

"CHRIST IN LIFE AND DEATH"**Introduction**

1. Paul has 2 things in mind: Life + Death
NB These are all any man has or will have
2. This is the Christian way to look at our life.
He speaks as a Christian. This is our example
3. This is what we should pray for daily because it is perfect – the way we should all be.
[No complaints: prison / sufferings / coming death.
Only happiness and joy – a good example]
DOCTRINE: This is a sample of the best kind of Christians.
We should take this as our pattern – Paul is our example – he knew it.
See 3:17 and 4:9.
There are 2 things to notice:
 - (i) how we are to think of life: it is "Christ"
 - (ii) how to regard death: it is "gain"
SUM: The Christian life is good here and it is better hereafter. Some of Christ now and much more of Christ in another world.

1. CHRIST IS OUR LIFE NOW IN THIS WORLD

- 1) We rely on Christ's work as our only righteousness before God:
 - our legal standing is perfect
 - texts: Philippians 3:8-9
 - OBSERVE:** I was Christ's condemnation; He is my righteousness + will be forever.
 - APPLICATION:** Rest wholly on what Christ has done
- 2) We desire no pleasure more than to enjoy Christ's love:
 - there is love between us and Christ
 - texts: Galatians 2:20 (crucified / alive / loved)
 - it is experienced: Ephesians 3:16-19
 - OBSERVE:** It has 2 effects
 - (i) we shun worldly pleasure ("love not the world") and
 - (ii) we long to experience more of Christ's love

- 3) We understand that even now we are in union and fellowship with Christ:
 - we are united to Christ, married to him
 - texts: Ephesians 5:25, 30, 31-32
 - "of his flesh and of his bones"!
 - ILLUSTRATION:** as a man and his wife are one, so are we. This is a fact. It cannot be altered.
- 4) We long to see Christ honoured and His gospel believed by all men everywhere
 - our first passion is for His service / glory
 - texts: Philippians 1:18, 20
 - OBSERVE:** This drove Paul all over Europe and it explains the great missionaries, e.g. Livingstone.
 - APPLICATION:** O let this be your spirit and mine.

2. TO DIE WILL FOR ALL BELIEVERS BE "GAIN"

- 1) This fact puts Paul into a remarkable state of mind:
 - (i) he wishes to live
 - (ii) and die!
He is torn in two – pulled in two directions:
ILLUSTRATION: A man at a crossroads: "Which way?"
- 2) The relative value of life and death is made clear: death for all believers is "far better" (v.23) than life
Explain: (i) in life: some of Christ
(ii) in death: far more of Christ
ILLUSTRATION:
 - (i) Life: Christ + sufferings, trials, harsh words of men, bad reputation
 - (ii) Death: Christ with none of these sorrows: Christ seen, heard, near in all his glory, giving us heaven.**APPLICATION:** This is how we are to view life and death as believers.
- 3) So death is to be reckoned "far better":
 - (i) he will wipe away our tears
 - (ii) he will feed us with heavenly manna
 - (iii) he will lead us to living fountains

(iv) we shall see the Triune God

(v) we shall be in eternity, which is an unchanging state.

CONCLUSION

All this is set before us in the Lord's Supper: "till he come":

(i) to take us to glory

(ii) to raise our body in the Great Day

"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain!"

Amen! "Even so, come, Lord Jesus".

PSALM

42: 8 – 11

63: 1 – 6

106: 44 – 48