

The Joy of Ministry, Part 4

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Philippians 1:12-26.

B. It is part of spiritual greatness to want to be with Christ intimately, so there is tension between wanting to stay on earth and wanting to be with Christ in heaven.

C. Paul experienced this but he assures that the Philippians that he had great joy related to his ministry.

D. Paul's point was that joy did not come from his circumstances.

E. Paul had two great desires.

II. Remaining in the flesh.

A. This means living physically. (2 Corinthians 5,, Galatians 2:20,1 Peter 4:2)

B. Paul sought to bear fruit in the world: righteous deeds and people. (Romans 1, Philippians 1:11, Galatians 5)

C. Fruit comes from work.

III. Being away with the Lord.

A. Paul says he does not know which he would choose.

B. He felt pressured from both sides.

C. Paul's departure is a way of talking about his death. (2 Corinthians 5)

D. Paul just wanted to be with Jesus Christ.

E. One is immediately in the presence of Christ when he or she dies. (Acts 7, 2 Corinthians 5:6)

F. We will always be in the presence of Christ after death.

G. Advancing faith is accompanied by increasing joy.

IV. Paul was ultimately released from prison. What matters is that Christ is preached. Paul is our example.

Application Questions:

1. Why is Paul's response different than those who want to die because of difficult circumstances?

2. Is Paul morbid in his desire for death? Explain.

3. How is Paul a model for ministry for us in this passage? How can one go about cultivating the same heart for Jesus and his work? Explain.
