

LESSON 4

Philippians 1:18-26



I Can Do This All Day

OPEN IT

1. What is one thing that you look forward to in life?

DAILY DEVOTIONS

Day 1

TODAY'S THEME: EXPLORE IT

Read Philippians 1:18-26

2. Why does Paul say he can rejoice in his imprisonment?
3. Why can Paul not decide what outcome he would want more?
4. What would the outcome be if Paul dies in his trial? Why does this cause him to rejoice?
5. What would the outcome be if Paul stays alive? Why does this cause him to rejoice?

Day 2

TODAY'S THEME: ENDGAME

Read Philippians 1: 18-20, 23

“To live is Christ, to die is gain.” This is one of the most well-known verses in all of Scripture. Paul shares with the Philippians exactly why he is able to rejoice in the midst of such difficult circumstances. He’s in Roman prison waiting for his trial in Rome. As he goes through his days, chained to a Roman soldier, he comes to terms with the reality that his court sentence could be the end of this life. Yet his attitude toward this reality is not doom and gloom, but one of eager longing to be reunited with his Savior.

I don’t think Paul was trying to tell the Philippians that they should wish they could die so they could go be with Jesus again, but rather that there is no fear in death because there is certainty to the life with Christ that awaits us after. In the Marvel movie, *Endgame*, as Dr. Strange handed over the sixth and final infinity stone to Thanos, ensuring the certain doom of the universe, there was great concern about why he did this. But he did this because he knew it was the only way, and for that reason he had hope.

That’s what I think Paul is sharing with the Philippians: hope. He knows that even if it means his life is ended, that’s ok because that will only mean he’ll get to be with Jesus. And I think that’s what Paul would want us to understand today. It is right to long to be with Jesus again. Our hope in Christ gives us confidence to face all life’s trials because we can know that even if the worst happens, and we lose our lives, we will spend eternity with Him, and in that we can rejoice!

6. How do our longings for the things we look forward to affect how we live our lives as we wait for them to come to pass?

7. Who is someone you always look forward to seeing? Why do you look forward to seeing them?

8. Why would someone long to be with Christ? What are some reasons you think Paul longed to be with Christ?

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

Pray that your relationship with God would deepen to a point where you long to be with Him!

Day 3

TODAY'S THEME: MORE TO OFFER

Read Philippians 1:22, 24-26

In response to a reporter, Tony Stark once said, "I came to realize that I had more to offer this world than just making things that blow up." In a much more significant and real way, Paul knew that he had something to offer still in this life. It wasn't because he was some narcissistic person who thought that he was the best thing to touch the face of this planet, but because he cared deeply for the people of God and wanted to see them grow into deeper relationship with Jesus Christ.

Paul was torn between what he thought would be best for him—to go and be with Christ or to continue on in life and serve faithfully the Church that was growing rapidly around the world. This conclusion was that it would be better to be with Christ but more beneficial to be here and serving others. I think if you were to sum up Paul's perspective here it would be this: There is an eternity to be in heaven with Christ but only a short while to be here and building up the Church. So with that perspective in mind, as we apply this passage to our lives today, let us work hard for the sake of the gospel and the kingdom of God today. Give it everything you have. There is a day coming when you'll be with Christ in heaven, but for now, work as hard as you can to bring as many people with you as you can.

9. What is something that you enjoy working hard for?

10. What do you think it means when Paul says, "If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me?"

11. What does fruitful labor for God look like today? Can you think of any examples? What fruitful labor are you engaged in for God's kingdom right now?

PRAYER GUIDE ➤ Here are some things you could pray for today:

Ask God to help you find a ministry that you are passionate about and that He will give you opportunity to work hard in that ministry.