

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?