resurrected Jesus. What could be better than looking just like resurrected Jesus?

Jesus will also continually improve heaven. Just as Jesus will resurrect our bodies, one day he will resurrect creation. Just as Jesus made all of creation but it was polluted by sin, Jesus will remake the entire creation and strip it free of sin. Next time he will make it even better than we see it now. He will also combine heaven and earth together as one. That is what we look forward to.

As Christians, we are the only people on the planet that can look death in the face without fear. We are the only beings in the universe that can say death for us is truly better than life.

If you don't know Jesus today, there is no way you will be with Jesus on your final day. Please repent of your sin. Trust in Jesus' death on the cross to forgive your sin. For those who don't know Jesus, the day of their deaths are the worst moment of their lives, not the best moment of their lives.

This sets up a big question. If Jesus would be honored by Paul's death or by Paul's life, which option did Paul prefer? To live or to die? All things being equal, death was the better choice. When Paul factored in the needs of the Philippians, he changed his mind.

Life is about helping others grow in Christ and find their joy of Christ.

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. Philippians 1:24–26 (ESV)

Since Paul was convinced the Philippians needed to grow in Jesus and God wanted him to teach them more about Jesus, Paul was convinced he would not be executed but would be released to help them with the progress and joy of their faith.

Just as advancing the gospel was more important to Paul than being in prison, helping the Philippians grow in Christ was a higher priority than dying and his promotion to be with Christ. It was Paul's desire to help the Philippians grow in Christ that tipped the scale and gave Paul the desire to remain.

What we see here is an important sub-theme in this letter. Paul developed it in the following chapter. Spiritual maturity is putting the needs of others in front of our desires. We will see this modeled again and again. Jesus modeled it in Philippians 2 — that's where Paul told the Philippians to, in humility, consider

others better than themselves. Paul reminded us that Jesus modeled this for us by leaving heaven to save us. Timothy and Epaphroditus were also used as examples of humble people who considered the needs of others before their own. We will learn more about this in the upcoming weeks.

Another theme Paul introduced to us is that progress in the faith equates with joy from our faith. The more we grow in Christ, the more joy we will have from Christ. There is no joy in ignorance of Jesus. Joy comes from growing in our knowledge of Jesus. Why do we gather for worship? Why do we study the Word? Why do we stay in the text? In a word, joy. The more we mature in Jesus, the more our character becomes like Jesus, the more joy we will have from Jesus. Church is about people gathering for more joy. That is why it kills me when people say, "Do we have to go to church?" We don't have to go to church. We get to go to church. Church is about Jesus, which means church is about joy.

Conclusion

So as we live, let us live to help others meet Christ and to help others grow in Christ which leads to them finding more joy from Christ. We don't live for ourselves. In humility we consider the needs of others more important than our own.

When we die, we do not die with fear. We die with confidence that we will be with Jesus which is much more better than life.

When we face trials in life, we look to Jesus for our rescue, whether it is rescue in this life or rescue from death at the end of this life. Jesus is the one who delivers us.

When we began, I promised we would peek behind death's door and see what lies on the other side. I promised that when we saw what was behind death's door, it would not just change the way we faced death, but it would change the way we live.

For a Christian, behind death's door is Jesus. He makes death far better than life. He is so good to us that it is only right that all of our life is about pleasing him. That is why we join Paul in saying about our life, "To live is Christ, to die is gain."



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