



Sermon Discussion Guide

September 27, 2026

Philippians 1:18b-26

Summary

Big Idea: The Assurance of Future Joy Creates a Life Worth Living and a Death Worth Dying

Paul continues giving his update on his circumstances that started in verse 12. At the end of v18, his attention shifts from his present joy to the future. With a Roman verdict ahead, will Paul's joy continue? "Yes, and I will continue to rejoice," he declares. Why? Because when Paul looks to the future, he has the assurance of future joy. This glorious certainty radically changes Paul. It gives one overarching purpose in life (to magnify Christ), it gives him the needed resources to do that (through the Spirit & prayers of others), and it radically reorients his values (choosing to labor for the gospel joy of others, rather than depart to be with Christ). Do you know your future? Does this knowledge produce these same fruits in your life?

Discussion Questions

1. What comes to your mind when you think about the future? What are your desires and hopes, or things you would like to accomplish? Why?

Read Philippians 1:18-21

2. How is Paul so convinced that there is joy in his future?
 - a. When you think about the future, do you think more about the known or unknown?
3. How does Paul's assurance impact the way he lives now? How does it transform his desires?
 - a. How has this assurance impacted your life?
4. To Magnify Christ - What would it mean for you, to have your life be the way that others, Jesus closer and bigger than perhaps they currently do?
 - a. To live is Christ. What makes you **come alive**? The things in this life that excite you, do they compete with or eclipse your joy in Jesus, or do they fuel it? How?
 - b. To die is Gain. How is death gain and not loss?
5. How does assurance relate to the help of the Spirit through the prayers of others? (v19).
 - a. When was the last time you asked for help? Is that easy or hard for you? Why?
 - b. What does Paul's dependence on receiving help teach us about magnifying Christ?
6. **Read 1:21-26.** How does the assurance of future joy reorient what Paul desires and values? How does Paul make his "choice"? What criterion is at work here?
 - a. How does it relate to the next chapter, 2:3-4?
7. From these verses, 1:18b-26, how would you discern false from true assurance?
8. Does Paul's understanding of God's sovereignty (expressed in 1:6) lead him to apathy or activity? What would apathy in our lives reveal about our understanding?
9. If ultimate future joy was not certain, how would that impact how you live now? How is it that the assurance of future joy creates the only life worth living and death worth dying?



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