

Philippians

A Life of Purpose and Joy

To Live Is Christ

Date: Sunday 28th March

Speaker: Jon Solway

Key Verses: Philippians 1:12-30

Talk Summary:

This passage breaks up quite nicely into a few main points. Why not ask someone to read each passage out loud as you talk about each point?

- Firstly, God turns all things for His glory, and the good of those who love Him (verse 12-14). Despite Paul being arrested and locked down, without many opportunities to share the gospel, God still used Him to bring His Kingdom. It's the same for us in lockdown: we have fewer opportunities, but we need to become aware of them so that God can use them.
- Secondly, an issue is raised about motivations behind sharing the gospel (verse 15-18). Other teachers were going around preaching the gospel, but with motivations of competition, pride and selfish ambition. We need to be aware of our motivations as we share the gospel too.
- Thirdly, to live is Christ, and to die is gain (verse 19-26). Paul may well be executed, and so he is weighing up the benefits of both life and death. In death, Paul knows he'll meet Jesus - the best gain one could ever have. In life, Paul knows that he gets to continue the privilege of following in Jesus' footsteps and advance the Kingdom.
- Lastly, Paul's encouragement to the Philippians, and to us, is to keep going, despite difficulty (verse 27-30). The Philippians were a minority in an oppressive society and were persecuted for sharing their faith. Suffering & persecution is part of the Christian life - even Jesus promised that it would come. What matters is how we go about our life, following Jesus, despite these difficulties, and Paul encourages us not to be intimidated, but continue to do life as the gospel calls us to.

Worship

Worship is not just singing, it is thanking God for who he is and what he has done and is lived out through a life of trusting obedience. Discussing this together is an act of worship.

(Small group worship resources can be found at bvc.so/sgworship)

- What are you thankful for this week?
- Where has God been at work in your life?
- When have you taken risks in faith and obedience this week?

If you have a time of singing you can skip the above questions but please do ask this question each week:

- What has God been speaking to you about this week? *(Go around the group quickly don't spend a long time on it)*

Discussion Questions (choose some which are most relevant to your group)

- Despite lockdown, what opportunities do you have to share the good news of Jesus with those around you? Has anyone in your group got a story of how they've shared their faith in the past 12 months?
- Does it matter how we share the gospel? Is it by any means necessary? (Answer: No - our methods need to be loving)
- What motivations might we have for sharing the gospel? Which are healthy, and which are self-centred?
- What persecution have you experienced? How did you continue to follow Jesus despite it?
- (Reflection, can be shared too if you'd like): What are your next steps in spreading the good news?

Witness

We want to be investing in authentic relationships with those who don't know Jesus yet and inviting them to anything where they might meet other Christians and Jesus. Pick one of the below each week:

- How would you share what you have learned with a non-church friend?
- Who are you going to invite to Easter? Pray for your friends who don't know Jesus yet.
 - Easter Sunday is a great invite opportunity! More details at bvc.so/easter
 - A new online Alpha course begins 14th April, if you know anyone who is exploring faith feel free to invite them. More details at bvc.so/alpha