

# Philippians Chapter 1 B

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[ 0 : 00 ] As you all know, the Apostle Paul did not have an easy life. He lived for the Lord. He died in the Lord.

He had a blessed life. God does not promise His people an easy life. He does promise them a blessed life.

Paul is writing this epistle to the Philippians while he's in chains. That is, he's under house arrest. He cannot preach. What a tragedy for Paul. He cannot preach. A man of God who's called powerfully to be a preacher, who experiences woe unto me if I preach not the gospel, there is no greater burden for him than to be able not to preach.

Yet Paul, in all his affliction, is so one with God's will that though if you said to him, Paul, would you rather not be able to preach and die?

[ 1 : 16 ] Or would you rather be able to preach and live? He'd say, I don't know what I would pick, he said. But for him, not being able to preach was really worse than death.

And yet, in this epistle he says, Rejoice! And again I say unto you, rejoice! For I have learned in whatsoever state I am therewith to be content. This is amazing.

Paul has learned sweet submission before God to all of the ways of God. And how is that possible? Perhaps you too have wondered, How can you be so content when God seems to cross your path? Well, the answer lies in living not for yourself or to yourself or by yourself or out of yourself.

But the answer lies in living to and for and in and through and out of the Lord Jesus Christ. And that's what Paul is saying in the text I want to expound for you this morning.

[ 2 : 28 ] Which I think is one of the biggest texts in all the Bible. You know Charles Spurgeon said, Preachers ought often to preach the big texts of the Bible. Texts that are so big that if the preacher did nothing but just repeat the text all sermon long, you'd have a great sermon.

Well, this is one of them. Philippians 1, 21. These simple words, For me, to me, to live, is Christ.

And to die is gain. So I want to speak to you about this theme of the only way to live and die.

In two simple thoughts. First, how Christ can be our life. And second, how death can be our gain.

Now Paul loved the Philippians.

He felt nostalgic about the Philippians. After all, for Paul, the Philippians brought back all those memories of going down to the riverside when he couldn't find a synagogue.

[ 3 : 36 ] And there was Lydia and she got converted as she attended to the words spoken by Paul. And then he was thrown in jail. And God sent an earthquake.

And suddenly there was a Philippian jailer, a tough Roman soldier, in front of him saying, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? God wonderfully saved him, his wife, his children.

That very night, they were baptized. The Philippian jailer and his family and Lydia were the first converts. The seabed, if you will, of the Philippian church.

And that church was small. It was not well to do. But that church had ministered to Paul's needs physically. Paul was amazed by it.

And he tells them, The fact that it comes from you means more than what you actually gave me.

You can identify with that, can't you? If you get a gift from someone who can't afford much.

[ 4 : 39 ] But it comes from them and you love that person. Or better yet, if something comes from God. Even if it's small in your life, it's from God. It's big. Because God is big in the horizon, in the panorama of your life.

And so Paul is saying, I'm so grateful for you, Philippians. You mean so much to you. I'm praying for you daily. And I feel your prayers for me. And the love bonds are there. Even though I'd rather die and be with Christ, I'm quite content to stay here.

In fact, it's necessary for me to stay here to minister to you. And so Paul is in a very reflective mood as he's writing Philippians 1. Under the inspiration of the Spirit.

He's talking about dying. He's talking about living. He's reflecting on his bonds of imprisonment.

He's saying, I believe God's going to use these bands to somehow bring me deliverance.

It's all going to be for my good. Don't worry about me, Philippians. It will be for your good. All things work together for good. And then at the end of verse 20, it's as if Paul just sets down his pen for a moment.

[ 5 : 46 ] And he's thinking, what is my life? What is my whole life? What is life all about? He picks up his pen again.

And he writes these simple words, which are like a title over his life. Like a succinct summary of who he is.

And in Greek, you know, there's no linking verbs. So you don't need the two ises. That's why in the authorized version, the two ises are in italic. It's not there in the original. It's like a staccato title.

For me to live Christ. To die gain. That's it. That's what life is all about, Philippians. That is what we need as well.

