Week 3 Philippians 1.18-26, 1.27-30

To Live or to Die?
The Gospel in Public

I. Prayer
II. Opening Question
   a. What are some circumstances in your life in which God has proved himself faithful regardless of how you felt?
III. Read N.T. Wright Commentary p.90-96
IV. Scan Aesthetic Commentary p.48-63
V. Discussion Questions
   a. Has there been a time when you endured suffering because of your beliefs or convictions? What form did that suffering take? Reflect on that time and what you learned from it.
   b. How is Jesus Christ depicted in your culture? Is he the same Jesus you see in Scripture?
   c. How accurately does your experience of Church—fellowship, worship, teaching, outreach, mission—reflect Jesus Christ as you see him in Scripture?
   d. In what ways do you find yourself or your congregation trying to make Jesus Christ and the Good News conform to the expectations of your culture?
   e. What about Jesus Christ is so important to you that you would be willing to suffer and even die rather than renounce him?
   f. Read some accounts of contemporary people who are suffering because they are Christ followers. How does their story speak to you? How is their story part of yours?
   g. Read Philippians 1:18-26. Paul struggles with whether it would be better to die in custody or to be released and live. In either outcome, death or life, what are the advantages to Paul?
   h. How would his comments help the Philippian Christians deal with their worries about Paul?
   i. Paul feels confident that God has more work for him to do (vv. 23-25), even though he admits that his first desire is to be with God. How can his attitude here serve as a model for us in times of waiting?