



INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been in a situation where you had to make a decision between at least two things that wouldn't only affect you but those around you? If you're an adult living with a family I'm sure the answer is a resounding "Yes!" Have you ever had to make a decision between two things that would be to your benefit no matter which way you choose? In other words, have you ever have found yourself in a "Win-Win" situation? A "Yes" answer to that question is probably not as common. We don't often find ourselves that fortunate. In today's lesson, Paul finds himself in a "Win-Win" situation. No matter which way he chooses, he would be satisfied. However, Paul places the needs and desires of others ahead of his own which tips the scales in favor of one situation over the other. Let's pray that no matter what decision we make concerning our lives (spiritually, physically, or monetarily) in Christ we place the needs and desires of others ahead of own.

Philippians 1:19-26 (NKJV)

¹⁹ For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ,

²⁰ according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death.

²¹ For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain.

²² But if *I* live on in the flesh, this *will mean* fruit from *my* labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell.

²³ For I am hard pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, *which is* far better.

²⁴ Nevertheless to remain in the flesh *is* more needful for you.

²⁵ And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith,

²⁶ that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

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Paul already knows that his current situation is only temporary. Paul realizes that we are eternal beings so that no matter how many earthly months, days or years we experience good or bad things...the experience or time doesn't compare to eternity with Christ. He also realizes that his deliverance isn't determined by his physical freedom from prison because he knows who truly delivers and that is Jesus Christ.

However, due to this strong expectation and hope, whether in custody or not, his desire is that his witness shows strong to the believer and the non-believer. His desire is to be bold in Christ no matter what situation he finds himself in, so that Christ will be brought into clear focus (magnified) in his action in life or death. If he lives he lives because of Christ alone. If he dies he will be with Christ in the heavenly realm. It's a "Win-Win" existence for Paul, and for those who follow Paul's example.



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Paul is certain that if he continues in this life there will be fruit from the seeds he plants. He's not confident in his own ability, he is confident in the power of the gospel. He knows God's word will not return to Him void (useless, without producing any effect). **(Is. 55:11)**. This section of scripture sounds as if Paul has a choice to live for Christ or to die in Christ. As it turns out, Paul did both and so can we!

Paul knows first-hand that being with Christ is far better than anything this world has to offer. Only a person who has experienced both could really do so. **(II Cor. 12:2-5)**. So, he's having a hard time making a choice to go or stay. It seems as though Paul was given the choice by God. Truly God would not honor someone who took his own life as his (Paul's, ours) life is not his (our) own. **(I Cor. 6:19-20)**.