But that raises the question, doesn't it? What does it mean to live Christ? To die gain? Well, I'd like to suggest to you that, though this won't be exhaustive, that to live Christ means at least four things.

[ 6 : 59 ] Four things. First of all, it means to be linked with Christ. Like a chain. You know, boys and girls, when a link is in a necklace like that, one link is inside of another.

You can't pull them apart, can you? The two links aren't the same thing. The two separate links, but they're linked together. And that's what happens, you see, when a sinner gets saved.

He becomes linked with Jesus. You can't pull them apart. Theologians call this a fancy word that I mentioned in my talk to the children. Justification.

It means we're united with Jesus. Jesus. By faith. Justified in him. Forgiven by him and in him and through him.

So that we have relationship. Real relationship. With him. We're connected. You know, I don't know if that's true in England, but in America, young people often speak of their friends these days.

[ 8 : 09 ] They say, we're connected. They're connected in so many ways. In the physical world, in the electronic world, they're connected.

You know, when my son goes hunting and he gets something, he's connected immediately with all kinds of friends. He tells them all.

And they all know it. Like in five minutes. Connected. Well, you see, when you're a Christian, you're connected with Jesus Christ. When you have a problem, he knows it in five minutes.

He speaks to you through his word. You speak to him through prayer. There's a two-way communication going on. It goes on. 24-7.

It's not just your stated times of prayer. But you're sighing to him. You're crying out to him. You're thanking him. You're confessing to him. You're praising him. There's a relationship.

[ 9 : 03 ] You're connected. If you live Christ. He's in your thoughts. He's in your words. He's in your actions. You see, this hasn't always been the case with Paul.

There's once a time Paul was very disconnected with the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, he was persecuting his followers. Throwing them in jail. Abusing them.

If Paul had to summarize his life in one word before he was converted, he would have had to say, For me to live? Moses. I serve the law.

I'm a strict Pharisee. I relish my legalistic, man-made righteousness. But on the way to Damascus, it all changed, didn't it?

A light shone from heaven. Paul fell to the earth. Trembling. Blinded. Astonished. Conquered by God. And you know the story.

[ 10 : 02 ] His friends bring him to Damascus. For three days, he can't see. He can't eat. He can't drink. He can only pray. And there in the street called Straight, the Holy Spirit causes Paul to see who he really is.

In the mirror of the holy law of God. And now, what is Paul's life? For me to live? Sin.

I'm a lost sinner before a holy God. I'm a stranger to God. A stranger to grace. A stranger to Christ. Paul's uncircumcised heart is humbled.

And there he accepts the punishment of his inequities. He deserves to perish. But there too, in the street called Straight, the Holy Spirit leads this persecuting Pharisee to Jesus Christ.

The scales fall from Paul's eyes. And he says later to the Galatians, It pleased God there to reveal his Son in me. That I might preach him among the heathen.

[ 11 : 13 ] And so in one moment, you see, Paul switches ownership. In one moment, he's justified. He's united, connected with the Lord Jesus Christ.

Never to be disconnected again. He's filled with peace that passes all understanding. And he wants to preach Christ. And he goes out and preaches him.

Called to it by God. To preach him to kings and nobles and poor people. And Jew and Gentile. And the entire world. Paul's church is the world.

His mission field is everyone. Every unconverted person ought to be a mission field to us.

Straightway, he preached Christ in the synagogues.

Says Acts 9.20. That he is the Son of God. And he says, What things were counted gain to me before. I now count loss for Christ. I count everything else like garbage, he says.

[ 12 : 14 ] That I might know him. And the power of his resurrection. He is everything to me. For me to live. Christ. Christ. Because he's my justification.

He's connected. With me. And I. With him. You see, when you're linked with Jesus, you're justified. And to be justified, two things need to happen.

That you can't perform yourself. And only someone else can perform for you. And that someone else needs to be God. To give infinite value to those two things.

And that someone else must also be man. In order to take our place. So that someone else can only be Jesus Christ. God, man, savior. And the two things are these.

