

Saint Philip AME Church
240 Candler Rd S.E.
Atlanta, GA 30317
Rev. William D. Watley, Ph. D., Senior Pastor
Rev. Roy Jones, Jr. D.Min., Executive Minister (Presenter)
Cross Over means Living with A Purpose
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

Philippians 1:1-30 (NLT)

Greetings from Paul

1. This letter is from Paul and Timothy, slaves of Christ Jesus. I am writing to all of God's holy people in Philippi who belong to Christ Jesus, including the church leaders and deacons. 2. May God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ give you grace and peace.

Paul's Thanksgiving and Prayer

3. Every time I think of you, I give thanks to my God. 4. Whenever I pray, I make my requests for all of you with joy, 5. for you have been my partners in spreading the Good News about Christ from the time you first heard it until now. 6. And I am certain that God, who began the good work within you, will continue his work until it is finally finished on the day when Christ Jesus returns. 7. So it is right that I should feel as I do about all of you, for you have a special place in my heart. You share with me the special favor of God, both in my imprisonment and in defending and confirming the truth of the Good News. 8. God knows how much I love you and long for you with the tender compassion of Christ Jesus. 9. I pray that your love will overflow more and more, and that you will keep on growing in knowledge and understanding. 10. For I want you to understand what really matters, so that you may live pure and blameless lives until the day of Christ's return. 11. May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation—the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ—for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

Paul was grateful. He did not boast about his strength or his wisdom. He did not dwell on his success as he shared the gospel. Paul realized the God had placed people in his life who were willing to support his ministry. Paul took the time to thank the people who had supported him. Paul shares his love, longings, and feelings without any shame. We should feel comfortable about telling people that we love them.

Paul's Joy That Christ Is Preached

12. And I want you to know, my dear brothers and sisters, that everything that has happened to me here has helped to spread the Good News. 13. For everyone here, including the whole palace guard, knows that I am in chains because of Christ. 14. And because of my imprisonment, most of the believers here have gained confidence and boldly speak God's message without fear. 15. It's true that some are preaching out of jealousy and rivalry. But others preach about Christ with pure motives. 16. They preach because they love me, for they know I have been appointed to defend the Good News. 17. Those others do not have pure motives as they preach about Christ. They preach with selfish ambition, not sincerely, intending to make my chains more painful to me. 18. But that doesn't matter. Whether their motives are false or genuine, the message about Christ is being

Saint Philip AME Church
240 Candler Rd S.E.
Atlanta, GA 30317
Rev. William D. Watley, Ph. D., Senior Pastor
Rev. Roy Jones, Jr. D.Min., Executive Minister (Presenter)
Cross Over means Living with A Purpose
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

preached either way, so I rejoice. And I will continue to rejoice. 19. For I know that as you pray for me and the Spirit of Jesus Christ helps me, this will lead to my deliverance.

Paul's Life for Christ

20. For I fully expect and hope that I will never be ashamed, but that I will continue to be bold for Christ, as I have been in the past. And I trust that my life will bring honor to Christ, whether I live or die. 21. For to me, living means living for Christ, and dying is even better. 22. But if I live, I can do more fruitful work for Christ. So, I really don't know which is better. 23. I'm torn between two desires: I long to go and be with Christ, which would be far better for me. 24. But for your sakes, it is better that I continue to live. 25. Knowing this, I am convinced that I will remain alive so I can continue to help all of you grow and experience the joy of your faith. 26. And when I come to you again, you will have even more reason to take pride in Christ Jesus because of what he is doing through me.

Even when facing death, Paul did not despair. If our purpose in life is to love Christ and serve Him, God will give us joy even when we face danger and trouble. We can see every part of life as a way to glorify God and fulfill the purpose that God has for us. Our lives will be miserable if we focused on the troubles we face. If we focus on Christ and the mission, nothing will take away our joy.

Live as Citizens of Heaven

27. Above all, you must live as citizens of heaven, conducting yourselves in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing together with one spirit and one purpose, fighting together for the faith, which is the Good News. 28. Don't be intimidated in any way by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself. 29. For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him. 30. We are in this struggle together. You have seen my struggle in the past, and you know that I am still in the midst of it.

In chapter one of Philippians, Paul speaks of his unchanging mission. Paul remains on track, even in prison. He insists that his circumstances have actually turned out for the progress of the gospel. No matter where he ends up, Paul uses his platform to accomplish the mission.

The apostle also models for us an incredible attitude toward adversity. He mentions that he can't choose between life or death; to him, both seem positive options. Finally, he decides it's better for the Philippians if he lives, knowing he can be more useful to the cause while alive.

Saint Philip AME Church
240 Candler Rd S.E.
Atlanta, GA 30317
Rev. William D. Watley, Ph. D., Senior Pastor
Rev. Roy Jones, Jr. D.Min., Executive Minister (Presenter)
Cross Over means Living with A Purpose
Tuesday, May 14, 2019

- People either surrender to a cause or they surrender to their circumstances.
- You must be willing to stretch.
- Your attitude toward a task will affect the outcome.

What motivates us to keep going?

- God is the source of Paul's joy, his peace, his conquering spirit, and his heart for ministry, even when he is an inmate and in need of someone to minister to him.
- God enables us to remain confident no matter where we find ourselves.

How did Paul's sense of purpose keep him in the battle as he sat in prison? What did he learn while in prison? Consider the following:

- A purpose will motivate you.
- A purpose will keep your priorities straight.
- A purpose will develop your potential.
- A purpose will give you power to live in the present.
- A purpose will help you evaluate your progress.

Paul was a leader who never drifted from his mission. He determined to leave his mark wherever he went. George Washington Carver wrote, "No individual has any right to come into the world and go out of it without leaving behind him distinct and legitimate reasons for having passed through it."

God can be seen in people who, although they find themselves in positions of adversity, nevertheless display attitudes of conquest, joy, peace and fulfillment in ministry. We are empowered by God to fulfill the great commission in a sinful world.