

## Bible Studies, Series 4, Week 3

### Personal Bible Study

#### Day: 1

*Read Philippians 1: 19-20*

1. On what two matters does Paul rest on while in custody in jail? (Verse 19)
2. Paul had a lot of confidence in the Holy Spirit! Read the promises in Matthew 10: 19-20 and Luke 12: 12 and claim them for yourself.
3. Thanks to the prayers of the congregation and the strength of the Holy Spirit, Paul believes that he will not do anything during his trial or his time in jail that he will have to be ashamed of. What is his only ambition?
4. What is your real ambition in life?

#### Day: 2

*Read Philippians 1: 21-22*

1. Death can only be profit if we own our goods as if we own nothing. Only when God has "grabbed" us can we learn to let go of everything, even our loved ones and our own life.
2. If Paul stays alive he can continue with his work of spreading the gospel. Read God's promises in Psalm 126: 6 and Isaiah 55: 11
3. What message does Matthew 13: 1-9 have for you?
4. What do you learn in 1 Corinthians 3: 6-7 about the status of a spiritual worker?
5. If Paul dies, 1 Corinthians 3: 6-7 becomes true for him instantly. What is Paul's real problem concerning this?

#### Day: 3

*Read Philippians 1: 23-24*

**"To depart"** Literally loosening a ship from its anchor or breaking up camp - really leaving

**"Be with Christ"** no mention of a resting soul or going through fire or any such thing but, a life continued directly in the presence and with God. This is the best for Paul

1. Are you looking forward to dying or do you want to live longer? Motivate your answer.
2. Paul was looking forward to dying, yet at the time of writing this letter he was responsible for the care of the congregations. Read Romans 8: 18, 2 Corinthians 5:8, Philippians 3: 14 and 2 Timothy 4: 7-8 and look for differences in Paul's life between going and staying.

## Day: 4

### *Read Philippians 25-26*

Paul expects to be released. In verse 25 and 26 Paul says he will not only remain for the Philippians but for the other congregations as well. It does not seem all that clear in the translations I'm consulting and that is why I mention it here.

1. Paul is placing a lot of emphasis on the spiritual growth of the members of the congregation. "Your growth and joy in this life of trusting God continues." How important is this to you?
2. Without growth there is in fact not a standstill but a backsliding. In what do you have to grow according to Philippians 1:9 and 2: 12?
3. A Christian with a mature spiritual life is a joyful person. If even death is a profit to you and if Romans 8: 38-39 has become true to you - you have all the reason you need to be filled with joy! Is that the case with you?

## Day: 5

### *Read Philippians 1: 27-28*

Paul is encouraging the congregation to stand strong and as one. He encourages them to be unafraid of any suffering for the gospel and to suffer it willingly.

**"Live in such a way"** Here a term is used that points to the conduct of a citizen of a country.

**"A credit to the Message of Christ"** Because we are "reborn" we are members of God's kingdom. While we are still alive in this world the two kingdoms that we are in (the temporary and the eternal) can stand against each other. This can bring along stress. Now the choice is, according to the gospel or according to the world.

**"Stand united, singular in vision"** We are very prone to stand on our own and to work in contention with others and each other, this is not the way of the gospel and it is not to the benefit of the gospel (in other words the saving of humanity and the kingdom of Christ)

1. Test your life to the first part of verse 27
2. What can you do in a practical way to work for the gospel in unity with others?

## Day: 6

### *Read Philippians 1: 28-30*

There is no "perfect" church on earth. Even inside the congregation of Philippi there are opposition.

**"The opposition"** in all probability people coming from the pagans as well as Jews. They are now members of the congregation so they are considered believers. Some of these Christians have not been able to shed all the customs and bad habits coming from the heathens yet. From the Jews again there were still those that did not accept Christ as the only way to salvation. These Jews still insisted in keeping part of the old laws. These are the people Paul are warning the congregation against.

**"Not flinching or dodging"** the image used here is of horses running wildly after they have been frightened by something.

1. The opposition has to learn two things from the congregation standing fast. What are they?
2. Does your faith in Christ costs you anything? A cheap faith normally costs nothing and it also means nothing!
3. Verse 29 says it is a privilege to serve God! Have a look at what you have to do in the following day or so: how can you make use of this privilege even more?

### **Group Bible Study:**

*Read Philippians 1: 19-30*

In Philippians 19: 26 Paul writes about his coming trial. There are essentially two possibilities: he can be released (= life) or the death penalty. For him the death penalty would be the best (verse 23) but for the congregation it would be best if he was released (verse 24) Paul greatest wish is to honor Christ with his life, in life and in death (verse 20) To live is Christ and to die is profit. In this group study we are going to look at these two statements.

1. A life that has Christ as its center has certain characteristics. State these characteristics according to today's reading and the following verses; Philippians 1: 19-30, 2: 5-8, 3: 8-12, 4: 4 and 4: 13 and test your life in it.
2. Paul says that he during his imprisonment, trial - as in his whole life- does not want to do anything he will have to be ashamed of (verse 20.) How does one achieve such a life?
3. Paul says that death (the death penalty or death by torture as ruled by the judge) is a profit to him. Why do people who honor and serve Christ have to suffer like this? Should true believers not experience prosperity and happiness? (Get the answers from today's reading)
4. Why is death profit to Paul?
5. Why are so many people afraid of death?
6. "We have to be ready to die anytime; we do not have to be in too much of a hurry though." Motivate from verse 20-24 whether you agree or not.

7. In verse 27-30 Paul writes about the opposition the Christian gets in his or her life as a Christian living in triumph.
8. How is a believer supposed to see suffering?
9. How does a life "according to the gospel of Christ" appear in times of suffering and persecution?
10. What are "the same kind of struggle" that Paul writes about in verse 30 that we are all involved in