Number one, someone needs to pay for our sins. And wipe away that whole bad history. And give us a new heart. Because that's our double problem, isn't it?

[ 13 : 16 ] We've got a bad heart and a bad record. And someone needs to wipe that away. Give us a new heart. Wipe away the bad record. And then obey the law perfectly for us.

So that we can have a right to eternal life. Now, most of the time when we think of justification, we think of forgiveness of sin. That's a big part of it. But there's another part as well.

It's not enough to just have my sin wiped away. I need to have a right to eternal life. And that could have been given to Adam if he had continued in obedience to the law written on his heart in paradise.

But he broke that law. And we fell in him. And so what has to happen is this. Someone who's absolutely perfect, which is Jesus, who's almighty God, has to come and become man, suffer and die in his passive obedience, pay for all our sins, and then have his death imputed to us so that we can be saved in him.

He takes our sin and we take his righteousness. But that same person also needs to obey the law perfectly for us, to love God above all, to love his neighbors himself, which he did for all 33 years he was here in this world, so that that obedience, which we call active obedience, can also be imputed to us.

[ 14 : 44 ] And as Calvin would say, through that double obedience of Jesus Christ imputed to us, in the moment when we, by grace, may believe in him alone for salvation, we are saved, we are justified, we are counted righteous before God, as if, by the alien righteousness, as if we had never sinned.

That's the gospel. And you see, once you understand that, you live. You are spiritually alive. You live, and you see that before the moment you began to live, you were dead.

And Christ becomes all. And you can say, for me to live, Christ. Secondly, to live Christ, isn't only to be linked with him, but it's to find life in him.

That is that other word I was talking about, sanctification. That Christ is my life, day by day. The aim of my daily life.

When I get up in the morning, my prayer is, Lord, help me to live to Jesus today. Help me to think like him, to speak like him, to act like him. Conform me to his image.

[ 15 : 58 ] Transform me by his grace. Lord Jesus, be my teaching prophet today. Be my interceding high priest today. Be my ruling and guiding king today. As I want to show you tonight in the sermon, this savior, as prophet, as priest, and as king, can meet all our needs.

We don't need anything more than the Lord Jesus Christ. So he becomes our life. And so what's to live Christ is to find life in Christ.

Daily life in Christ. So that we are made holy, day by day, sanctified, set apart for the master's use. And so when you're a Christian, though you don't live this to the full because you still have remaining sin here and you wish you could, but when you become a Christian, for you, everything outside of Christ really smells like death.

And everything in Christ and all that flows out of him is life. And so if we were to pass around paper this morning, and the paper just said this, for me to live, and there's one word, you can only fill in one word, what would you put down?

I'm talking about on a daily basis. What really is your life all about? If I woke you up at three o'clock in the morning and said, don't think about it now, too long, I want you to analyze too much, but what's your life?

[ 17 : 24 ] What's everything to you? Would you say immediately, it's Christ. No doubt about that. Or would you say for me to live, well, if I'm honest, it's reputation.

Money. friends. My spouse. My kids.

Grandkids. What is your life? Is it Christ?

Is he the bullseye? Is he the center? Is he... Everything. Really, everything to you.

Well then, thirdly, if our life is Christ, we don't only have linkage with Christ and life in Christ, but love for Christ.

[ 18 : 34 ] Paul said, the love of Christ constrains me. Paul was, may I say it? I say it reverently. In love with the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was his greatest motivator.

Christ was the engine that made the train of his life run. You know, there's an old saying in, all roads lead to Rome in the ancient world.

But you see, for Paul, all matters, large and small, lead to Christ because Christ is all. That's it. He's everything. And it's amazing when you read his epistles, I mean, I'll just do it right now.

