

To Die is Gain

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Text:

[Philippians 1:12-23](#)

Introduction

These words were written in 61AD by the Apostle Paul when he was imprisoned in Rome. He has been arrested and accused of insurrection against the empire and now awaiting his trials. Paul is facing a real possibility of losing his life for his faith in Jesus Christ. Words have reached many of the churches, including the church in Philippi. They are deeply concerned and troubled for the welfare of Paul. Their concern is, will Paul survive this imprisonment and live or will he be condemned to die? To encourage Paul, the church in Philippi takes up a collection for him and sends it to him as he awaits trials in Rome.

Paul now writes them in this letter in response in their attempt to reach out to him, to encourage him, to support him, to stand beside him, as he is in this confinement.

He writes to comfort and strengthen them in their sorrow. The one who needs encouragement becomes the encourager. Paul writes these words in ...

[Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.](#)

Paul says his life is a win-win situation. Life - Christ. Death - Gain. If he lives, that is a victory. If his life is taken, that too is a victory as well. He cannot decide which one he really wants to experience.

[Philippians 1:23 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.](#)

Paul is torn between two desires, to depart or to abide; to die or to live. For either way he wins. If he is released from prison and live for Christ here upon earth, that is a win, or if he is executed and die, that is also a win because he will go immediately into the presence of Christ who has died for him and purchased his salvation.

[Philippians 1:21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.](#)

On the surface that statement “to die is gain” appears to be absolutely contrary to reason. It is certainly contrary to everything that we know, understand and see about life and about death. We look at life and there are all the things in life that we experience and enjoy and these things are gain. And then we look at death and all we can see is lost. That one that was once here is no longer here. The mouth that could talk could no longer talk, the ears that could hear could no longer hear, the eyes that could see could no longer see. So the statement, “to die is gain” is a statement which seems contrary to reason. This is not how normally we look at death. To many

death is loss and not gain. **This is the paradox that only true Bible Christians can understand.**

To the Apostle Paul and to all true Bible Christians, death is not loss but rather gain. Death is profitable. It is winning. It is an advantage. It is profit. It is gain.

What do we gain?

1. We Gain a Perfect Place

At death we will be translated into a perfect place. Heaven is a perfect place. It is a place where the streets are made of gold and the gates are made of pearl, where the homes are beautiful mansions.

John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2: In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3: And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.

In Heaven there will no more ISIS, terrorism, suicide bomber, beheadings, drive-by shootings, funeral homes, hospitals, treatment centers, prison cells, abortion clinics, hunger, famine, earthquakes, tornadoes, hurricanes, typhoons, calamities, etc. No more Devil to attack and accuse and oppress and tempt us.

No wonder Paul could say, “to me death is gain” because in Heaven he gains a perfect place!

2. We Gain a Perfect Body

In this world our fallen bodies are dying. We are disintegrating. We are subject to decay and disease. Pain, suffering but death is gain because in Heaven we receive a perfect body in which there is no sickness, disease, illness and no more death.

There is no more cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, blindness, ulcer, pimples, injuries, etc.

No more medicines, surgeries, chemo, insulins, ICUs, nurses, doctors, dentists, hospitals, wheel chairs, eye glasses, hearing aids, crutches, etc.

Philippians 3:20 **For our conversation is in heaven**; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: 21: **Who shall change our vile body**, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.

No wonder Paul could say, “to me death is gain” because in Heaven he gains a perfect body!

3. We Gain a Perfect Spirit

For the true child of God, our greatest frustration is that we still sin.

Romans 7:23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24: O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?

We want to be holy and we fall short of the holiness we long for. We want to love, we want to worship, we want to be pure but we fall short. but at death our sin nature will be removed.

In Heaven there will be a complete absence of sin. Here on earth the Bible Christians still have to deal with their own sins and the sins of others. But in Heaven, there will be no more lying, cheating, cursing, blasphemy, killing, war, child molestation, adultery, idolatry, gossip, cyber bully, etc. All sins! There will no longer be the spiritual warfare on the inside. There will no longer need to confess sin.

No wonder Paul could say, “to me death is gain” because in Heaven he gains a perfect spirit!

4. We Gain a Perfect Fellowship

In Heaven, being in a perfect place and having gained a perfect body and a perfect spirit we will experience perfect fellowship. We will have a great reunion. We will really and finally know one another in Heaven. There will be no longer be misunderstandings, hurt feelings, divisions, bitterness, holding grudges, unforgiveness, pride, envyings, jealousies, etc.

Psalm 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

No wonder Paul could say, “to me death is gain” because in Heaven he gains a perfect fellowship!

5. We Gain a Perfect Vision

In Heaven we will behold Jesus Christ in all of His glory!

1 John 3:2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.

We will see Jesus Christ just as He is. We will not see Him as He once was, not as a meek Messiah, not as a humble carpenter from Galilee, not as a lowly servant, not a suffering and bleeding Saviour, rather, we will see the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords seated upon His throne, crowned with glory and majesty.

John 17:24 Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world.

No wonder Paul could say, “to me death is gain” because in Heaven he gains a perfect vision!

6. We Gain a Perfect Union (Reunion)

In Heaven we will be with Christ.

