



Guest Speaker: Josh Turansky  
Calvary Chapel Costa Mesa, Assistant Pastor  
May 17, 2015

## PHILIPPIANS 1:18B-26

[Scott] Alright Josh, come on up here. This is my son, Josh, and he's my brother in Christ. I appreciate his ministry and what God is doing in his life. It's a privilege for us to have him come and share the word with us today. Thank you, Josh.

[Josh] Thank you. I appreciate it. It's great to be here with you guys. If you want to get your Bibles out, we're going to be in Philippians 1. We'll be starting in verse 18.

It's been a little bit of time since I've been able to be here with you guys. I think I was here last year. It's great to see the growth that's happened here and to be able to worship with you guys and appreciate what God's doing here in this community. I'm excited to see what the next stage is and what God does.

In Philippians 1:18, I don't know what version you have, but there's an interesting verse break. We're actually going to pick up in the middle of verse 18 starting with the *Yes, and I will rejoice*. I'll explain in just a second why that is the case.

*Philippians 1:18 finishes off by saying – Yes, and I will rejoice (and then in verse 19 it says) for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness as always so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit for my labor. Yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two. Having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy of faith, that your rejoicing for me may be more abundance in Jesus Christ, by coming to you again.*

[PRAYER] Lord, we just pray as we look into this scripture that you would teach us, that you would instruct us. You know each person's story here. You know what's gone on in our lives just this past week. Lord, you know every hair on our head and we just submit our story to you and we invite you to speak into our lives. We want to be a people that are yielded to the work of your Holy Spirit and to the authority of scripture. We thank you for the opportunity to just gather corporately and to place ourselves in that position of submission underneath you, underneath your word. So teach us, Lord. Speak into our lives we pray this morning. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.

Josh Turansky - Calvary Chapel Living Hope

So we live in a world that there's a great deal of uncertainty. In fact we live in a world where there's a great deal of anxiety. I was reading a book the other day that was saying that the level of anxiety that the average high schooler experiences, if it were to be compared to the amount of anxiety that a person felt in the 1950s, they would say that the high schooler today is almost mental or on a spectrum where they're struggling with their mental state. We live in a world where there's so much worry and uncertainty.

What I want to do this morning is I want to look at this passage. What I believe it does speak to is our future, or at least the application does because that's what Paul is doing.

I told you that there's a break in this text, right in the middle of verse 18. The reason why there's a break is because the language there goes from speaking about Paul's present circumstance and Paul then goes from talking about what he's been going through and he begins to speak of what's to come. He's speaking of what he's anticipating in the future. A great deal of our worry and anxiety that we wrestle with has to do with our future and what's going to happen in the future.

There's the whole generation that's called the baby boomer generation. The reason why they're called the baby boomer generation is because after World War II there was a sense of calm and a sense of peace and prosperity. There was a greater deal of certainty in the lives of citizens in the United States and in the West. So people felt comfortable with having kids and settling down. So there is what was called a baby boom. We call that generation the baby boomers.

That's what comes from a degree of certainty about the future. It's like my life is settled and so I feel like I can have multiple kids and a big family because I feel like I can count on what's going to happen in the future.

Now if you look at our present day the actual numbers in terms of life decisions that people are making, the average age of when people get married has shifted from the late 1970s where the average age of a person getting married was at late twenty-one, twenty-two years old. Now the average person is getting married around the age of twenty-seven.

If you look at childbearing and read into that kind of how settled do people feel, you can see that our world, our culture feels very unsettled. There's a number of reasons for that. People's lives have been changed, probably some of your lives have been changed by things that have taken place within society and culture.

Maybe you had a career that was going along. Let's say you're a travel agent and you've been a travel agent for years and then all of a sudden Orbitz comes along and Expedia. That threatens the career that you were counting on. Or maybe you're in the music industry that's working in a certain way and all of a sudden iTunes comes along and the music distribution and the democracy of music distribution takes place.

In our culture there's a great deal of uncertainty. With uncertainty comes a level of fear about what's going to happen and what's going to take place. They say that 90% of the things that we're afraid of never come to pass, but yet we can be plagued with anxiety.

So in this passage here Paul is talking about his own future. What we're going to see is that Paul, rather than being dominated by all the possible scenarios of what could happen in his own future, he is choosing to look at his future through a theological lens. He's looking at it through scriptural truth and he's saying this is the reality about who God is, how the gospel has impacted my life, and I'm going to count on those things.

