

Philippians 1:19-30

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Preacher: Clay Naylor

[0 : 00] It's good to be back. I'm a little wired. I had a little bit of a five hour energy a little while ago. I had a long drive home from Birmingham and I made the mistake of eating fast food on the way home and it just made me like just falling asleep at the wheel.

But I've been in Birmingham the last few days just getting my stuff done at UAB, just a procedure I had to have done on Tuesday and a clinic visit Wednesday.

So it's been good to get back for the whole few hours I've been back. So this is a pretty amazing text we have tonight and I do really feel the weight of this text.

And I hope that you're able to walk away with a greater sense of what God was trying to convey to us in this. Well, I could say back in the day, but I don't know if like four or five years back in the day. But back in the day when I was in school and Nathan and Wes, Sam and Liz were at North Georgia. And we had started this Bible study and we were meeting in the Red Door apartments.

[1 : 14] What road is that off of? Like Happy Hollow? Okay, down that way. Okay. And so we were meeting in the apartments there. So around 2008, roughly, we were doing Bible study there and we were kind of really urging each other and encouraging each other to just teach the Word of God.

And at that time I taught, Nathan taught, and Wes taught, and we would just kind of flip-flop every third time. But a book that we, a second book that we had done on Thursday nights was Philippians.

And this came at a time when I was really deteriorating health-wise really, really fast. And I have, most of you know this, but I have cystic fibrosis, which is a lung disease.

I could tell you more about it later, but not to get into all that, but just over time I was losing, like, all my lung function due to the disease. And around this time I had about, roughly about 20, 25 percent of lung function, my lung function.

You would have 100 if you smoked. You might have something in the 90s or a really bad smoker in the 80s. But it's really not that much to where you can barely walk across a room and do any physical activity.

[2 : 38] And it seemed like I was going to the hospital every two to three weeks and staying for two weeks for IV medications and treatments and stuff. And it got to be a point where I was frequently spitting blood up and just a lot of bad things, not getting enough oxygen.

And so I would sleep with oxygen on. I would wear it kind of off and on throughout the day. I was just too ornery, I guess, to wear it the whole day. I was going to do something without it because I just thought, like, maybe this is wrong thinking, but I just thought if I can just be active and do a lot of things without oxygen, my body will build up, like, a greater ability to, like, you know, press on without oxygen.

I didn't want to be, like, dependent on it. But in reality, I was. And so, but on these Thursday nights, I was having to teach this Bible study wearing oxygen a lot of times.

And so these texts in Philippians are very, very, like, vivid in my memory just reading through these and what I was feeling at the time because this was the stuff that was on my mind.

I had just gotten on a lung transplant list at UAB. I thought I'd wear the shirt tonight. For some reason, I had, I got my lung at UAB. So I had Jamie draw an S on to that because I got two and not one.

[3 : 58] So, but this was the book in Scripture we were studying, and it meant a lot to me as I was going through all this stuff.

So it's very, very, speaks even now, very powerful. And having just come back from there and reminding myself, like, when you look at certain places and see certain people, it reminds you that, wow, I was here for almost a year and a half, you know.

I spent almost a year and a half of my life here and through some difficult times. So I hope that this text will speak to you.

And I was pondering a lot in my own life and death and those things. I had to plan my memorial service. I remember that. I remember sitting at Crimson Moon with Wes and Liz and talking about a lot of that.

And so we're going to talk about four things that are in this text tonight. And the first one, number one, is what is Paul's dilemma?

[5 : 04] What is Paul's dilemma? And we're going to see this in verse 22 through 24. He says, So what is the dilemma here?

Remember, he's under house arrest in Rome and he's kind of like, he's kind of doesn't really think he's going to be executed or put to death at this time. He thinks he's going to be released.

But he's aware of just his own physical mortality, if you want to call it that. And so he's pondering a lot of these things. And so the key word phrase we're looking at is in verse 23 where it says, I'm hard pressed between the two.

