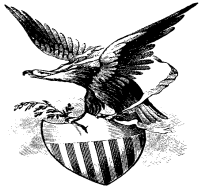


Light Brings Salt

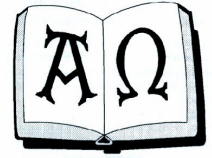
Volume 6, Issue 24

June 22, 2008



Iron Range Bible Church

Dedicated to the Systematic Exposition of the Word of God
"Sanctify them in the truth: Your word is truth."



The Reality of Living is Christ in You!

Pastor John Griffith

As we join Paul in Philippians 1:20-21 we find Paul imprisoned in Rome, chained to a praetorian guard 24 hours a day while awaiting his trial. Under these very trying conditions we discover Paul's thinking and objectives. All Christ centered just as ours should be also.

Notice what he says in 1:20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I shall not be put to shame in anything, but *that* with all boldness, Christ shall even now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. (NASB)

"..according to my earnest expectation and hope.." No matter what the outcome of the present situation whether he lives, which is his expectation, or whether he dies, promoted face to face he has one "earnest expectation and hope." These two words are two aspects of the same concept that molds his thinking and convictions.

Earnest expectation ἀποκαραδοκία refers to an intense expectation, an earnest watching; an alertness. The idea is to stretch out the head to concentrate on something to the exclusion of all other things around you. While hope ἐλπις refers to the expectant confidence that one can have with the Truth of the Word of God being the basis of life.

Paul's immediate focus here is on his appearance before the Court, that he will acquit himself well, not for any personal gain, but that Christ might be exalted and the gospel advanced. Paul knew what his priority was to be, what was important therefore he was not as concerned with what might happen to him but what would be the result, or the impact of what he would do knowing that it would stand as a testimony for his Lord.

Secondary in his thinking would be his appearing before the Judgment Seat of Christ, sincere and blameless having acquitted himself honorably in the present situation as noted in 1:10. In fact that is what he's referring to in the next phrase; "...that I

shall not be put to shame in anything." Put to shame αἰσχυνομαι indicates to be brought to a point of disgrace by his efforts being frustrated; disappointed by his hopes.

The main idea is not an emotion, the feeling of shame as a painful emotion but one of disappointment. Biblically the one who is not ashamed is the person whose trust is not misplaced and who therefore is never disillusioned or disappointed by that trust. The point is that when God and His Word is the center of one's hope you will never be put to shame. Example: Rom 5:5 "..hope does not disappoint."

"..but that with all boldness.." -The word boldness = παρρησία is used to refer to speaking boldly, frankly, with assurance and courage even in a hostile environment that he will not be frustrated as to what to reply or how to make the point needed as he faced the Roman authorities. This is something Paul requested to be an item for prayer on his behalf earlier in this imprisonment. (Eph 6:18-20)

Reason for the bold speaking.

"...Christ shall even now as always be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death."

To "be exalted" is μεγαλύνω which means to make large, to magnify, to exalt. The passive voice says the subject, here Christ, receives the action of the verb, being magnified, or exalted. The important point here is to recognize that Paul is **not saying that he will exalt Christ but that Christ will be exalted in his body, by the actions taken.**

He is not relying on his own courage, boldness, ability but on the empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit working through him which would produce this result as he deals daily with the many and varied pressure situations he faced.

Paul's attitude which ever way it goes. 1:21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (NASB)

The words "to me" are in the emphatic position which places great emphasis on them. He is saying

by doing that, as far as he is concerned it doesn't matter what others may think, it makes no difference, **my conviction, my faith** is unshaken regardless of the outcome. No adverse decision from the court nor the alarm of his friends could alter his firm, rock solid belief about his present or his future in Christ. This should be the case for each of us!

To live is Christ, to die is gain (his desire in vs:23-24) This could be translated; living is Christ, dying is gain. This attitude should be the thinking for all believers but only finds its reality in those who are truly focused on Christ and living out the Word.

For Paul Christ was the hub around which the wheel of his life revolved. He understood that life only finds real meaning in Christ. This is summed up by Paul in Gal 2:20

In what way then is living Christ for Paul?

1. Living is Christ because He is the source of life. **Col. 3:4**
2. Living is Christ because He is the motivation for all that Paul does. **Col. 3:17**
3. Living is Christ because He is the pattern of Paul's thinking. **Phil 2:5**
We are to emulate His thinking; our actions follow thinking; **change in our life results from change in our thinking.**
4. Living is Christ because He is the **hope** of Paul's life. **Phil 3:21**
When he is the hope of life it impacts ones daily living; **Titus 2:13-14**
5. Living is Christ because He is the focus of Paul's life. **Phil 1:21**

Christ has truly become the motive for his life therefore it is seen in his actions, in the goals of his life and his ministry. Paul is only able to do this because the source of his strength is supernatural. That is Holy Spirit and the Word of God. Powerful force! The very same provision that you have!!

Observations on verse 21

1. If we are to be able to say along with Paul, For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain, for this to be a reality in our life then we must make DVPT, the Word of God a priority in our thinking.
2. To be occupied with the person of Jesus Christ is to be occupied with His thinking. They go together, can't be separated, can't have one without the other).
3. It is doctrine in your thinking that will properly relate you to the Person of Jesus Christ.
4. Paul recognizes that it is Christ alone that gives meaning to life. When that relationship is right, your connected to the vine and growing then all other relationships in your life will be enhanced.

5. For Paul and for the believer "**...the process of living is Christ**" [present tense]. For Paul this meant to know Him, to love Him, to serve Him and to suffer for Him. 2 Cor 11:16-30; 12:9b-10
 - everyone's niche will be different;
 - you'll not face the floggings, shipwreck, etc. that Paul faced but you will face difficulties, CHP's, living in a sin cursed world, circumstances, that will challenge you related to your spiritual priorities, the choices that you need to make.
6. "**...the act of dying is gain.**"
 - Death held none of the negative associations for Paul that it does for most people.
 - Most live in fear of death which puts them in slavery. Heb. 2:15
7. He recognizes that death is a bridge between two distinctive expressions of life.
 - death where is your sting; victory is in Lord Jesus Christ! 1 Cor 15:55-57
8. It is the end of our life here but is the beginning of a new and glorious life in heaven. Paul knew that it would put him into the presence of the one who is His life.
9. Here is the situation we find here. Heaven was such a reality to Paul that He could not wait to see Christ, face-to-face, to be in His presence and enjoy all the glories of heaven forever.
10. Paul wasn't in prison hoping to be set free so he could live longer.
11. Whether he lived or died he could rejoice in either eventuality.
 - He does have a preference but leaves the choice with God where it belongs!! (Phil. 1:23-24)
12. Death is gain for the Christian but unbearable, eternal loss for the Unbeliever.
13. At physical death the soul and the human spirit departs the body and immediately enters into the presence of our Lord 2 Cor 5:1-9.
14. Only BD and spiritual growth will change your outlook on life and death.
15. When we are rightly related to Christ and Christ is the center of our life, everything else falls into proper perspective.
 - It is so easy though to become complacent and neglect the most important things, those things that matter spiritually.
 - Everything in our culture is attempting to squeeze us into its mold, and to change our focus and priorities. Lk. 12:15
16. The question is: What is it for you?? Is it like Paul??
 - Or is it for me to live is _____. Anything but Christ.