The breakdown of this text is verses 18b-20 as Paul is talking about the reason for his rejoicing. The reason for his rejoicing. Then verses 21-24 he's explaining his life and death statement. You see at the end of verse 20 he says that *Christ is going to be magnified in his body, whether by life or by death*. And then verse 21-24 is his explanation of that statement. Whenever you see that word *for*, in many, many cases in scripture that means that there is going to be an explanation. It's a substantiation of the preceding statement. Then in verses 25-26 Paul explains the results of him being given life. It would be to their advantage. He talks about *if I live on in the flesh, I continue to live here on this earth, here is how that is going to affect you guys*.

So there are a couple of points that I want to pull out of this, three major points that I think come from this text that really impact us. The first is found in verses 19 and 20. It's this: Our future is good for Jesus. Our future is good for Jesus.

Now often when we think about our future we're thinking about "how is it going to impact me?" Right? We're the center of our own anxiety. We're anxious because of what's going to happen to us. But what Paul says in regards to his own future is that it's *whether by life or by death Christ is going to be magnified in me*. In other words, Paul's future is good for Jesus. It's going to glorify Him.

Warren Wiersbe, who's a great commentator, says this in regards to this whole idea of Christ being magnified. He says, "The telescope brings distant things closer, and the microscope makes tiny things look big. To the unbeliever, Jesus is not very big. Other people and other things are far more important. But as the unbeliever watches the Christian go through a crisis experience, he ought to be able to see how big Jesus Christ really is. The believer's body is a lens that makes a little Christ look very big, and a distant Christ come very close."

Just like you'd look through a telescope and you'd see a distant planet and it brings that planet closer, so too Paul says when people look at my life it's going to magnify Christ, whether it's through life or through death.

Paul also said the same kind of things in 1 Corinthians 6:20. He says – *For you are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's*. Paul is totally sold out as a disciple to having Jesus be glorified in him, whether it's by life or by death. He told the Corinthians, "Hey, let God be glorified through you. That is your purpose. That is why you exist is for the glory of God."

In 2 Corinthians Paul was very transparent with the church, talking about his own personal trials. When he wrote the letter to them he had just gone through a great deal of persecution. In fact in 2 Corinthians he says that he was *despairing of life*. He wasn't necessarily suicidal, although he

may have been. But he was questioning whether or not he would continue to live. He was questioning what his future would look like.

He went through some horrendous stuff and he says in 2 Corinthians 4:7, *But we have this treasure in earthen vessels* (which is Christ if you look in the context. We have this Christ-in-us relationship). *We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed.* And then look at verse 10. It says, *Always carrying about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.*

In other words Paul is saying that God has a plan when He allows His chosen apostle to go through trials. It's so that the life of Jesus can be evident in His life.

This is 2 Corinthians 4:10. He says, *Always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus.* He looked at his trials as not something that God intended for him to escape, but something that God intended for him to go through and to bear so that the resurrection power of Jesus could be seen in his life.

In 1 Corinthians 15 he says that he calculated out what risks he was going to take on a daily basis, based upon the reality of the resurrection. He was willing to take great risks because the God that he served was the God who was raised from the dead. So he believed in the resurrection power of God and he believed that God intended to put on display through him the power of the resurrection.

So the first thing that we see in this text out of Philippians is that our future is good for Jesus. As long as you're a disciple and you're submitted to the Lord, whether it's life or it's death, whether it's the job promotion or losing the job, whether it's the cancer prognosis or I've been healed from cancer, whether it's my kids end up kind of doing what I had hoped they'd do and what I dreamed for them or, man, my kids really struggle – either way what God wants to do in us is He wants to glorify the person of Jesus through our lives.

Again, we are that lens, Paul says, "I am that lens that Christ can be magnified in my life by life or by death." That's a whole lot different of a perspective than a life dominated by fear or hopelessness or despair. It's a really optimistic perspective that no matter what way this whole thing goes, whether Caesar decides to kill me or to give me life, Christ is going to be magnified in my body.

The second thing that I see in this text is that Jesus makes every future option good for us. In verse 21 he says this: *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit for my labor. Yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. For I am hard pressed between the two. Having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you.*

So Paul explains to this church in Philippi that as he's sitting in jail in Rome and he's under house arrest not knowing if he's going to get a death sentence or a life sentence, meaning that if

he's granted life he's freed, he looks at that and he says, "You know, I can't lose." For himself personally Jesus is going to be magnified, but he himself, he says, "If I keep on living in the flesh, to live is Christ. I get to live with Christ. Christ is with me. He's given me His Spirit. But if I die, that's gain. I put off this body and I enter into the presence of God and I'm even closer to Christ than I am now." And so every future option is good.