So hard pressed is a phrase that referred to like a traveler going on a very narrow path to where like it seemed like there's like a rock wall on both sides.

And you can't go anywhere but just straight forward. You're just kind of hard pressed. So if you hike or climb, you've been in like situations like that where there's no other way than just this way.

[6 : 25] And you're just kind of pressed in. And he's stuck between two desires that he has. And the first desire is he really desires to remain alive and to continue to love, to minister, to serve, and to give his life away to the church and the believers.

He has a deep longing for that. He wants to enable the Philippians to just grow further in their walk with Christ and see them mature in the faith. And that's his first desire.

But the second one is he really desires just to pack it up and leave this world. He really wants to go and be with Christ. He is just to a point where he's tired of the fallen flesh.

He's tired of seeing the devastating effects of sin. But a greater desire is he really just wants to be with Christ and dwell in Christ's presence for all eternity.

That's really what his true desire is. And so he's saying, I'm hard pressed here. And in his mind, going to be with Christ is far more attractive at the moment.

[7 : 32] But yet, he really doesn't have the right to decide what he's going to do. So he recognizes that. He knows that God is the one who's going to sovereignly decide if he's going to live or if he's going to die.

And so he's basically just like, Lord, I will joyfully accept whatever it is you bring my way. And so what probably happened is he's confident of his release.

Back in the first message of this series, we got into this. This is around 61 A.D. And at this time, Christianity wasn't outlawed in the Roman Empire, not at this point.

And he was hoping to go and appear before the emperor and be heard by the emperor in trial, which would have been Nero, but Nero liked his parties and he liked his wine, women, and song. And if something just kind of rolled around that wasn't that important, he wouldn't deal with it. He would just delegate it to, at this time, the empire, the commander of the Praetorian Guard. And ten other advisors, they would hear the case.

[8 : 37] And so, but most people and most Roman officials didn't consider things like these weird teachings coming out of a little desert land called Judea, any kind of threat.

So they didn't really worry about it. Just as Pilate couldn't really find any fault with Jesus, and people couldn't find anything wrong with Paul multiple times. So he's confident that though he does believe he's going to be released and remain to minister to them, he's not afraid of death.

And so he just kind of turned it over to God. Look at verse 19. For I know that through your prayers and help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, this will turn out for my deliverance.

And then jump to verse 25 at the end. He says, Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus because of my coming to you again.

So he's pretty confident that he's going to be set free and he's going to continue to minister to the believers there. But I want to just kind of highlight just two reasons underneath why Paul desires to stay in the flesh.

[10:02] But number one, this is still underneath number one, Paul's dilemma. For the furtherance of the gospel. You can see that if you rewind a little bit and look at verse 12, he talks about the furtherance of the gospel.

He's basically saying, If I live longer, I want to be advancing the gospel of Christ. I want to be proclaiming salvation in Christ to people that I'm around.

I want to stay here for the advancement of the kingdom. And so he is ready for that. He's ready to kind of go all out and just declare Christ to the lost world.

And so he longs for that. So this is a motivation that he has, a strong motivation. And so many people are longing for deliverance from darkness and sin and death.

And I long to see many people come to know Christ. I was just pondering this on the drive home when I was awake on the drive home. Like, I long to, like, see some people come to Christ.

[11:08] It gets personal and it gets even beyond that. I long to see men and women and students at North Georgia be set free and have salvation in Christ.

I long for my oldest friend that I have literally since the cradle, Chris Edwards, to have his eyes open to see the glory of Christ. As long as my brother Lee, one of my best friends, is without Christ.

And I long to see him set free from the bondage of sin and death. And if I think that I wouldn't be here to help him that, it would just grieve me. It would just make me, I want to stay here and proclaim Christ to them as long as God will allow me.

And I want to see the nations come to know Christ. Those who live in a place where Christ is not allowed to be spoken.

Our people don't know anything of Christ that live in complete darkness with no hope to be saved by the blood of Christ. So, this is a large motivation for why Paul was to stay.

