

# What Does It Mean: “To Live is Christ & To Die is Gain”?

*Philippians 1:19-26*

## I. v21 - Life Means Service & Commitment

### A. What does it mean to belong to someone or something?

1. **ILL: Bob Feller was owned by baseball.**
2. Christians are owned by the Lord Jesus.
3. **Christian** (Χριστιανους) = a Latin form of a Greek word meaning “Christ’s” or “of Christ”. Found 3 times in the NT:
  - a. **Act 11:26** - The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.
  - b. **Acts 26:28** - Then Agrippa said to Paul, “Do you think that in such a short time you can persuade me to be a Christian?”
  - c. **I Pet 4:16** - However, if you suffer as a Christian, do not be ashamed, but praise God that you bear that name.
4. Described in **Rom 14:7-9** - For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.

### B. The Old Testament example of people who were dedicated to the Lord were the Nazarites (**Num 6:1-21**).

1. They dedicated themselves - or were dedicated by their parents (נָזַר = to separate, consecrate, to vow).
2. **ILL: Samson** (**Judg 13:1-5**).
  - a. In a time of weakness, he let his enemies control him.
  - b. When you let the world control you - you also become weak & blind!
3. **ILL: Samuel** (**I Sam 1:11-28**).
  - a. He was dedicated to the priest Eli by his mother Hannah.
  - b. When you are given completely to the Lord, He will use you!

### C. The best New Testament example of dedication to the Lord was the Apostle Paul.

1. When the Lord uses you - you will be effective in your ministry.
2. **v13** - He influenced even the palace guard.
3. **v14** - He was an encouragement to other believers.
4. **v20** - He always portrayed courage for Christ.
5. **v22** - When he did something for the Lord, it was fruitful.

D. So - "for you to live as Christ" - means:

1. **v8** - You should have the affections of Christ.
  - a. A deep affection for brothers & sisters in the church.
  - b. A desire to be with them for worship & study - fellowship.
  - c. A devotion to help one another - to satisfy needs - to love them.
2. **v12-18** - You should have the interests of Christ.
  - a. **v13** - Like Paul - proclaiming the gospel.
  - b. **v14** - Like Paul - encouraging other believers to proclaim the gospel by them seeing your example.
  - c. **v17-18** - Like Paul - rejoicing when the gospel is proclaimed even by people who are against you.
3. **v19** - You should have the Spirit of Christ.
  - a. This means having the Lord's aims & motives.
  - b. **Act 2:38** promises you the indwelling gift of the Holy Spirit.
  - c. You need to come to the point in your life where you can say, **I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. - Gal 2:20.**
  - d. The Lord will give you the power to overcome temptation & accomplish His will only to the degree that you crucify your old self!

## II. v23 - Death Means Salvation

A. How many of you want to go to heaven? How many of you want to go right now?

B. God's word tells us that being with the Lord in heaven is much better than living this old life on earth!

1. The Lord said, **Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am. - Jn 14:1-3.**
2. Do you trust that Lord Jesus included you when He said that?

C. When you are "in Christ" you never have to doubt your salvation.

1. You & the Lord have a slave/master relationship.
  - a. The slave's obligation was to do his master's bidding 24 hours a day & to remain faithful.
  - b. The master's obligation was to provide all of his slave's needs & protect him from harm.
2. Salvation is promised to those "in Christ".
  - a. **Rom 6:11** - In the same way, count yourselves dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.
  - b. **Rom 6:23** - For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
  - c. **Rom 8:1** - Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
  - d. **Rom 8:39** - neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
  - e. **II Cor 5:17** - Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

For me to live is Christ & to die is gain! He who is born of God overcomes the world! Life means victory, purpose & meaning. Death means victory over the grave & eternal life with a loving God. So live your life for Christ. Look forward to when you die - being launched into an everlasting life in heaven!