

“FOR TO ME, TO LIVE IS CHRIST, AND TO DIE IS GAIN”

Philippians 1:19-26

I. “FOR TO ME, TO LIVE IS CHRIST”

A. For some, to live is...

1. Career

- a. Many people define who they are by what they do for a living. If you were asked to describe yourself, how would you do so?
 - i. “I’m a teacher.”
 - ii. “I’m a carpenter.”
 - iii. “I’m a car salesman.”
 - iv. What about, “I’m a Christian”?
- b. **Ecclesiastes 1:3-4; 2:22**
Whatever profit will be gained from work is lost in death.
- c. **Proverbs 23:4-5**
If wealth is the motivation for throwing oneself into his work, it is a useless pursuit.
- d. **Matthew 16:26**
That which is spiritual far exceeds the value of the whole world.

2. Education

- a. Were you asked to name your greatest accomplishment, what would you say?
 - i. “I got a 2400 on my SATs.”
 - ii. “I was valedictorian.”
 - iii. “I attended Yale or Harvard or Dartmouth.”
 - iv. “I graduated summa cum laude.”

v. What about, “I was baptized into Christ; I have put on Christ; now I live for Christ”?

b. **Ecclesiastes 1:18**

Human wisdom isn’t the end-all-be-all of existence.

c. **Ecclesiastes 12:12**

No man can ever gain all the knowledge there is to be had on earth and any attempt to do so will simply wear him out.

3. **Pleasure**

a. It’s certainly nice to have a hobby, but do you fancy yourself a fisherman, or a *fisher of men* (**Matthew 4:19**)?

b. **Ecclesiastes 2:1-3**

Solomon concluded that mirth doesn’t really accomplish anything.

c. **Hebrews 11:24-25**

Pleasure can be sinful and is always temporary.

4. **Health**

a. **1st Timothy 4:8**

There is some profit in bodily exercise, but it hardly compares to the practice of godliness.

b. **Matthew 6:25**

Some folks spend a lot more time reading fitness and health magazines, exercising, and planning their diets than they do studying the scriptures and praying.

c. **Psalms 92:12-15**

What good is health in one’s advanced age if he is no longer bearing fruit in the vineyard of the Lord? Perhaps those among the elderly no longer bearing fruit are not actually righteous, not planted in the house of God.

d. Ecclesiastes 6:3-6

Why do we desire health; to live a long life? Yet, what is a man profited if he lives a thousand years twice, but not according to God's goodness?

e. Mark 2:1-5

Health is desirable, but infirmity did not keep this man from coming to hear the Word preached!

B. "For to me, to live is Christ"

1. Philippians 1:22; Romans 14:7-8

Living for Christ is living for a cause greater than oneself.

2. Matthew 5:16; Galatians 1:24

Living for Christ is living in such a way as to glorify another.

3. Philippians 3:7-8; 2nd Peter 1:2-3

Living for Christ is living to know everything about Him.

4. Romans 8:9-11

Living for Christ is to model Him.

5. Philippians 1:24-26; Matthew 25:34-40

Living for Christ is to promote progress of the brethren. What good works we may accomplish are attributed as works done unto Christ, Himself.

II. "TO DIE IS GAIN"

A. For some, to die is...

1. Annihilation

a. Many think that there is nothing beyond this life. The prospect of death is to be without hope; without fear; nothing.

b. Matthew 10:28

“Destroy” does not refer to annihilation as some teach, but to utter ruin.

c. **Matthew 13:40-42, 49-50**

Wailing and gnashing of teeth indicates ongoing torment.

d. **Mark 9:43-44**

Unquenchable fire and undying worms further indicate ongoing torment.

e. **Luke 16:19-31**

This account of life beyond the grave paints a terrifying image of ongoing torment in flame.

f. **Matthew 25:41, 46**

If the reward is everlasting, so is the punishment.

2. **Terror**

a. There are others who believe in the reality of hell, and are terrified of it, but make no effort to escape God’s wrath.

b. **Hebrews 10:26-31**

This is the prospect of those who turn away from the truth.

c. **1st Corinthians 15:55-56**

There is a sting in death caused by sin. By remedying the problem of sin, one can prepare for death.

B. **“For to me... to die is gain”**

1. **Philippians 1:23**

As much good as can be enjoyed in this life, Christians know that being with Christ is better.

2. **Revelation 14:13; Psalm 116:15**

God blesses those who die in Him, giving them rest.

3. **Revelation 12:11; Matthew 16:25; Acts 21:10-13**

Christians are willing to surrender their lives for the cause of the gospel because they trust in the reward to follow.

4. Ecclesiastes 7:1

Death is preferred over birth when a reward is anticipated.

CONCLUSION

A. 2nd Corinthians 5:6-15

When we live, we live for Christ (15), but when we die, we can be with the one we have previously lived for (8). So, prepare for judgment (10)!

B. Colossians 3:1-4

Life is for Christ, so use it accordingly.