[12:16] And it definitely is one of mine because I had to ponder these things. And so, that's the first one is just a motivation of his. He wants to stay to see the gospel advance.

He wants to, the Lord's like, there's a fight going on down here. I'm advancing my kingdom. Paul's like, I'll stay as long as you want me to. Get me in that fight. That's kind of how he's thinking here. But, further on, you see that he, you read this at the end of verse 25. He wants to stay for their progress and joy in the faith.

So, not just for the lost, but for the believers. He wants to see them grow and mature in Christ. And so, as your faith increases and as your faith strengthens in Christ, so does your joy.

They're like connected. So, your joy in Christ grows stronger and stronger as your faith in him increases. And he wants to stay to encourage that in them.

[13:17] And, like, I long to see that. Like, it makes me so joyful when I see some of you even in here tonight and even people from the past that have just kind of come and gone.

It gives me a lot of joy to see them just, like, running hard after Christ and laying their lives down. And reaching out to the lost and just being heartbroken over their sin and taking complete joy in Christ.

And kind of just living with this reckless abandon for the glory of God. Like, that just brings me so much joy to know that God used me in some tiny way to impact them.

And so, he wants to stay to see their faith progress. And so, he's basically just saying, like, God, I'm going to just offer this up to you.

Whatever you sovereignly ordain, I will gladly just accept. As if he had the choice anyway. But, he's saying, I'm going to gladly, just joyfully.

[14:18] Like, your will be done. Like, in Peter, 1 Peter 4, 19, he said, Peter says, Therefore, let those who suffer according to God's will entrust their souls to a faithful creator while doing good.

So, he's just aware that I'm just going to entrust my soul to God. Turn to, hold your hand and flip me, turn to 2 Corinthians 5. Real fast. And go to verse 6.

This is just kind of a mindset Paul has throughout a lot of the things that he does. Philippians 2 Corinthians 5, verse 6.

So, we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body, we are away from the Lord. So, that's us right now.

For we walk by faith and not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage. And we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. So, whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him or to honor him, to give him joy.

[15:31] Verse 10. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive what is due for what he has done in the body, whether good or for evil. So, Paul is like saying, like, whenever we are in the body or we are at the way of the Lord, we make it our goal, our aim, our purpose to honor him, to please him.

And this is just a mindset he had throughout his life. And so, I'm aware that even in this moment, like, God has allowed me to, like, stand here in front of you.

And some of you have witnessed this stuff over the years. But I'm excited to be here to see you progress in the faith and to, like, love Christ more and more and to despise the things of this world more and more.

And it brings me just a lot of joy. It really does. God has given such a privilege to many of you to see this in the lives of other people you're around, to see them grow for their joy and progress in their faith.

And I wouldn't trade what I do for anything. I really wouldn't. So, as long as I have breath, I'm going to declare to you the glories of Christ.

[16:57] And as long as I'm here, I'm going to live and fight and die for the kingdom. And until the Lord is like, you're done, come home now. And this is a mindset Paul has.

And I only have just a few places to turn tonight. But turn to Acts 20. I think these few verses are such, like, a beautiful picture of what our lives should be like.

Our life statement, if you even want to call it that. Amen. Amen. Acts 20, verse 22, Paul talking.

And now, behold, I'm going to Jerusalem, constrained by the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies to me in every city and imprisonment that afflictions await me.

So Paul understands. He doesn't know exactly what's going to happen for some people who tend to over-spiritualize matters. Paul's not getting, like, a word from God saying, if you go to Jerusalem, you're going to die.

[18:08] He just is aware that, like, wherever he goes, there's going to be affliction and suffering and pain. And so this is what happened. This is where he was finally arrested for good in Jerusalem.

So verse 24, But I do not account my life of any value, nor as precious to myself, if only I may finish my course in the ministry that I have received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

And that's such an awesome focus. And this is in light of him going to a place where he knows he's going to, like, get some serious affliction and persecution. And he's like, I don't count my life of any value.

