

Philippians 1: 12-30

Brothers and sisters, here is what I want you to know. What has happened to me has helped to spread the good news. One thing has become clear. I am being held by chains because of my stand for Christ. All of the palace guards and everyone else knows it.

Because I am being held by chains, most of the believers in the Lord have become bolder. They now speak God's word more boldly and without fear.

It's true that some preach about Christ because they are jealous. But others preach about Christ to help me in my work. That group acts out of love. They know I have been put here to stand up for the good news. But the others preach about Christ only to get ahead. They aren't honest and true. They think they can stir up trouble for me while I am being held by chains.

But what does it matter? Here is the important thing. Whether for reasons that are right or wrong. Christ is being preached about and that makes me very glad.

And I will continue to be glad. I know that you are praying for me. I also know that the Spirit of Jesus Christ will help me. So, no matter what happens, I'm sure I will still be saved.

I completely expect and hope that I won't be shamed in any way. I'm sure I will be brave enough. Now as always Christ will be lifted high through my body. He will be lifted up whether I live or die.

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

Suppose I go on living in my body. Then I will be able to carry on my work. It will bear a lot of fruit. But what should I choose? I don't know. I can't decide between the two. I long to leave this world and be with Christ. That is better by far.

But it is more important for you that I stay alive. I'm sure of that. So, I know I will remain with you. And I will continue with all of you to help you grow and be joyful in what you have been taught. I'm sure I will be with you again.

Then your joy in Christ Jesus will be greater than ever because of me.

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind, striving side by side for the faith of the gospel, and not frightened in anything by your opponents.

This is a clear sign to them of their destruction, and of your salvation, and that from God. For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.