

## Reflection Questions: Philippians 1:18-26

For the message, "To Live Is Christ, To Die Is Gain" given by Pastor John Ferguson at Mercy Hill Church in Bryan/College Station, Texas, on October 30, 2022

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*These reflection questions are designed to help you apply the message from the Scriptures by helping you think through application to your personal life, your church life, and your city's life. You can use these by yourself for reflection, or with your family or small group for discussion. To review the message, go to [MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages](http://MercyHillBCS.org/resources/messages).*

### **INTRODUCTION**

**Pray.** Take a moment to pray asking God to guide you in reflecting upon the Scripture text.

**Read the Scripture text:** Philippians 1:18-26

**18** Yes, and I will rejoice, **19** for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, **20** as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. **21** For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. **22** If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. **23** I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. **24** But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. **25** Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, **26** so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

**Summary of the message:** For the Christian, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

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### **Let's get started...**

- What initially grabs your attention as you reflect on this excerpt from the Apostle Paul's prison letter to the Philippians?

### **QUESTIONS**

#### **1. Let's think about how this text applies to our lives as individuals.**

- As the Apostle Paul is "in chains for Christ," he contemplates his upcoming trial before the Roman Emperor, Nero Caesar. Paul wants more than anything for Christ to be "honored in my body, whether by life or death." And then he says, "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."
  - How does this pithy statement capture your attention? How does it stir your imagination?
  - What questions does it raise for you?
- What do you think it would mean for you to desire that Christ would be honored "in my body"?
  - If you have time, look up Romans 12:1-2 and 1 Corinthians 6:20. How do these verses shape your thinking?

- As Paul thinks about his potential death, he says, “I desire to depart and to be with Christ, for that is far better.” Is this how you normally think about life and death? If so, why? And if not, why not?
  - The Apostle Paul clearly wants the Philippians (and us) to follow his example in desiring to depart and be with Christ. What obstacles might be keeping you from thinking / desiring this? How might you grow in wanting the same thing?

**2. Let’s think about how this text applies to us as a community of Jesus’ followers.**

- How does embodying the central truth of this passage—that to live is Christ, and to die is gain—help us become more fully and truly ourselves, the people God is creating us to be?
- How can we pray for you, that you would grow more in the conviction, “To live is Christ, and to die is gain”? How do you need encouragement to live this out?

**3. Let’s think about how this text applies to our city.**

- What kind of community is this text calling us to become for the sake of the world? In other words, how does this text form our missional identity to live out and proclaim the gospel of Jesus?
- What kind of new life / future in Christ is this text calling our city to experience?

CONCLUSION QUESTION

What is the one thing you want to take away from this study to remember or to make a change in your life?

PRAYER

What are some ways you can turn what you are learning into prayer? List them as bullet points....

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