I just want Christ to be glorified. I want to finish the course in the ministry he has given me on this earth and testify of his grace. So this is Paul's dilemma.

He's stuck. But these are the reasons he wants to remain behind is the advancement of the gospel and seeing believers grow in joy in their faith. So the second thing of all this is what is the chief aim of Paul's existence?

[19:20] What is the chief aim of Paul's existence? And back in Philippians, look at verse 20. We're going to see this. And this is one of those passages that require memorization.

They're amazing. Verse 20. It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not at all be put ashamed, but that with full courage, now as always, Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.

And so this is the aim of Paul's existence. And look at that phrase there, my eager expectation and hope. It means that he's readily, fervently, keenly anticipating the future to where I think it kind of refers to like somebody who's like kind of like going like this and really trying to look to see like what is coming.

Like he's eagerly waiting for this hope that he has in Christ and the promises he has in Christ to be fulfilled. But then he says that Christ would be honored.

Or you could insert a word glorified or magnified or exalted. And this is his aim in life that no matter what happens, Christ would be magnified, glorified.

[20:42] And so his all-embracing passion was to see the glory of Christ. Come what may, it doesn't matter. I want to see Christ glorified. And he recognized that he and us exist for that purpose.

That's what we're made for. That's what we're wired for. We were made for the glory of God. And God is worthy of all praise and honor and adoration.

And as it says in Revelation 4.11, this is one of my number one go-to verses when you're talking about the glory of God. And verse 11, Revelation 4.

Worthy are you, our Lord and our God, that receive glory, honor, and power. For you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.

So he made us, and we were his. And back in the, way back in the day, not when I was around, but in the 1600s, the Puritans in England wrote their catechism out.

[21 : 41] And one of them was, which we have a modern-day version of here that we do with our kids, is, what is the chief and highest end of man? Like, what are we here for? What is the purpose and aim of man?

And the answer is, man's chief and highest end is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. So they coexist, because that's what you were made for. When you seek a life that glorifies Christ, you receive joy as a result.

And that's what you were made for. Achieve and highest end of man to glorify God and enjoy him forever. So honored or magnified. And I'll put a pause right here and just tell you that a lot of the stuff I'm saying tonight, a book that I would recommend that you read at some point in your life, and it might take some time to work through, but probably in the top two or three life-altering books I've read is *Desiring God* by John Piper, and he talks a lot about this, just how we were made for to glorify God and to enjoy him, and how they coexist.

You can't really have one without the other, and how to glorify Christ in different areas of your life and find joy. And so a lot of things I'm saying tonight are very Piperian things.

So, but this is probably the best. I actually found somebody else that wrote this before, Piper. I was kind of shocked.

[23 : 13] But you can use the word magnify like in two different ways. You can use it when you're referring to a microscope or a telescope. And a microscope magnifies things that in reality are really, really tiny and make them a lot bigger than they are.

And a telescope makes things like planets and stars, which are in reality enormous, but that we have a hard time seeing. It magnifies them to look more like they really are, look bigger to us, to the naked eye.

And so most people, so you want to be a telescope for Christ, not a microscope, because Christ is huge, indescribable, and he's the greatest thing.

But a lot of people that you're around and people you know, Christ is just like a misty figure from history, a good moral teacher, a prophet.

They have no idea that he exists out there at all. And so when they put their eye to the telescope of your life, they can see Christ for who he actually is.

[24 : 23] And he's magnified by how you live and what you do. And you display the greatness of Christ in all spheres of your life. And they see this, and they see that he's glorious and beautiful and majestic and incomparable.

And so this is what it really means, I guess, magnify Christ. And when we do that, because of what we were created for, joy is the result.

And so we seek to find that place in our life that will magnify Christ the most. And we search that place out. Maybe places, maybe not just one place.

So that's the second thing is what is Paul's aim in his existence. And thirdly, how does Paul honor Christ? We're going to break this down.

Excuse me. So he talks about glorifying Christ in two areas, life and death. Okay, so we're going to break that down. Number three, how does Paul honor Christ in life?

