

Paul's Great Dilemma

Phil. 1:21-24

Introduction:

- A. Paul was in prison at Rome. (1:13,14; 4:22).
- B. Paul's tells of his great dilemma (v. 23, 24).
 - 1. Not to end his own life or not.
 - 2. But, more likely should he continue his legal battle for his life or not.
 - 3. Either choice had its advantages.
- C. Let's look more closely at his choices:

Discussion:

I. If He Chose "To Depart."

- A. Would be better for Paul personally. ("gain", "far better")
- B. It was better or gain because of:
 - 1. What he had done.
 - a. Had obeyed (Acts 26:19; cf. Heb. 5:8,9; 2 Thess. 1:7-9)
 - b. Had kept the faith (2 Tim. 4:7, 8; cf. Heb. 10:26-29)
 - 2. What he would gain.
 - a. To be with Christ. (v. 23; 1 Thess. 4:17).
 - b. To be with redeemed. (cf. 2 Sam. 12:23).
 - c. To be free of the struggle against sin (cf. 1 Cor. 9:27)
 - d. To be free of sorrow and suffering. (Rev. 21:4).

II. If He Chose "To Remain."

- A. Paul's reason for living was Christ-centered. ("To live is Christ")
 - 1. To preach Christ (v. 18).
 - 2. To defend Christ (v. 17)
 - 3. To magnify Christ (v. 20).
 - 4. To strengthen others in Christ (vv. 24-26)
- B. How would you finish "To live is ... "
 - 1. Money? (1 Tim. 6:6-10; cf. Amos 8:5).
 - 2. Pleasure? (2 Tim. 3:4).
 - 3. Power? (cf. Acts 12:21-23).
 - 4. Attention? (Acts 5:1ff).

Conclusion:

- A. If you could choose life or death, which would you choose?
- B. Why would you choose either?
 - 1. Death simply to escape problems and duties of life? Or to be with Lord?
 - 2. Life to further your own purposes? Or to further Cause of Christ?