This page, this is just this page that's open. Christ, Christ, Christ, Christ, Jesus, Jesus Christ, Christ, Lord Jesus, Christ, Christ, Christ, I'm not even reading the he's and the him's and the his's. This, this, every page of Paul's epistles has dozens of references to Jesus Christ. No matter where he goes, no matter what problem he confronts, no matter, no matter what it is, you see, as he speaks to the lost, as he speaks to the saved, the answer is always Jesus, Jesus Christ, Lord Jesus, Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 19 : 48 ] Christ is everything. It's because Paul loves him. He says to the Colossians, Christ is all and in all. Everything I believe, everything I have, everything I am, I believe and I have and I am in relationship to Jesus Christ.

He's my only theme. I'm determined to know nothing among you save Jesus Christ and him crucified and him exalted. what a glorious love Paul has for a Savior of whom he has to say, we love him like the Apostle John because he first loved us.

So are there divisions in the church in Corinth? What does Paul say? Is Christ divided? Is there a problem with an immoral man in the assembly?

Purge out the old leaven, you may be a new lump for Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us. Are there problems with people with immoral temptations? He says, you are washed, you are sanctified. Such were some of you, but you are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus. How are you to live as a Christian husband? You are to love your wife as Christ loved the church.

[ 21 : 06 ] How are you to live as a Christian wife? You are to respect Jesus Christ the way the church, respect your husband the way the church respects Jesus Christ.

How are you to forgive each other? The way Christ forgives you. Colossians 3.13 How are you to be generous in your giving? The way Christ was generous in giving his all for us.

2 Corinthians 8.9 You see, when Paul exhorts us to humility, he says, put on Christ. Philippians 2. When he exhorts us to holiness, he says, it's on the ground that we're crucified and risen with Christ.

Romans 6. Christ is the answer, you understand, to everything. To the lost, to the saved. He's all I preach. He's the sum and substance of my ministry for me to live. Christ, I love him with heart and soul and all.

Puritan Thomas Brooks said, Christ is lovely. Christ is very lovely. Christ is most lovely. Christ is always lovely. Christ is altogether lovely. Christ is the most sparkling diamond in the Father's ring of glory.

[ 22 : 11 ] Christ is the most Christ. Christ is the most of you. Christ is the most of you. Christ is the most of you. Christ is your life. And you'll want to keep his commandments.

This leads me to my forethought. Likeness to Christ. If Christ is all, if I live Christ, I want to be like him.

Have you ever seen a very aged marital couple, maybe they've been married 65 years, and they're weak and frail, but have you ever seen that?

If they're really in love still, madly in love with each other, it's almost like they start to sound alike and they look alike and they, you can't imagine the one without the other. And you say, well, all those years together, they almost, they almost become, they really do become more and more one. It's one thing to be stated that you're one in marriage and you walk down the aisle out of the church holding hands as one. It's another thing to live a life of oneness. And that takes a lifetime.

[ 23 : 27 ] But it's beautiful to see it in an elderly couple, isn't it? Just as it is so sad to see an elderly couple bickering and fighting. 65 years of nagging and fighting.

Oh. But a oneness. Oh, it's so beautiful. That, you see, is what God's people want.

And what they really do begin to be more like, even though they sometimes can't see it. Oh, wretched man that I am. but it becomes more and more true.

It really does. I learned to lose my own righteousness. I learned to cling more and more to the righteousness of Christ. You know, when a couple becomes that way, it's so beautiful because, you know, they can almost finish each other's sentences.

They think alike. They speak alike. They walk together. They talk together. They pray together. They maybe even read together. They just love each other. They become like each other.

[ 24 : 32 ] Thomas Boston said, I make a holy resolution that wherever I go, whatever I do, whatever I say, I will leave the aroma of Christ behind.

What a blessing to smell like Christ. probably the biggest compliment a Christian can ever get is when another Christian says to him in all sincerity, not shallowly, but deeply, I see Christ in you. But what does it mean to become like Christ? John said, if all the things were to be written about what Christ was like, the world can contain all the books. We have 70,000 books in our seminary. They're really all about Christ and they only scratch the surface. So how can you become more like Christ? Well, I think if you boil it all down, you can get to some major things and I'm just going to give you three of them real quickly.

