



SESSION 2

Christ Our Life

Text: Philippians 1:12–26

Focus: Living the gospel together begins with shared faith and prayer

Big Idea: When Christ is our life, every circumstance—especially suffering—serves the gospel.

Recap of Session 1

In Session 1, we saw that living the gospel together begins with gospel partnership—shared identity in Christ, shared mission, shared prayer, and confidence in God's ongoing work. Paul showed us that the gospel forms not just individual believers, but a deeply connected community shaped by grace and affection.

Session 2 builds on that foundation by answering a pressing question:

What happens when gospel partnership leads into suffering?

Introduction: (Pastoral & Contextual)

Paul now turns from thanksgiving and prayer to his personal circumstances. He writes from prison—restricted, watched, and seemingly sidelined from ministry. From a human perspective, Paul's situation looks like a setback.

But Paul interprets his suffering through the lens of the gospel.

Rather than asking, *"Why is this happening to me?"* Paul asks, *"How is Christ being magnified through this?"*

This passage confronts modern assumptions that faithfulness leads to ease, comfort, or success. Paul shows us that the gospel often advances **through hardship**, not despite it.

In-depth Exegesis of Philippians 1:12–26

Verses 12–14 – Suffering and Gospel Advance

"What has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel..."

- "Advance" was a military term for clearing obstacles ahead of an army.
- Paul's imprisonment became a platform for witness.
- The whole imperial guard hears about Christ.
- Other believers grow bolder, not fearful.

Theological Insight: God's mission is never hindered by human chains.

Verses 15–18 – Mixed Motives, True Message

"Some indeed preach Christ from envy and rivalry..."

- Paul acknowledges impure motives among some preachers.
- Yet he rejoices because Christ is proclaimed.
- Paul prioritizes the truth of the gospel over personal reputation.

Theological Insight: The power of the gospel lies in Christ, not the purity of human motives.

Verses 19–20 – Confident Hope

"I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit... it will turn out for my deliverance."

- Paul depends on prayer and the Spirit.
- "Deliverance" includes both vindication now and salvation ultimately.
- Paul's deepest concern: Christ's honour, not his comfort.

Theological Insight: True Christian confidence rests in God's purposes, not outcomes we control.



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In-depth Exegesis of Philippians 1:12–26 Contd.

Verses 21–23 – Christ Our Life and Death

“For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.”

- This is not rhetoric—it is conviction.
- Life means fruitful labor for Christ.
- Death means deeper communion with Christ.

Theological Insight: Only when Christ is our life does death lose its terror.

Verses 24–26 – Gospel Love for Others

“To remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.”

- Paul willingly delays personal gain for others' spiritual good.
- Gospel love chooses service over self-interest.

Theological Insight: Christ-centered living expresses itself in sacrificial commitment to others.

Study Questions

1. How does Paul interpret his imprisonment differently from how we might?

2. What does this passage teach us about God's use of suffering?

3. Why does Paul rejoice even when others preach Christ with wrong motives?

4. What does verse 21 reveal about Paul's priorities?

5. How would your life look different if Christ truly were your life?

6. What fears keep believers from bold gospel witness today?

7. How do prayer and the Spirit shape Paul's confidence?

8. Why is Paul willing to remain alive for the sake of others?

9. How does this passage challenge a comfort-driven faith?

10. Where might God be advancing the gospel through your hardships?



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Key Doctrines Highlighted

- Sovereignty of God in suffering
- The mission of the church
- The role of prayer and the Holy Spirit
- Christian hope in life and death
- Sanctified ambition (Christ's glory above self)

Personal Application

- Identify an area of difficulty you've labeled as an obstacle.
- Ask how God might be using it to advance the gospel.
- Evaluate whether your ambitions are Christ-centered or self-centered.

Personal Challenge:

Can you honestly say, "To live is Christ," not just in words but in direction?

Reflective Practice

Journaling Prompt:

- What does "gain" mean to you?
- What would need to change for Christ to become your deepest joy?

Meditative Reading:

Slowly read Philippians 1:21 three times.

- First: listen
- Second: reflect
- Third: respond in prayer

Points for Prayer

Personal Prayer

- *Surrender of personal ambition*
- *Trust in God during hardship*

Church Prayer

- *Boldness in gospel witness*
- *Faithfulness in suffering*

Mission Prayer

- *Gospel advance in difficult places*
- *Encouragement for persecuted believers*

Closing Summary

When Christ is our life, even chains become instruments of grace, and even death becomes gain.