[25 : 31] And look at verse 21. And he says, For to me to live is Christ. And so Paul's very being, his purpose, everything in him was found in Christ.

Christ was his portion and his joy, and that's why he lived. And so he sought to honor and to magnify Christ in his life and in his actions. But we're going to jump ahead a little bit.

Look at Philippians 3. Just go ahead a few chapters in Philippians 3 and look at verse 7. And so this text has a general meaning as well as a specific meaning.

And we're going to talk about the general meaning of it tonight and in the future more in context to what he's referring to. But Philippians 3, verse 7. Whatever gain I had, I count it as loss for the sake

of Christ.

Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish in order that I might gain Christ.

[26 : 42] So this is a picture, I guess the clearest one we could get, of how do we glorify Christ in life. So this is done by having Christ, loving Christ, valuing Christ, treasuring Christ above everything in your life.

Above everything. And displaying his word for all people to see. And so this does literally mean everything.

We have things in our life, relationships, money, possessions, food, even things like that. We have those things to display that they are not like what is most valuable to us.

And they're not what we love the most. But Christ is. And that we should often try to, not just as they come, but even deliberately think out things like, how can I display the glory of Christ in this situation?

What can I do? Jonathan Edwards, definitely one of my heroes, a guy back in the 1700s. He wrote, he had these resolutions that he wrote out for his life.

[27 : 52] And just sought to like follow those things daily. But one of the first ones he wrote about was how he just desired to glorify Christ above all things. To do all things to the glory of God.

But he gets down to resolution 23 and he says, Resolved frequently to take some deliberate action, which seems most unlikely to be done, for the glory of God.

And to trace it back to its original intention, designs and ends. And to find, and if I do not find it for the glory of God, to repute it. So this idea of like, I'm going to deliberately seek out ways to glorify Christ.

And what people wouldn't normally expect, I'm going to take, I'm going to do it to glorify Christ. And I'm going to seek this out. So money and other things, money is given to us that we use in a way that can be clearly seen by other people that is not the most important thing to us, that Christ is. And possessions, the same thing. We're to use them in a way that magnifies Christ. And in relationships, and the people that we live with, our friends, our family, were to live with them in a way that shows that they're not the most important thing to us.

[29 : 14] A marriage being a huge picture of something like that. That Christ is to be exalted in every relationship. That they are not what's the most important thing to us.

And so it would just be obvious. I remember, I hope he doesn't get mad at me for this, and he's not going to lose his reward. But a long time ago, Nathan and Wes worked at the Outdoor World in Dawsonville.

I believe they changed the name of that. They changed the name of it? Okay. It's okay. It's between you and God. But they got commissions if they sold kayaks.

And there was a girl that worked with them who just, I guess she just wasn't a good salesman or something. But she just could never get a commission. She never could sell a kayak.

And Nathan being the slide businessman he is, he was just pumping out some nice kayaks. And this girl came in and was just like, did you just sell, huh?

[30 : 16] What? I know. I know. I'm telling you. And so I was just like, or not I, excuse me. Nathan, this girl came in the store and was just saying like, did you just sell another one?

And he was like, yeah, I did. And she's like, man, I'd never sell anything. It just really was kind of broken. But he just kind of told whoever it was in charge of this, hey, just put that commission like under her name.

You know, because I really want her to have that money. And she was kind of shocked by that. And she asked him why. And he said, because money is not my God.

Christ is. You know. And that just really was a deliberate action that he took to display the glory of Christ. And so we should think that way.

We should think in what situations can I like show the worth of Christ here? And whatever you come across. So that's honoring Christ in life. To look at everything and count it as loss in comparison to knowing Christ.

[31 : 27] That word, you know, for rubbish, as it says in verse 8, is dung, refuse. So he's like saying in comparison to Christ, even the best things in this world are that.

That's kind of like what he's saying. And so that's how we honor Christ in life. So lastly, how do we honor Christ? Or excuse me.