Three major things to become like Christ. If you become more like Christ, you grow, first of all, in what I'm calling a servant heart. You know, I have a brother named Jim and he came into my bedroom one day when he was 19 years old, I was 16, and he said, brother, he said, I found out what life is all about and I can summarize the whole of life in one word.

[ 26 : 04 ] I said, wow, what's that? He said, service. I said, what? He said, service. I said, explain. He said, well, it's quite simple. God made us to serve him and to serve one another and to serve creation.

That was the whole purpose of life and then we fell and we became self-centered, self-serving, but when we get regenerated, God puts those new principles in us and we go through a process all our life of becoming more and more servant-oriented.

So we serve God and we serve our neighbor and we serve the church and we serve the world. That's what life is all about. I said, yeah, it sounds pretty good to me. Well, nearly 50 years later, I think it sounds very good to me.

See, Christ didn't come to be ministered to, he says. I came to minister. This is the character of Christ. You become a servant. What gives you the most reward? When someone hands you a \$10,000 check?

No. I mean, you need money to live. But what gives you the most reward is when you can serve someone else and give to them or give to God or lead someone in gospel ways, that gives you true joy because that resonates with the purpose for which you were created.

[ 27 : 27 ] Service. So would your spouse, would your kids, would your family, would your friends say, I see you growing, growing in a servant heart.

But secondly, to become more like Christ is to develop a loving heart. A Christian ought to be more and more and more and more loving all his life.

Jesus had a perfect loving heart to begin with. He was a people person. He loved people. He took up little babies in his arms in a day when it wasn't kosher for a self-proclaimed prophet to even

notice kids.

He reached out and touched lepers when you're supposed to run away from lepers, even if you saw them 500 feet away. He embraced sinners.

He held nothing back from loving people. Do you love the souls of people? Someone said to me just when we were in one of the recent cities last week and saw all these people walking.

[ 28 : 39 ] Thousands of people walking. They said, it's like one of the old divines. I think it was William Carey who said, the thought of all those footsteps just tears my heart apart.

He went in a big city and he went down and he went down and just wept his heart out over all the people that didn't know the Lord Jesus Christ that were walking on that sidewalk. There's a need of other people sometimes overwhelm you.

You just want to, you wish you could give them all the gospel. You feel a love for strangers because they're made in the image of God and they're on their way to hell and they can have a savior.

It would mean everything to them. Become more like Jesus. Jesus wept over Jerusalem. Oh, Jerusalem, Jerusalem. If you'd only known, I would have gathered you like a hen gathers his chicks under his wings, but she would not.

Then to become more like Christ is to grow into having a humble heart. A humble heart. He was meek and lowly. We're all far too proud.

[ 29 : 59 ] But when God works in our hearts, he does work humility even when we can't see it. You know, humility is one of those graces that the more you think you have of it, the less you do because you can't see it in yourself.

As soon as you see it in yourself, you're proud. So, but it doesn't mean that we don't need it. We need it desperately. Augustine said when someone asked him what are the three graces the church needs the most?

And the answer was humility, humility, humility. Now I'm not asking you this morning, do you have all these things in perfection?

I'm asking you, do you know the beginning of these things? And is it your desire to grow in these things? Linkage with Christ, life in Christ, love for Christ, likeness with Christ, then you too can say for me to live Christ.

But now more briefly, what does it mean to die gain? What does it mean to die gain? Didn't Paul go over the top here? Just three days ago while we're over here, sadly, a 90-year-old member in my church with an 89-year-old wife driving along the road.

[ 31 : 19 ] He can't see very well. They would drive with four eyes, they would always say, because she would help him. There's a car, honey, watch out. And well, this time, it didn't work. And he plowed into the back end of a car, and his wife hit the windshield, and she died.

It's the other morning. Funeral's this week, Wednesday. I finally was able to get a hold of him last night. He said, I killed my wife.

Oh, death. It's awful. You lose a loved one, whether it's suddenly by some accident, whether it's gradually by cancer or heart attack.

