

In Christ and Christ in me

Philippians 1:19-26 for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance.^[a] **20** I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. **21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.** **22** If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labour for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! **23** I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; **24** but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. **25** Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, **26** so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.

V 20-21

To those who don't believe in God, life on earth is all there is, and so it is natural for them to strive for this world's values--- money, popularity, power, pleasure, and prestige. For Paul however to live meant to develop eternal values and to tell others about Christ, who alone could help them see life from an eternal perspective. Paul's whole purpose in life was to speak out boldly for Christ and to become more like Him.

Paul could confidently say that dying would be even better than living for it would be the end of his worldly troubles and he would see Christ face to face.

2 My story as a seventeen-year-old pinning up the text. **21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.** to the wall of my bedroom. Moving from a Christian home to a workshop where I was the only Christian was a challenge, but I had lots of opportunities to speak my workmates about Jesus.

3 Your experience?? I think we should share our stories to encourage one another.
To live the Christian life full on, it doesn't work any other way.

Galatians :2 17-21 **17** "But if, in seeking to be justified in Christ, we Jews find ourselves also among the sinners, doesn't that mean that Christ promotes sin? Absolutely not! **18** If I rebuild what I destroyed, then I really would be a lawbreaker.**19** "For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. **20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.** **21** I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

How have we been crucified with Christ?

Legally God looks at us as if we had died with Christ. Because our sins died with Him, we are no longer condemned.

Relationally we have become one with Christ, and His experiences are ours. Our Christian life began when, in unity with Him, we died to our old life. In our daily life, we must regularly crucify sinful desires that keep us from following Christ. This too is a kind of dying with Him.

Our focus should not be about dying but living, we have been reconciled with God and are free to grow into Christ likeness. We are no longer alone, for Christ lives in us--- He is the power for living. When Jesus was crucified, he had us in mind. Peter said He bore my sins in His own body on the tree.

For us Being crucified with Christ is simply putting Jesus first and dying to self.

The verse finishes by Paul saying he lives by faith in the son of God who loved Him and gave himself for him. We live by faith this is what the Christian life is all about we trust God for everything. We can do nothing by ourselves but with God all is possible.

We live by faith in Jesus (**Fantastic Adventure In Trusting Him**)

Romans 6:1-4 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? ² By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? ³ Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ **We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.**

Just as Jesus died for us, we should die for Him (put Him first in everything) we will then be raised with Him onto a new life. This is the challenge, but it is the only way, God has given us His holy Spirit to empower us, and it is He who makes it possible.

Baptism is the acting out what has already taken place in our hearts and lives, it is our testimony.

It is not a ticket into the church or an example of how good we are; it is evidence of the love of God and His power to change our lives for good.

We can be baptised at any age but often it comes shortly after our conversion but sometimes it comes later and follows a commitment to a deeper life with Christ.

Two examples-----

Philippians 4:10-13 I rejoiced greatly in the Lord that at last you renewed your concern for me. Indeed, you were concerned, but you had no opportunity to show it. ¹¹ I am not saying this because I am in need, for I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances. ¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ **I can do all this through him who gives me strength.**

Paul had faced many difficult things in his life he listed a few. Being let down in a basket over the city wall on one occasion. Being beaten with rods; He was stoned and left for dead on another occasion; He was shipwreck but came through all these testing times.

He is not saying we can do what we want and expect God to strengthen us, he is saying when He calls us to serve Him, he will give us all the strength we need.

We must ask ourselves are we getting out of our comfort zone in serving God.

1 John 5:9-12 We accept human testimony, but God's testimony is greater because it is the testimony of God, which he has given about his Son. ¹⁰ Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony. Whoever does not believe God has made him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given about his Son. ¹¹ And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. ¹² **Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.**

The first letter John writes to the church considers three things about God. 1 God is light (1:1-2:27)
2 God is love (2:28-4:21) 3 God is Life (5:1-21)

Whoever believes in God's Son has eternal life. He is all you need. You don't need to wait for eternal life because it begins the moment you believe. You don't need to work for it because it is already yours. You don't need to worry about it because you have been given eternal life by God himself – and it is guaranteed.

When we trust Jesus, we are given a new life that starts when we commit ourselves to God and continues into eternity where we will live in His presence for ever. **It is the only way to true life.**

It is good for us to remember that Jesus said I have come that you might have life and have it to the full. John 10 v 10