

Faith Talk - Feb. 8, 2026

Series: Philippians: Together for the Gospel

Sermon: Joy: Advance & Defend the Gospel

Scripture: Philippians 1:12-26

Philippians 1:21

For me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

Sermon Summary

Pastor Brian continued the Philippians series by addressing the Philippian church's concerns that Paul's imprisonment would hinder the spread of the Gospel. Paul demonstrates how his chains became opportunities as guards heard the Gospel, believers gained courage, and Christ became known throughout the imperial guard.

Paul addresses a second concern about preachers with false motives, teaching that while motives matter personally, the accurate proclamation of the Gospel is what truly counts, even illustrating the individual humility needed for unity between churches and people of different denominations.

The message culminates in Paul's famous declaration, "to live is Christ and to die is gain," showing his complete surrender to the spread of the Gospel over personal comfort. Paul's willingness to delay heaven itself to help others know Christ demonstrates the radical humility required to produce the unity in a church God would choose to use to spread the Gospel.

Discussion Questions

Conversation with Adults

1. Paul says his imprisonment actually advanced the Gospel rather than hindering it. What current difficulty or limitation in your life could God use to make Christ known if you approached it with Paul's perspective?
2. The sermon emphasizes judging people's message rather than their motives. When have you been tempted to display disunity because of secondary issues rather than unity based on the truth of the Gospel as the main issue?
3. Paul was willing to delay heaven to continue helping others grow in Christ. What personal comfort, preference, or even legitimate desire might God be calling you to set aside for the sake of church unity and Gospel advancement?

Conversation with Students

1. Paul's guards couldn't escape hearing about Jesus because they were chained to him. Who are the people "chained" to you (classmates, teammates, coworkers) who regularly hear and see your life? How could you use these relationships to make Christ known?
2. When believers saw Paul in chains, they became more bold, not more fearful. When have you seen someone's faithful response to difficulty inspire you to be braver about your faith?
3. Paul says "to live is Christ." If someone followed you around for a week, what would they say you're living for? What would need to change for them to say you're living for Christ?

Conversations with Kids

1. Paul was in jail, but he didn't waste his time feeling sad—he told the guards about Jesus! When something hard happens to you, how can you still show people Jesus' love?
2. The guards had to stay with Paul all day, so they heard all about Jesus. Who do you spend the most time with each day? How can you help them learn about Jesus?
3. Paul said going to heaven would be wonderful, but staying on earth to help people was important too. How can our family be excited about heaven while also helping people learn about Jesus here on earth?

Closing Prayer

Heavenly Father, thank You for Paul's example of viewing every circumstance, even house arrest, as an opportunity to advance the Gospel. We're grateful that You can use what seems like setbacks to actually spread Your kingdom in ways we never imagined.

We ask for help in seeing our difficulties through the lens of Your purposes rather than our comfort. Give us Paul's perspective that makes our relationship with Christ known in every situation we face. Help us to judge messages rather than motives, rejoicing whenever the truth about Jesus is proclaimed.

We commit to living as Paul did, "to live is Christ." May our lives be so focused on Your cause that we would willingly set aside personal comfort, preferences, and even legitimate desires for the sake of advancing the Gospel. Help us to have such confidence in our eternal home with You that we're free to invest everything in making You known here. In Jesus' name, Amen.