Nobody wants to die slow. Nobody wants to die fast. We're born to live, not to die by nature. Death is the wages of sin. Death is ugly. Paul, what do you mean to die again?

Death is terrible. You know, if you were to ask me, what is the most awkward situation a minister can get into? I'll say to you without hesitation, it's standing beside a casket with relatives when they're not believers, and they don't know what to say, and you don't know what to say.

[ 32 : 44 ] And then someone blurts out something like this. It happens so often. Didn't they do a good job? Oh, do a good job.

Doesn't he look nice? And you want to say, no one looks nice in a coffin. Death is ugly.

Death is hard. Death is separating. Have you ever kissed a dead body? It's awful. It's like kissing a wall. Separation is terrible. How can death be gained, Paul?

Well, because of two things. Because of what Paul leaves behind and because of what Paul receives. what does he leave behind? Well, he does leave behind some good things.

He leaves behind his wonderful adopted son and brother in the Lord, Timothy. He's behind his brother, Silas. But you know what?

[ 33 : 53 ] His relationship with Timothy and Silas will be even better in heaven than it is on earth. I once preached a whole sermon about heaven at the Medtab in London and a man came up to me afterward and said, I agree with everything you said, but I really, really love my wife.

I've got a great relationship with her and whenever we talk about heaven, I always have this little resistance in me but I won't be married to her there. So, brother, you'll have a far better relationship with your wife in heaven than you ever had on earth.

You see, all the good things in life are better in heaven and the bad things are taken away. Death really is gain for the believer. But think of all the other things Paul leaves behind.

He leaves behind this body of sin and death. He leaves behind that earthly state or condition of which he frankly acknowledged, I am carnal, sold unto sin. For that which I do, I allow not.

For what I would, that I do I not, but what I hate, that do I. No more. No more, does Paul have to say. Evil is present with me.

[ 34 : 59 ] It's gone. Sin is gone. Death is gain. What will it be like to never sin, to never be tempted to sin, to never be tempted to be tempted to sin?

Here, Paul says, my life is labor and sorrow, but that will be gone too. The life of afflictions will be gone. Twice he was beaten with rods, once he was stoned, three times he suffered shipwreck, he was in the deep for a night and a day.

Perils of waters, perils of city, perils of wilderness, perils of the sea, perils of false brethren, weariness, painfulness, hunger, thirst, fastings, cold, nakedness, done. It's all gone.

No more buffeting Satan. No more trouble with the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. No more enticing world. No more mystery about that troubling thorn in the flesh that he never did quite understand.

No more unanswered prayers. No more vexing riddles. Death is gain. Not only because of what he leaves behind, but because of what he receives at death and beyond death.

[ 36 : 16 ] You know, as ugly as death is from the human perspective, from God's perspective, it is beautiful. He said, precious in the sight of the Lord is the dying of his saints.

You see, dying brings us into communion with Christ's sufferings. Dying gives us a unique experience of Christ's all-sufficient grace. Dying transforms us into Christ's image.

Dying is our last and perhaps greatest opportunity to witness for Christ's glory. best of all dying brings us into the presence of our Savior.

One old Scottish divine said, death is a wheelchair that rolls me into the presence of my Savior where wheelchairs are needed no more. all sorrow and tears are past and everlasting joy is on our heads.

I once preached in Northern Ireland ten sermons at a conference on the love of God and the last one was on the love of God in heaven and I was mentioning about how all infirmities are past and there was an elderly lady she was one of those old ladies who when she walked her top half of her body was like parallel to the ground and she had two canes and she was just walking along like this and she came up to me to shake my hand and she slowly stood up and she lifted her one cane all the way up and she said no, not needed up there anymore and she put it down and she lifted up the other one slowly nor this one either she said it's done she's going to be strong in the Lord she's going to be free she's going to worship and without handicap without drowsiness without infirmity forever in his presence enjoying Jesus you see dying brings us to eternal life life vibrant living with Christ perfect knowledge of Christ perfect activities glorifying Christ we will finally worship God perfectly without one wandering thought dying welcomes us into a perfect home perfect mansions perfect glory perfect fellowship with the saints and the angels perfect communion with the triune God in Jesus Christ we will have finally what what the old divines called the beatific vision of Jesus he will be in our eye it won't be now a mystical misunderstood vision of unity but it will be a concrete unity a unity seen a unity embraced a unity felt a unity experienced no more will

