

“Paul, a student of History”

“We have little or no control over our circumstances, but we have complete control over what we think about our circumstances!”

Philippians 1:19-21

Paul’s joy does not depend on his recognition or his circumstances, but on his identification with the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

If our focus is where it should be, we’ll not fear anything in living or dying.

Jesus Christ controls history under 3 categories:

- 1. Directly through His power and perfect essence.**
- 2. Indirectly through the laws of divine establishment.**
- 3. Permissively by allowing evil to run its course in history so that the angelic dispute might be completed.**

In the next few verses, we see one of the most beautiful pictures of how common sense, maximum biblical truth in the soul and the reasoning power given to anyone who has divine viewpoint, is brought to focus in a perfect interpretation of contemporary history and the meaning of his own life and why he must go on.

The Philippians loved Paul so much that they prayed for him all the time.

The motivation for the Philippian’s prayers and giving is biblical truth resident in their souls and the ministry of God the Holy Spirit.

This is not arrogance or pride, it’s self-conscious awareness of one’s own existence and the ability to use biblical truth in the soul to face the reality of contemporary events.

Paul relates the events of contemporary history to two other events which are involved in his deliverance and both come directly from the Philippian congregation; their prayers and their monetary offerings.

And if we do come to the point where we’re trusting God to choose the time, manner and place of our death, why do we not trust Him to do the same with our loved ones? Paul, like us, doesn’t know his future but He knows his God and he knows that He will work all things together for the good of the Gospel, His own glory and his ultimate good, also.

***‘Eagerly expect’* comes to mean that all genuine enthusiasm in the royal family of God must originate from biblical truth inside of the believer’s own soul.**

If you’re eagerly expecting to be with Jesus Christ, it’s going to show in your life.

Arrogance reproduces itself in jealousy, bitterness, vindictiveness, implacability, revenge motivation and function, inordinate ambition and competition, gossip, slander, maligning and judging.

Courage has its origins in the soul and it means to have no hang-ups, to be totally relaxed and therefore, to be a good friend.

Integrity is the state or quality of being unbroken, complete, undivided, with honor and sometimes with moral courage also.

We are to carry around our own solutions long before we face the problems of life.

This “*gain*” is a reference to dying grace and the fact that Paul, a mature believer is going to accrue profit for all eternity after the judgment seat of Christ.

Only if Jesus Christ is everything in Paul’s life, does the second half of verse 21 makes sense.

The only preparation for the believer’s death is the spiritual life.

For the believer who has harmonious intimacy with God in his spiritual life, dying is far better than any blessing in living.

When we bury a loved one, we rejoice because we have hope to see them again and we know their suffering is over.

We will find our identity in the source of our hope.

If for anyone ‘to live is anything other than Christ, to die is to lose.’

Only the Christian who’s made Christ his life can say; dying is gain!