

Phillipians 1:15-30 study guide

"Joy in the Midst of Trials"

Philippians 1:15-30 describes Paul's situation in prison and his response to it. Despite some preaching Christ out of envy, Paul rejoices that Christ is being proclaimed. He trusts God's sovereignty, is confident in his deliverance, and prioritizes the advancement of the gospel. Paul reflects on life and death, valuing serving Christ and being with Him. He exhorts the Philippians to live worthy of the gospel, standing firm and united in the face of opposition. The passage showcases Paul's faith, humility and focus on Christ.

Section 1: Some Preach Christ Out of Envy (1:15-17)

- Some people preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, trying to stir up trouble for Paul in prison.
- Paul's imprisonment has become well known (1:13-14), and some are taking advantage of his situation.

Section 2: Others Preach Christ Out of Goodwill (1:18)

- Others preach Christ out of goodwill, sincerity, and love.
- Paul rejoices that Christ is being proclaimed, regardless of the motives.
- Paul prioritises the gospel over personal preferences or circumstances.

Section 3: Paul's Confidence in Trials (1:19-20)

- Paul knows that his imprisonment will ultimately lead to his deliverance (1:19).
- He cites the Spirit's help and God's plan as reasons for his confidence.
- Paul's desire is to glorify Christ, whether in life or death (1:20).
- Paul trusts God's sovereignty and plans, even in uncertainty.

Section 4: Life and Death (1:21-24)

- Paul sees life as an opportunity to serve Christ and death as gain (1:21).
- He's torn between living to serve and dying to be with Christ (1:23-24).
- Paul prioritizes what will benefit others and advance the gospel.
- Paul's perspective on eternity shapes his view of life and death.

Section 5: Paul's Decision (1:25-26)

- Based on his circumstances and the Philippians' needs, Paul believes he'll remain alive.

- He wants to continue serving and encouraging the Philippians.
- Paul's decisions prioritise others' needs and the advancement of the gospel.

Section 6: Living Worthy of the Gospel (1:27-30)

- Paul exhorts the Philippians to live in a manner worthy of the gospel.
- This includes standing firm, united, and unafraid in the face of opposition.
- The Philippians are facing the same struggle Paul faced.
- Living worthy of the gospel requires courage, unity, and perseverance.

Reflective Questions

1. What different motives are mentioned for preaching Christ in this passage?
2. How does Paul respond to those who preach Christ out of selfish ambition?
3. What gives Paul confidence in his difficult situation (1:19-20)?
4. What paradox does Paul express about life and death in verses 21-24?
5. According to this passage, what should be our primary concern in life and death?
6. How does Paul's perspective on eternity influence his view of life?
7. What does Paul exhort the Philippians to do in verse 27?
8. How can believers demonstrate unity and courage in the face of opposition, as encouraged in this passage?