[ 39 : 04 ] Samuel Rutherford have to complain of only blinks and glances at Christ as he called but now he will abide we will abide in Jesus forever you know I we have some Nigerian students in our seminary and one of them came over about a year ago and one of the older Nigerian students introduced him to me and the the brother as he was introduced to me just kept looking at me like this and then the other the older brother realized what he was doing he said no no no he said you're in America now you're in America now in America he said to him it's rude not to look a professor in the face it's not like Nigeria where it's rude to look at him so then the brother tried to look at me a little bit longer he'd go like this he'd go like that maybe he got a half a second in but you see there the Old Testament says no one shall see his face and live but the New Testament says without contradiction they shall gaze upon his face in glory

Revelation 19 gaze upon him I will stare at him I will enjoy him my eyes will never be taken off I'll never have to look away there'll be no shame there'll be no guilt I'll be as perfect as he is perfect he'll see no transgression in his Jacob no sin in his Israel perfection will meet perfection there is a utopian marriage it's between Jesus and you dear believer forever married forever one with the Lord Jesus Christ oh death will be our gain but if you're not in Christ I need to tell you death will not be your gain if you're not in Christ the opposite will happen to you hell is the opposite it's the antonym of heaven that's why Samuel Rutherford I mentioned a moment ago said this build your nest in no tree here on earth because God has sold the entire forest to death everything here will be burnt up you've got to build you've got to put your treasure in heavenly places where moth and rust do not corrupt but you say how can I get ready for death well first thing is to be in Christ and the second thing is to be dying to your own righteousness every day in Christ

Spurgeon had it so right when he said no man will find it difficult to die on his deathbed who's dying every day throughout his life he compared it to singers he said a singer has one performance to sing in front of a large audience and he's practicing singing every day practicing practicing practicing practicing so Spurgeon said do you want to die well die every day and practice and practice the singer finally sings and it's all done he said well if you die every day to your own righteousness when your death day comes you just have to die one more time and you'll enter into glory to be with the Lord forever well let me close this sermon with two quick illustrations the first is this there was an Italian man named Galatius who was converted at the time of the reformation he gave up all his estates in Italy fled to Geneva got some instruction from John Calvin and at that time the church of Rome wrote him a letter and said we offer you a free passage back to Italy and a restoration of all your estates if you will only give up your new found reformed faith and this is what he sent back to Rome let your money perish with you who esteem all the gold in this world worthy to be compared with one hour's worth of communion with Jesus Christ one hour is worth more than everything you see Davy you were right there's only one way to live and there's only one way to die it's in Christ for me to live Christ and to die gain because I'm in Christ it's all about Christ and so let me give you a final quick illustration as a loving warning to those of you who are not yet in

Christ there was a minister by the name of Roland Hill 19th century pastor close friend of Charles Spurgeon he was discouraged that there were lack of fruits on his ministry one day he looks out his study window he sees a pig farmer going to market all these pigs following him straight into the slaughter house the guy comes out of the slaughter house Roland Hill is there to meet him and he says to him how do you do it I can't get people to follow me to what I'm teaching to follow Jesus to eternal life and you can get pigs to follow you into a slaughter house all the farmer said you didn't see what I was doing as I walked along he said didn't you notice that in my pockets was just some pigs food and every few steps I took I just let out a few crumbs here and a few crumbs there and those pigs are so stupid for a few crumbs they'll follow me to death don't you follow this world for its pigs food you'll end up like the prodigal in the pig sty it's empty it's but crumbs it's a mirage follow [ 45 : 22 ] Jesus Christ to eternal life and don't rest until you can say to for me to live Christ to die gain amen let's pray