What does Paul, how does Paul honor Christ in death? So I've had life. Now we're going to look at death. Look at back in chapter 1 again. Chapter 1 again.

In verse 21. For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. Verse 23. Jump ahead. My desire is to depart and be with Christ for that is far better.

And there's some really cool ways in which this term depart is used. There's about five. I just picked.

[32 : 31] I'm not going to go through all of those. But for one, Greek for depart, they're all metaphors. One means like a military camp kind of breaking up and like moving to a different location.

Kind of breaking down the tents. Which is a good analogy because like this, our bodies are called tents. And 2 Corinthians, it's a temporal dwelling place. And it's being moved away to a different location.

But an awesome metaphor is it was also used for sailors who were on their ships and they loosened the sails. To set sails, like out of a harbor. We're going to depart now kind of idea.

And a picture of like a ship's commander who's like in a foreign port. And he's on business there or something. But he has a strong desire to go back to like his native country and to his people and his family.

But his desire is kind of counterbalanced by his conviction that he needs to stay in his port and conclude the business. And he's going to wait until he receives orders from the superior to return home.

[33 : 43] So it's kind of like this. And then he will depart and go back to his home country. So his heart's at home. But like he's here for his mission and because he hasn't received orders to return.

And awesome nautical metaphor there. But thirdly, it also means setting free of a prisoner. And believers, if you truly know Christ, there's a huge part of you that just longs to like be set free from this.

And like you hate it when you sin. You hate it. You hate it. You despise it. And you're sick of having to fight temptation everywhere you look.

And you're tired of like the physical limitations the body has. And you're like Paul in Romans 7. And you long to just go and like be with Christ.

And to shed the limitations of the body and temptations of the flesh. And so he understands that like dying is like to be set free from that.

[34 : 47] And so he desires to depart and to be with Christ. Another metaphor there. And where he says to be with Christ is far better. It's like this phrase like much, much more better.

Like that's kind of like what it's saying. This is not just a little better. It's like not even comparison better. And this is what I desire. Like I have a desire to depart and to be with Christ.

A great pastor back in the 1800s in Scotland, Robert Murray McShane. He wrote, I long for love without any coldness, light without dimness, impurity without spot or wrinkle.

I long to be at the feet of Jesus and tell him I am his and will ever be. And like that's, man, just to be in the presence of Christ and to kind of shed this.

I was, when I was in Ireland this summer, I was praying and I was just, I was out in the middle of nowhere. So nothing around me to distract me. But like my heart just kept thinking about all these worldly things while I was trying to pray.

[35 : 57] I was trying to focus on the Lord and trying to pray. But these just stupid things were just coming to my mind. And I was just having to like, just redirect my attention. You know what I'm talking about? Like you're just, that kind of stuff just bombarding you.

And I was just, I just got, I was just broken. I'm like, God, how can I, how can I not just focus on you right now? This kills me. I hate this. Help me to, to focus on you.

And I was just grieved. And because in this life, we're not able to embrace the fullness of who we are in Christ. We're not able to just attain the, the, the fullness of who we will be in the glorified state.

And it breaks our hearts. And that's why Jesus said, blessed are those who mourn for you will be comforted. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness. You will be filled.

And so he's saying like, these are healthy symptoms. If you're in this life, if you feel that way, like this is, this is weird. And this is not my home. And I long to go and to be with Christ so I can be set free from this and to dwell in his presence forever.

[37 : 02] So you long to be at the feet of Jesus and tell him that you're his and will ever be. So, so Paul glorifies Christ by seeing his death as gain.

And so when that day comes for you, if you have the privilege of having that, that time to like premeditate your death a little bit.

Some of you just, some people say I'm going to get killed by a horse and nothing's going to, I'm just going to go out. So I've had a lot of people tell me that for some reason. I've had some bad horsing accidents before.

But, but most times I've experienced near death and this, I've lost count now. I've had time to think about it a little bit.

And what glorifying Christ in your death looks like is being able to, to let everything go.

