

## TALK IT OVER

### Key Scriptures

#### from the Message:

Philippians 1:12-30

#### Start reading.

Galatians 2:20

*"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."*

Philippians 1:21

*"For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain."*

2 Corinthians 5:8

*"We are confident, I say, and would prefer to be away from the body and at home with the Lord."*

#### Start talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- In honor of Memorial Day, take a moment to share any names of friends and/or family members that are on your heart and pray together as a group to thank God for their willingness to give their lives for our country.
- Review Philippians 1:1-11. Share about your "pursuit of joy" journaling.

#### Start thinking and sharing. Ask a question to get your group thinking, to create openness.

- What is the Gospel (1 Corinthians 15:3-6; Ephesians 2:8-9; John 3:16-18)?
- Read Philippians 1:12-14. What results may the endurance of persecution for Christ's sake have? Share any examples of this happening when you or someone you know was bold in sharing the Gospel of Christ.
- Read Philippians 1:15-18. What are some reasons why people share the gospel? No matter the motives, what was Paul's chief consolation? When you heard a clear Gospel message for the first time, did it seem to be under a positive or negative circumstance? Was it presented with the right motives? How did it impact your life?
- Troy spoke of "chains" that God may put on us to accomplish something that would not happen any other way. If you can, take time to watch and discuss David Ring's story ([www.iamsecond.com/seconds/david-ring/](http://www.iamsecond.com/seconds/david-ring/)).
- Tell about a time when you experienced hardship in your life (injury, job loss, illness, family situation, etc.). Did that situation provide an opportunity to do things you wouldn't have done otherwise? Were you able to use that hardship to bring glory to God?
- Read Philippians 1:19-21. What is Paul's secret to joy? In verse 21, Paul gives us his perspective on life and death. What is your perspective on life and death? Are you afraid of death or is it something you look forward to? Does the reality of heaven eliminate fear? If you have a personal faith in Christ, has it made a difference in your attitude toward death?
- Read Philippians 1:22-26. Even though he longed to be in heaven, Paul was convinced that he would remain with them. What keeps you (if anything) from longing to be with God in heaven? Encourage one another by reading these verses Revelation 21:1-4.

#### Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- Given your priorities and schedule this week, how would you honestly finish this phrase: "For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_." What would need to change to make it Christ?
- Read and discuss James 1:22-25; Romans 12:2; and Galatians 5:24. What do you need to do to die to yourself and your agenda?

#### Start praying. Be bold and pray with power.

- Pray that the Gospel will impact and Christ will be exalted in every area of our lives. We will be "Doers of the Word and not hearers only."

#### Start digging. For further study.

- Read and discuss the article on back, "What does it mean that to die is gain (Philippians 1:21)? [www.gotquestions.org/to-die-is-gain.html](http://www.gotquestions.org/to-die-is-gain.html)

**Question: "What does it mean 'to live is Christ' (Philippians 1:21)?"**

**Answer:** Philippians 1:21 says, "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Most people focus on the second part of the verse, "to die is gain," and contemplate the joys of heaven. But we should not overlook what comes before. The importance of the phrase "to live is Christ" cannot be overstated. In all honesty, this phrase should be central to every Christian's life.

In this statement, the apostle Paul is saying that everything he has tried to be, everything he is, and everything he looked forward to being pointed to Christ. From the time of Paul's conversion until his martyrdom, every move he made was aimed at advancing the knowledge, gospel, and church of Christ. Paul's singular aim was to bring glory to Jesus.

"To live is Christ" means that we proclaim the gospel of Christ. Paul preached in synagogues; he preached at riversides; he preached as a prisoner; he preached as an apostle; he preached as a tentmaker. His message was constant: "Jesus Christ and him crucified" (1 Corinthians 2:2). He brought the message of Christ's sacrifice to kings, soldiers, statesmen, priests, and philosophers, Jews and Gentiles, men and women. He would preach to literally anyone who would listen.

"To live is Christ" means that we imitate the example of Christ. Everything that Jesus did and said, that's what Paul wanted to do and say. The church benefitted from his godly example: "Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). What would Jesus do? That's what we want to do.

"To live is Christ" means that we pursue the knowledge of Christ. We want to know Christ better and better each day. Not just a set of facts about Christ, but Christ Himself. "I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead" (Philippians 3:10-11).

"To live is Christ" means that we are willing to give up anything that prevents us from having Christ. Paul's testimony in this regard: "Whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ and be found in him" (Philippians 3:7-9). We cling to the promise of our Lord in Mark 10:29-30 that our sacrifices for Jesus' sake will be repaid a hundredfold.

"To live is Christ" means that Christ is our focus, our goal, and our chief desire. Christ is the center point of our mind, heart, body and soul. Everything that we do, we do for Christ's glory. As we run the "race marked out for us," we lay aside the entangling sin and worldly distractions, "fixing our eyes on Jesus" (Hebrews 12:1-2). He is our life.