

## The Thing You Desire Most (Philippians 1:12-26)

What if the thing you desire most in life was able to be accomplished regardless of circumstances? The result would be an incredibly hope-filled perspective. Obstacles would become platforms and preferences could be laid aside. Fear and cynicism wouldn't have an atmosphere to thrive in and joy would be the defining characteristic of your life.

### 1. Obstacles become platforms for the progress of the gospel (Philippians 1:12-18)

V13! People who otherwise would not have heard the good news were hearing it.

V14 Followers of Jesus who before were afraid to speak of Jesus are finding renewed confidence.

His imprisonment was *intended* to be a barrier and now it's being used to break down barriers of all kinds.

VV15-18 Teachers filled with envy and rivalry looking for the spotlight.

Paul doesn't give fear and cynicism an atmosphere to thrive in.

### 2. The thing you desire most - ambition and joy in Jesus (Philippians 1:19-24)

Do you see the importance of prayer; the priority it has, the joy it brings? Do you see the "help" Paul leans on? The "Spirit of JESUS" - Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6; Acts 16:7

V20 "eager expectation" = literally "*straining toward with outstretched body; concentrated effort; intense hope which ignores other interests.*" John 3:30

The thing Paul wants (desires) most is for Jesus to be honored (amplified; exalted).

The driving ambition and unshakable joy of Paul's life was found in Jesus. It colored everything else.

V21 "*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*"  
"*It's a win, win. Deliverance regardless. Hope regardless.*"

Passion, purpose and perspective can be found here. 2 Corinthians 5:15

### 3. Preferences are laid aside for the progress and joy of others (Philippians 1:24-26)

*"The gospel will advance. You will advance (progress) in the faith (in the gospel)."*

That was reason enough for Paul to lay aside his preferences.

**QUESTIONS** (Pray, read the passage and pick 4-5 questions to discuss. Trust the Holy Spirit to guide.)

1. When have you been faced difficult circumstances, and seen God work good out of them? How did the experience effect your faith?
2. Read Philippians 1:12-18. How would you describe Paul's mood throughout the passage?
3. In what ways did Paul's imprisonment (a serious obstacle) become a platform for the gospel?
4. In VV15-18 Paul described people who proclaimed Christ out of "envy and rivalry" and others "out of love." What are some ways that Christ could be proclaimed out of envy and rivalry these days?
5. Anger and cynicism towards those who preach out of selfish ambition can quickly become an obstacle itself. How did Paul respond to those who preached out of selfish ambition? How can his attitude serve as a model for us? What might his response protect us from?
6. The thing Paul wanted (desired) most was for Jesus to be honored (amplified; exalted) in his body, whether by life or by death. What examples come to mind when you think about honoring Jesus in your life? Is this the thing you desire most? How does it "color" (influence) your life?
7. Read Philippians 1:21-24. What passion, purpose and perspective is found here?
8. Paul laid preferences aside for the progress of the gospel in the Philippian's. What preferences do you need to lay aside for the progress and joy of those here at LCSP?

Ask Jesus to give you a passion to see him honored (amplified) in your life; that he would be the driving ambition and unshakable joy of your life. Then, in light of that request, pray whatever obstacles you're facing right now would become platforms for the progress of the gospel. Finally, ask for the grace to lay down preferences for the progress of the gospel in others, especially those here at LCSP.