In 2 Corinthians 5:6 Paul writes about death. *We are always confident, knowing that, while we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, yes, well pleased rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.* So Paul knew if I put off this body, if I put off this tent (he would call his body a tent), if I put this off, *to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.*

You can't lose as a Christians if you have this perspective. There's no bad option on the table for Paul. *To live is Christ, and to die is gain.* Death is no longer our enemy because we depart to be with Jesus.

One more verse in 2 Timothy 1:10. Paul tells Timothy about *the appearing of our Savior, Christ Jesus, who has abolished death.* Paul's perspective on death is that it has been abolished. Yeah the physical body, he even uses the term, goes to sleep. Death just isn't the same for a Christian.

We live in a culture that dramatizes death. Imagine watching a movie where death is not an option on the table. It becomes not so great of a movie. One time I watched this movie where the way they solved the problems (my mom would know a lot about this because she writes good stories) was there was like this magic guy that would come in. You're like, "Well that ruins the story because nobody believes in a magic guy that shows up and rescues the story." Right? So death is a great narrative tool. It gives high stakes.

But yet for Paul, he's not looking for some engaging story that's going to have you hanging. He's just like, "No, death has been abolished for the Christian. It's not even a factor. It's only a gain." So being a disciple of Jesus makes every future possibility awesome. It makes me think of *The LEGO Movie* – "everything is awesome."

This leads to the optimism of 2 Corinthians 2:14 where Paul says *But thanks be to God, who always leads us in triumph in Christ and through us defuses the fragrance of his knowledge in every place.* Paul said there's this triumph that we're led in to. We get to live out a triumphant life because of the victory that Jesus accomplished on the cross. The reason why every future option is good for us is because of what Jesus did on the cross. There is a victory that was won at the cross. Our life became meaningful.

You think back to the garden and the meaningfulness of life that God gave to Adam. There was the *be fruitful and multiply*. There was a life lived without shame. It was a beautiful environment. There was perfect fellowship between man and God. And then when sin came in, sin wrecked all of those things. The curse just infected the world so that there could not be that beautiful fellowship, the purposefulness of work. All of these things were just curses. They were under the curse, and yet when Jesus died on the cross He was able to overcome that curse, abolish death, and make our work meaningful so that Christ is our life.

The third and the last point from this text is that life on earth now has purpose because Jesus has redeemed us unto good works. Do you see that in verses 22 and 24-26? Paul is explaining to them. He's saying now if I die, it's gain, but if I live on in the flesh, here's what it's going to mean. It's going to mean that I get to bear spiritual fruit and I play a role in your life.

You've got to appreciate that as you look into the text you look at how Paul viewed himself as a benefit, as a participant in the spiritual growth of these believers in Philippi. He saw that humans, human instruments, are a part of the work that God still wants to accomplish.

So he comes to the conclusion – it's almost like we're given a window into Paul's thought process like he's realizing, "You know, it's more needful for me to be here with you. I'm going to bear fruit." So he gets to the point where he says *I'm convinced that I'm going to remain*. We don't know if he's writing this and all of a sudden he just feels the sense, almost the presence of God, saying, "Nope, you don't have a death sentence, you're not going to die." But it's almost like it unfolds in this passage. We see what he's saying is that if I remain here it's so that it's for a purpose.

In John 17 Jesus prayed for His disciples before He went to the cross. One of the things that He prayed was that the Father wouldn't take His disciples out of the world. Because they still had a role to play. God has a plan for your life, He has a purpose for your life.

Last fall I taught an ethics class and we spent some time in the class talking about suicide. With suicide, what underlies it is this emotion or this feeling of despair or purposelessness. This passage here and John 17 is a great passage really to talk with somebody who's despairing of life or feeling suicidal, because what Paul believed and the Holy Spirit had convinced Paul of was that, no, your life serves a purpose. Your life here serves a purpose and when God wants to take you out of this world, He can. He wants to work through you in the midst of His church.

In Ephesians 2:10, Paul says – *For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them*. There's good works that God has for you and for me that He's called us into. Your life serves a purpose.

So again go back to your own life and your own worry. I don't know whether you're what they call a worrywart or you're maybe more carefree and you're not really worried about the future. More people are worried in this world than are carefree and not concerned about what's going to happen next.

There are major things that can dominate the horizon for us. What's going to happen down the road? Maybe it's work, maybe it's your health, maybe it's a relationship. But again, when we look into this passage we see that Paul had some pretty big stuff on the horizon. He's in jail and he's waiting to find out is he going to get the death sentence (which would mean he's beheaded or crucified or some terrible death sentence) or is he going to be granted life?

