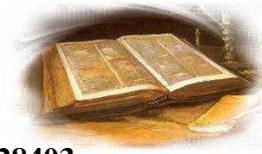


# The Examiner



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## "To Live Is Christ" - by Cecil Willis, Marion, Indiana

As Paul debated the relative merits of living or dying, he stated that "to me to live is Christ" (**Phil. 1:21**). Every Christian today should be able to say meaningfully that "to me to live is Christ." But what does this expression mean? What "to live is Christ" means is best explained by Paul in that same letter to the Philippians. "To live is Christ" means:

1. TO DERIVE ONE'S STRENGTH FROM CHRIST. There are many problems and situations to bear that the Christian feels inadequate to bear alone. But he does not bear them alone. Paul said, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me" (**Phil. 4:13**).

2. TO HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST. Paul told the Philippians to "Have this mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus" (**Phil. 2:5-11**). The mind of Christ was one of humble submission to the will of God. Jesus prayed "not my will, but thine, be done" (**Lk. 22:42**). Submitting his will to that of God, he became "obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." The Hebrew writer stated that Jesus "learned obedience by the things which he suffered" (**Heb. 5:8**). Our perfection, like that of Christ, comes by learning complete obedience to

God's will.

3. TO KNOW CHRIST... Paul said "I count all things to be loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ," and he sought to "gain Christ" through this knowledge (**Phil. 3:8**). To "know" Christ here means more than a passing acquaintance of him. It means to know him intimately. One knows Christ intimately only by doing his will. "And hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments" (**I Jno. 2:3**).

4. TO TRUST HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. The Christian has learned -that he cannot be saved of his own righteousness, for the righteousness of man are as filthy rags in God's sight (**Isa. 64:6**). He realizes that if he ever stands before God righteous (justified) it will be through Jesus Christ (**Phil. 3:9**). He is aware that those who seek to establish their own righteousness in the sight of God do not subject themselves to the righteousness which is of God (**Rom. 10:3**). God's righteousness is revealed through the gospel (**Rom. 1:17**).

5. TO REJOICE IN CHRIST. The Philippians were told "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord" (**3:1**), and to "Rejoice in the Lord always: again I will say, rejoice" (**4:4**). One of

the fruits of the Spirit is "joy" (**Gal. 5:22**). Thus the Christian should have an abundance of well-founded joy. It is interesting to read in several of the cases of conversion that after one had obeyed Christ, "he went on his way rejoicing" (**Acts 8:39; 2:46; 16:34**). The only place that one can have well-founded joy is "in Christ." Those outside of Christ have no hope and are without God in the world (**Eph. 2:12**). Such a condition is not a joyful one.

Paul adds that Christians "should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again" (**2 Cor. 5:15**). And Paul practiced what he preached. He said of himself, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (**Gal. 2:20**). Truly such a person can say, "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." ---- **Via TRUTH MAGAZINE, XV: 42, p. 3., September 2, 1971**

## The Peace That Passeth All Understanding - by Gil Holt,

Lewisburg, Tennessee

Could it be possible that in our effort not to be overly emotional in our service to God, and for fear of being accused of converting lost souls to Christ with an emotional appeal that we sometimes fail to appreciate how wonderful the blessings are that God has given us, or at least do not show property to the world how great and precious these things are?

One such blessing we have that I

would like to mention is the peace that we have as children of God that passes all understanding. In Paul's epistle to the Philippian brethren he said, "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (**Phil. 4:7**). This peace is defined as "the harmonized relationships between God and man, accomplished through the gospel" (Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, W. E. Vine). Paul illustrates in the preceding passage that this peace is that which keeps our hearts and minds right with God through Christ Jesus.

Because of the great and precious promises that we have in Christ Jesus, we know that if we do the will of the Lord, we will be saved with God in Heaven. This gives us security. People are searching for security, but in all the wrong places. They look for it in money and in high paying jobs. But they seldom look where real and lasting security can be found.

The peace of God that passes all understanding is that which gave the apostle Paul the ability to say, with confidence, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (**Phil. 1:21**). He is saying that to live at this point would further the cause of Christ, but to die was gain for him. He had confidence that inasmuch as he had obeyed the commandments of the Lord, he had nothing to fear. In fact, he had a certain desire to depart. "For I am in a strait betwixt the two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better" (**Phil. 1:23**).

