

## Thursday

Read Philippians 1:18-26. How does Paul feel about his circumstances? How might your circumstances serve to advance the gospel? What hinders you from having Paul's attitudes toward people and circumstances? What can you do to have a better attitude?

What two things kept Paul going, according to this verse? Do you focus on these things in your tough times? Which of the two is hardest for you to focus on?

What are your "eager expectations" for the day?

*Ask the Lord to help you remember that people really are praying for you! (Our pastoral staff does ever Thursday at noon!) Hang in there – and let the Spirit of God strengthen you today! You are going to make it!*

## Friday

Read Phil. 1:27-30. How do you feel when reading "it has been granted to you not only to believe... but also to suffer"? Of course, whether we like to think about it or not, this is a fact of life: We will suffer in life, and sometimes specifically for our faith. Why do you suppose, in a letter about joy, Paul wanted the Philippians to hear this truth so bluntly?

*As you go through your day today, make the first phrase in verse 27 your goal. Pray that God will help you conduct yourself in such a manner – with joy and grace!*

## Saturday

*Today finish any devotions you may have missed, and polish up the memory. Please pray for tomorrow's services-- for all the workers and teachers, that we'll be serving in the joy of the Lord!*

*Some questions adapted from NavPress Philippians Study Guide*

# Prayer Updates

## HOSPITALIZATIONS & SURGERIES THIS PAST WEEK

Dorothy "Jeannie" Rising – blood transfusion  
Mildred Osenga – out of ICU, improving  
Roberly Bedayan – Stanford, cancer treatment

## RECENT HOSPITALIZATIONS /SURGERIES

Angel Navarro, Crystal Kusalich, Joan Anderson, Judy Helmle, Ron Berry

## HOSPICE CARE

Josephine Walmer – hospice care at Pacific Coast Manor

## HEARTFELT THANKS

From Wanda Smith Shelley: "I want to thank each one who provided support and love to our family at the time of our son's death. I am so thankful for our church family. Love to you all, Wanda"

"I want to thank our church family for all your prayers, flowers and cards, and for the many visits from the Pastoral Care Team." – Judy Helmle

ENJOYING



## "Staying Positive in Negative Times"

Message by René Schlaepfer, June 10 & 11, 2006

*Philippians 2:12-30*

*Background: For the 4 years prior to writing this letter, Paul has been in miserable circumstances:*

- Illegally arrested in Jerusalem; entangled in red tape
- \_\_\_\_\_ years in prison in Caesarea
- Put on ship for Rome to stand trial before \_\_\_\_\_
- Shipwrecked, stranded on island
- Bitten by poisonous snake
- \_\_\_\_\_ years in Roman prison
- \_\_\_\_\_ to a Roman guard 24/7; no privacy

*Yet his attitude is one of joy:*

*"... I rejoice ... and I will **continue** to rejoice." (v. 18)*

*What is his secret?*

## 4 Essentials for Joyful Living

### 1. I need a \_\_\_\_\_ greater than myself

*"Now I want you to know, brothers, that **what has happened to me** has really served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. Because of my chains, most of the brothers in the Lord have been encouraged to speak the word of God more courageously and fearlessly." (vv. 12-14)*

### 2. I need a \_\_\_\_\_ greater than myself (vv. 15-18)

*"But what does it matter? **The important thing** is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And **because of this I rejoice.**" (v. 18)*

**The point:** \_\_\_\_\_ on what \_\_\_\_\_

### 3. I need a \_\_\_\_\_ greater than myself

*"... and I will **continue to rejoice**, for I know that through **your prayers and the help given by the Spirit of Jesus Christ**, what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. 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." (vv. 19-20)*

### 4. I need a \_\_\_\_\_ greater than myself (vv. 20-30)

*"**For me to live is Christ and to die is gain**" (v. 21)*

## How would you fill in the blank?

“For to me to live is \_\_\_\_\_”

### Top answers in our society:

“For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_”

“For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_”

“For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_”

“For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_”

One problem with all four:  
\_\_\_\_\_

“The best use of your life is to invest it in something that will outlast it.” — William James

“I am torn between the two; I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. . . . Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ.” (vv. 23-24, 27)

## Why I need to know all this:

“For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe in Him, **but also to suffer for him.**” (v. 29)

\_\_\_\_\_ times are not optional;  
a \_\_\_\_\_ response is!

## Resources used in development of this message:

William Barclay, *The Letters to the Philippians, Colossians, and Thessalonians*

Charles Swindoll, *Laugh Again*

Rick Warren, *Philippians tapes series*

Warren Wiersbe, *Be Joyful*

# Daily Meditations

Brief daily devotions based on this week's topic

This week's memory verse: “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” Philippians 1:21

## Monday

Read the entire passage: Philippians 1:12-30. Looking back over this weekend's message, what major theme or point meant the most to you? Have you seen these truths make a difference in your life already? How? What concepts will you try to remember and develop in your own life for this week?

Fill in this blank honestly: “For me to live is \_\_\_\_\_.”

*Tell the Lord about tough times you may be facing – or pray for others who are facing tough times. Ask him for the peace that passes understanding.*

## Tuesday

Read Philippians 1:12-13. Paul mentions his chains in verse 13. Who was Paul chained to? How did this advance the gospel? Has God “chained” you to anyone (in a hospital bed, office, family, etc.) in order for you to share the gospel with them? How can you use these chains to the advantage of the gospel?

Read Romans 8:28-30. How do these verses relate to this topic?

*Ask the Lord to help you view your circumstances – even your chains – with joy; not simplistic Pollyanna thinking, but true joy that comes from knowing He can use even our pain to further His work!*

## Wednesday

Read Philippians 1:14-18.

According to this verse, how have the other Christians responded to the fact that Paul is in chains? Why are they now more free to share the gospel rather than live in fear? Why do you think the Christian church has tended to grow more rapidly in many areas where it is under persecution? Do you grow when persecuted? Why or why not?

For more information on Christians in prison for their faith, and how you can pray for them, see [www.prisoneralert.com](http://www.prisoneralert.com)

According to these verses, did even some of the early Christian preachers have mixed motives? Why do you think preachers sometimes are tempted to “preach Christ out of vanity”? What is Paul's attitude toward these people? How does this compare with your attitude toward pastors of other churches? Why do you think Paul is so tolerant of the preachers he mentions in this passage, and yet stands so firmly against the false teachers he mentions in Galatians chapter 1?

*Today ask the Lord to help you keep your eyes on Him when you go through tough times! Pray for our Christian brothers and sisters throughout the world now being persecuted for their faith—pray that we'll experience their commitment and they'll experience our freedom!*