He made this decision that he was not going to be dominated by what was unknown, but instead he was going to basically make the theological truth, the theological facts the main contributing factors into his forward thinking into the future.

You've got to appreciate when you go back and you look at the beginning of this passage in verse 19 he says *for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus*. Do you see how he's talking about the work of the Holy Spirit there? *The supply of the Spirit*. So the church in Philippi is praying for him and then there's that supply of the Spirit.

As you look into the future and you look into what's God's plan for you and you wrestle with your own anxieties and worries, know that God has a plan for your life and the Holy Spirit wants to bear witness to that. He wants to remind you and I that "I have a good plan for you. I have a purpose for your life." There is no bad outcome in the future as long as you are walking with the Lord.

You may listen to that and you may say, "Well what if I do this over here?" or "What if I screwed up in the past?" "After I gave my life to the Lord I felt like He called me to this?" Well in Romans 5 it says that *where our sin abounds, his grace abounds much more*. So if you're a person dominated by sin or you feel like you've been a Jonah running from the will of God, the truth is that the grace of God abounds more than our sin.

There's this guy who wrote a book, it was book that was a response to another book, which was called *Experiencing God*, which was written by Henry Blackaby. Maybe you've heard about it. But anyway, in the *Experiencing God* book he advocates for us knowing God's will for our lives. It's a great book. But the presupposition of the book is that God has an individual will for your life and my life. He has a plan. Right? Like Ephesians 2:10 talks about God has a plan for our life, Henry Blackaby in his book says, "Look, this is the case. God wants to reveal His plan. He wants to invite us into the plan for our life."

Well there's a professor, I think he's from Multnomah, and he didn't like that idea because his hypothesis was if God has a plan for our life – let's say God has that one special person that we're supposed to marry and then we go and we don't marry that person, then we've screwed up the whole universe. The fabric of the universe has been rent because now we've taken and we've married somebody that wasn't supposed to be our wife. Well the person who was supposed to be our wife or our spouse, who are they supposed to marry? And then it's this chain reaction of nobody can ever marry the right person.

That's basically how he makes a case. So he literally writes a book that's this fat trying to explain away the fact that God has an individual will for your life. The reason it's that fat is he has to go through every passage of the Bible that says and gives an example that He has an individual will for your life and he tries to explain it away.

You can take that book and throw it in the trash. It's not the case. God has a plan for your life. God has a specific will, an individual will for your life. All I have to do to know that He has a plan that is greater than my own sinfulness, my own stupidity, my own fragileness is I can look

at that at the sin of Adam and the fact that God put him in a perfect environment, and yet Adam sinned. I mean, talk about screwing it up and screwing up the world, right? And yet, what was the power of God? It was displayed through the cross. The cross of Jesus Christ was able to overcome the sin of Adam.

So it lends itself, again, to us living out a life with a high confidence in God that God is able to work in my story. If the cross was able to overcome the sin of Adam and a cursed mankind, then God can work in my life to even bypass my inability to figure out the will of God or to not know the will of God or to violate the will of God and sin. God is able to work.

So again, the plan of God is good for Jesus, our future is good for Jesus, our future has only good options, and our life now has a purpose because Jesus has redeemed us unto good works. He's given us these good works.

I would just encourage you if you're a person that feels anxious, feels dominated by fear, let these truths, let the Holy Spirit just seal these truths into your heart, that you don't have to be worried about the future. You don't have to be worried about what's going to come next. God has a good plan for you and we get to kind of watch it unfold.

Let's pray.

[PRAYER] Lord, we thank you for just the beautiful example of the Holy Spirit inspired confidence in Paul's life, that he was totally confident in you. Our fickle hearts can get caught up with concerns and worries, fears, and we pray that you would, by the Holy Spirit, just help us to grab ahold of with faith the truth contained in your word, that we would be so steadfast committed to those truths that that's what we would place our thinking upon, that that's what we would allow to dominate our thinking. Lord, I pray that you would just work here in the midst of our hearts. We know that as a part of that warfare against our well-being Satan loves to attack the peace that you want for us and wants to plant seeds of fear. I just pray for each person here, God, that you would protect them and you would give them victory over those mental battles and that, Jesus, you would become more and more magnified in their own thought process and put on display through each person's life here, my life. Lord, put on display the person of Jesus and your greatness. Thank you. Bless this fellowship we pray. We pray that you would continue just to add to your church. Pray for Robbinsville that you would just be saving people, that people would give their lives to you. We ask this in Jesus' name, amen.