

For Me To Live Is Christ

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What do you live for? Some people live for family and some live for work. Some people seek for pleasure while others pursue their passion of sport, music or art. The Apostle Paul could say that for him to live was Christ. What did he mean? What do I live for? What do you?

What did Paul mean when he said, "For me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:12). I think he meant that Christ was first and last in his life (Revelation 22:13). Everything he did was with an eye to Jesus Christ (Hebrews 2:9). The person and work of Jesus Christ filled his thoughts and expanded his horizons (Ephesians 3:20). The service of Jesus Christ consumed his time and exercised his labours and energy (Romans 1:1). Preaching Jesus Christ was his business (Romans 1:15-16). Glorifying Christ was his aim (2 Corinthians 8:23, Ephesians 1:6).

The presence of Christ cheered and comforted Paul (2 Timothy 4:17). If he could not go with Christ he would not go alone (2 Corinthians 2:12). He spoke of the Lord (1 Corinthians 1:23), he spoke to the Lord (Acts 22:19) and the Lord spoke to him (Acts 26:15). He knew Christ as a friend when other friends forsook him (2 Timothy 4:17). When he was downcast the Lord lifted up his head (Acts 23:11), when he was worried the Lord brought him peace (Philippians 4:7), when he was in fear the Lord gave him courage (2 Timothy 4:18).

The love of Jesus Christ was Paul's inspiration and motivation (Philippians 4:13). For the sake of Christ's eternal love he faced scourging, stoning, beating and death (Romans 8:35, 2 Corinthians 11:25). Christ's love gave him confidence to strive against overwhelming odds, wrestle with overpowering foes, storm impregnable strongholds, reach heights and plumb depths beyond natural means (Romans 8:39). Christ's love for Paul first sought him, then won him and then cultivated Paul's love for Christ (1 John 4:19).

The will of Christ was Paul's rule of life (Acts 9:6). Paul lived to please His master (Ephesians 2:10). Where Christ led, Paul followed (Mark 8:34). What Christ commanded, Paul performed (1 John 5:3). What Christ declared, Paul believed and carried out with grateful heart (2 Timothy 1:12). Paul did not write "For me to live is Moses" or "For me to live is the law" (Romans 10:4). He knew where his allegiance lay and what is meant to be a servant of Christ (Philippians 3:8).

The glory of Jesus Christ was the grand aim and object of Paul's life, walk and conversation (Galatians 1:24). He wanted all men to know Christ as he knew Christ (John 17:3). He wanted the praise of Jesus to ring around the world (Philippians 2:9-11). He wanted the eternal majesty of Christ to fill the thoughts, hearts and souls of sinners and looked forward to that day when Christ would be revealed to the world as the great head of the church (Ephesians 1:20-21).

This is what it meant for Paul to 'live' Christ. Every sense, every ounce of energy, every waking moment, the apostle longed to experience the knowledge of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us (Ephesians 3:18). What more could be added, what could be better than living Christ? This one thing only; to be with the Lord in glory is far better (Philippians 1:23). To be freed from war with the old man (Ephesians 4:22), to be rid of the body of flesh (Galatians 5:17, 1 Peter 2:11), to enter spotless and pure into His glorious presence, there to dwell forever (2 Corinthians 4:17). To live is Christ but to die is gain (Philippians 1:21).

Paul was bound in union to the living Christ. He was found in Christ (Philippians 3:9) and Christ was formed in him (Galatians 4:19). He lived for Jesus Christ. He lived Christ. What do you live for?

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