[37 : 58] To look at your friends, your family, those that you love the closest, the things you love doing. And, and being able to say joyfully, not like, oh well, this stinks, I want to stay here kind of thing.

But, but joyfully leave it all behind to go and be with Christ. And to look at those people in the eye and be like, it's all right. Like I'm, I'm, I'm good.

And it is well with my soul. And I'm going to be in the presence of Christ. It's, it's okay. I'm going to, as David wrote, I'm going, I'm going to God, my exceeding joy.

And that's like what you, you can say at your deathbed. To be with Christ in paradise. And so there's like this greater desire in you to go. Like just to, to leave and go and be the Lord.

And you see it as gain and not loss. And I'm not saying you should be indifferent. I mean, sure, you're going to miss people here and miss things you do. But, but I can promise that once you cross over, you're just not going to care anymore.

[39 : 04] You're just going to be pretty happy, pretty joyful. Being in the presence of Christ forever. Because it says in Psalm 16, in God's presence is fullness of joy, not pieces of joy.

And in his right hand there are pleasures forevermore. And who's at the right hand of God? You know, you're going to make that connection. And Christ is at the right hand of God. So pleasures forevermore are found in Christ.

And so we glorify Christ in our death by seeing death as gain. And having a desire to, a greater desire to depart and be with Christ in eternity.

And so, last place just to look at, look at Psalm 96. Psalm 96 and go to verse 6.

This is just a picture of the glory of God and the joy of being in his presence.

[40 : 14] Splendor and majesty are before him. Strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples. Ascribe to the Lord, O Lord, O glory and strength.

Ascribe to the Lord, O glory due to his name. Bring an offering and come into his courts. Worship the Lord in splendor of his holiness. Tremble before him, all the earth.

Say among the nations, the Lord reigns. Yes, the world is established and it shall never be moved. He will judge the people with equity. Let the heavens be glad and let the earth rejoice.

Let the sea roar and all that fills it. Let the field exult and everything in it. Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy. Before the Lord, before he comes, before he comes to judge the earth.

He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in his faithfulness. And just longing to like go and be in God's presence and to make God known.

[41 : 23] I think this should be our prayer. That we would come to the Lord. And this is not easy to pray this. But to go to the Lord and to say, Father, grant me, if you please, any life and any death that will allow me to know you more.

And that will allow me to make you known among the lost. And if you please, give me this. And that's a hard prayer to pray.

Any life and any death that will glorify Christ. If you're serious, then God could do some amazing things. Just to bring honor to his name and his temporal life that we are in.

And so may that be our prayer. Let me just pray for us and then we're just going to respond and sing a little bit. So I already got started late. We had some problems with the sound in the back. And I think it's like bed night for some fraternities.

But I had a lot of texts from God saying, I can't be here tonight. I can't be here tonight. So it's funny. People are like, let me know that I can't be here. It's like, it's okay. Do what you got to do. So let's pray and then we'll respond and sing.

[42 : 35] God, you are holy and you are exalted. And we desire to declare with our lives that you do reign. And Lord, that we, I pray that people here will feel hard press.

That they will have a desire to stay here and to proclaim your salvation to the lost. And to see the church grow in joy and in faith.

To see you flourish in a disciple's life. And God, that when we wake up every morning, we would just be keenly aware.

That you hadn't just allowed us to live throughout the night just so we could live any way we wanted that day. It's not for our own sinful pleasure.

It's, you've sustained us on our beds, Lord, to know you in a deeper way that day and to make you known. There's no other reason for our existence. And so God, help us to seek out those things, whether by life or by death, that you would be magnified.

[43 : 48] And that if we're afraid of death or afraid of losing things in this life, that we would see it as gain. And that you would overcome all fear and doubt and anxiety.

And glory, glorify your name and bring honor to yourself, Lord, just through our lives. And when the time comes, Lord, through our deaths in whatever way you see fit.

And we wait upon you. We entrust our souls to you, our good and faithful sovereign creator. Be glorified in Christ's name. Amen.