I am reminded of the confidence of

those Christians whom I have known in the past who realized the threat of death in their lives and the courage with which they faced it. It must certainly be due to that peace, which they had, that passes all understanding. I can remember being by the side of a dear friend who spoke with such certainty of walking those streets of gold and eating of the fruit of the tree of life and drinking of the waters of life. I will never forget my father, Gilbert Holt, the morning before he passed away as he was about to be taken to by-pass surgery. A preacher friend came in expressing his wishes that all would be all right. Dad's reply was, "I believe that it will turn out all right, but if it doesn't, that will be all right, too." These words were saying in effect what the apostle Paul said to the young preacher Timothy, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (2 Tim. 4:6-8). This type thing is brought about by that peace of God that passeth all understanding. Every Christian can view eternity with this same confidence if he is doing as the word of God directs. --- **Via Guardian of Truth XXVIII: 18, p. 558., September 20, 1984**

**Philippians: A Book of Christian Joy** - by Paul G. Kelsey, Berea, Ohio

Paul wrote to the Philippians, "Rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe" (Phil. 3:7). Paul did not consider it in bad taste or unexpedient to repeat often in this letter of the joy he experienced as a Christian, and neither should we. The joy of a Christian can fortify against all the difficulties of this life. How many times during the course of this life do you experience heartaches, tribulations, disappointments and other sad experiences? Surely we all have our share of these things, but Paul by inspiration tells us to rejoice in the Lord. The reason Paul could give this advice is because he knew of the joy in the Lord. Time and time again Paul recorded his joy or occasions of rejoicing. He commended those who were thoughtful enough to supply him with occasions of joy. We so often are not this thoughtful. But the thing that caused Paul the most joy was that he was a Christian, a servant or slave of Jesus. He was not under a law which could not give salvation, nor was he under sin that it should have dominion over him, but he was a servant or slave of Jesus, which was an exalted position indeed.

In his letter to the **Philippians** he is writing to encourage these brethren. He mentions controversy little, although it is mentioned. He does not tell of the hard road he has traveled, nor does he talk at length of sin. But in the whole letter he tells of his joy, and this in the face of imprisonment and the fact that he can preach little if any while in prison. False brethren were

preaching diabolically. Though these facts would annoy him, yet this man is full of joy, an unspeakable joy. The reason he is so full of joy is that Christ is his life. Though he is in prison, he is so because of the furtherance of the gospel. He realizes that regardless of what happens, in Christ he cannot lose. He says in **Phil. 1:21**: "for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain". This is perhaps the key verse in chapter one.

In chapter two verse two he tells of his joy in unity. "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." Certainly this attitude would promote joy among the followers of Christ as it did with Paul. It is grievous when the contrary is practiced. He further points out in verse 1 of chapter two that another occasion of joy was for them to "hold forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ". Again it is an occasion of joy to see faithful brethren holding forth the word of life and to know that "not all in Israel have bowed their knee to baal." He further exhorts in **3:1**, "rejoice in the Lord." "In the Lord" is the only place for true rejoicing. Men can boast in their accomplishments, numbers, get gain of one kind or another and try to leave the impression that this is the source of true rejoicing, but the only place it can be claimed is in Jesus. If only we could convince some of this fact, even some who claim to be God's people, I am sure much more could be done for the Lord and there would be more true rejoicing. He further emphasizes this admonition in **4:4** when he says, "Rejoice in the Lord: and again I say, Rejoice."

Usually when advice or admonition is given the source is considered. So the source can well be considered in this case. When people who are not lacking in this world's goods, have desirable circumstances, many friends, etc., tell us in the face of our adversity, to be of good cheer, we consider the source of the advice and consider it worth little. But when we have one who is destitute, rejected of his countrymen, cast into prison, spoken against, bearing the scars of his stripes, having endured, to this point, most everything short of death stand before us and say "rejoice in the Lord again I say, Rejoice", it means something. It is not to be considered lightly. Here is an example that cannot be gainsaid.

We look into the life of Paul after his conversion and see that to him Christ was everything. He realized, as we should, that you cannot pray, you cannot perform your duties, you cannot go on your way to heaven, you cannot even think without Christ at every step. Therefore to Paul, as to us, to say the same thing often is not grievous. In this epistle there are more than fifteen times when Paul tells of his joy or rejoicing. If it had not been for the joy Paul found in Christ, do you think he could have endured all that he endured or that he could have continued faithfully? We also must have our joys. All the joys of this world are transient and fleeting but in Christ is eternal joy, a joy that is not here today and gone tomorrow. Regardless of what happens to us we should always rejoice in the Lord. When all is said and done and we have been faithful, we know that it will be well with our soul. Heaven then can be our eternal home. Can you think of anything that should give us more joy? --- **Via Truth Magazine VII: 5, pp. 6, 24., February 1963**