John 14:1 Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2: In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. 3: And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. 4: And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

Christ did not go away from us with the intent of forsaking us, but rather that He might eventually take us up with Him into heaven. We will be with Him forever.

To be 'with Him,' as He tells us in another part of these wonderful last words in the upper chamber, is to 'behold His glory.' And to behold His glory, as John tells us in his Epistle, is to be like Him.

No wonder Paul could say, "to me death is gain" because in Heaven he gains a perfect union!

7. We Gain a Perfect Knowledge

Paul's passion was to know Christ ...

Philippians 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9: And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 10: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death;

Paul's desire was to know Jesus Christ deeper and deeper. He is not content of a shallow and vague knowledge of Christ.

1 Corinthians 13:12 For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: **now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known.**

In Heaven we will have a perfect knowledge of God. Now, understand that perfect knowledge does not mean we will completely and fully know God. No, for God is unsearchable and He dwells in light unapproachable.

Romans 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34: For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

Though we will not have a full and complete knowledge of God, we will have an accurate knowledge of God, that is, our knowledge of God will not be mixed with error. We will no longer have any wrong concepts of God.

No wonder Paul could say, "to me death is gain" because in Heaven he gains a perfect knowledge!

8. We Gain a Perfect Rest

In Heaven we will have perfect peace.

Isaiah 26:3 Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee.

Do you not long for perfect peace?

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

In Heaven we will experience true lasting peace and rest.

No wonder Paul could say, “to me death is gain” because in Heaven he gains a perfect rest and peace!

9. We Gain a Perfect Service

It is true, that Heaven is a place of eternal rest. It is not a place of sweat and travail, but a place of rest. But the rest of Heaven does not mean idleness or lack of activity, but rest from weariness, tears, pain, all kinds of trouble for curse is removed,

Revelation 22:3 And **there shall be no more curse**: but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and **his servants shall serve him**.

Revelation 7:15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and **serve him day and night** in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. 16: They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. 17: For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Our service in heaven will be perfect. It will be a service out of pure motive. We will look upon our service not as a burden but a pure blessing; not an inconvenience but a delight.

No wonder Paul could say, “to me death is gain” because in Heaven he gains a perfect service!

10. We Gain a Perfect Joy

In this world sorrow is part of our lives, but in heaven there is joy, perfect joy!

Psalms 16:11 Thou wilt shew me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.

Not only will He wipe away our tears, but He will also give us perfect joy. It is not partial joy; not imperfect joy; not joy intermingled with pain and sorrow; but joy unspeakable and full of glory! It is real joy - full, pure, satisfying, and everlasting.

Upon our arrival there, our greatest joy will not be to see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses and David. Our greatest joy will not be to see our perfected body, nor to look upon our eternal reward, as great as those are. Our greatest joy will not be to see the streets of gold, the pearly gates, and the beautiful mansions. Our greatest joy will be at last with our own eye to see the

Lord Jesus Christ in all of His glory. Our greatest joy will be to behold the Lord Jesus Christ and to be with Him to commune and serve and worship and adore Him.

1 Peter 1:8 Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory:

No wonder Paul could say, “to me death is gain” because in Heaven he gains a perfect joy!

Closing Thoughts

Do you see now why Paul could say, “to me death is gain”. Because at his death, he does not lose, he gains. He gains perfect place, perfect body, perfect spirit, perfect fellowship, perfect vision, perfect knowledge, perfect rest, perfect service, and perfect joy!

But before I close, I want to make sure everyone here understands that Paul is saying that this is not true for everyone!

He said “for to me ... ” As far as I am concerned death is gain. The implication is that, death is not gain to everyone. If that is true, how is it that Paul is able to say with confidence that to him, death is gain? How did he come to that bold confidence?

The only reason that Paul could say with confidence that death is gain is because he could also say that, “to me to live is Christ!” It is only because of his relationship with Jesus Christ.

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. 21: I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain.

For Paul, life is living in faith. Not simply faith in faith or faith in anything, but faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ, who loved him and gave Himself up for him.

How about you? Will death be gain to you? Will you enjoy the perfect place, perfect body, perfect spirit, perfect fellowship and perfect vision, perfect knowledge, perfect rest, perfect service, perfect union, and perfect joy at your death?

Today, let me remind you, along with Paul and many true Bible Christians who had gone before us are enjoying all these. It is true, we sorrow when we lose a loved one, but our sorrow is not for that loved one who passed away, but our sorrow is for us. That loved one has entered through that portal and now enjoying the blessings of Heaven.

To those among us who are not in Christ, “Come to Christ!” Come to Christ to find life. Call upon God to save you from your sins. Confess your sins and trust Christ alone for your salvation! O, may you come to know the profitable death. May you find Christ as the source of your life.

May you find Christ to be the sustainer of life. May you be able to say, “for to me live is Christ and to die is gain!”

O, Christians, how these truths should encourage us greatly!

Let me close with this song:

*Let us then be true and faithful,
Trusting, serving every day;
Just one glimpse of Him in glory
Will the toils of life repay.*

*Onward to the prize before us!
Soon His beauty we'll behold;
Soon the pearly gates will open;
We shall tread the streets of gold.*

*Refrain:
When we all get to heaven,
What a day of rejoicing that will be!
When we all see Jesus,
We'll sing and shout the victory!*

Amen!