

# WEDNESDAY BIBLE FELLOWSHIP

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No: 16

## Philippians Chapter 1:12-26

### INTRODUCTION

Just what place does Jesus have in our order of priorities? if we are honest for many of us he does not have the place he should. Paul could say unashamedly, "For me to live is Christ." Christ was at the centre of his life in all that he did. This was shown in the way he spoke about Christ to anyone and everyone - even imprisonment couldn't shut him up - he saw it as yet another opportunity to speak about Jesus. He didn't mind when others were speaking about Jesus out of rivalry (perhaps to be seen to 'outdo' Paul) - as long as Jesus was being talked about. Suffering for Jesus' sake didn't matter. His love for Jesus even overcame his human fear of death - it was just the gateway to a fuller knowledge of Jesus. The Bible study looks at several areas in which Jesus made a difference to Paul and his life and challenges us about our response in those areas.

### AIM

**To learn from Paul's example how to speak about Christ and live for him.**

### READ PHILIPPIANS 1.12-26

### Questions for discussions

**Number in order the things you talk most about.**

Work \_\_\_\_\_  
Sport \_\_\_\_\_  
Family \_\_\_\_\_  
Fashions \_\_\_\_\_  
Food \_\_\_\_\_  
House \_\_\_\_\_  
Hobbies \_\_\_\_\_

## Witness

- Paul used the situation he was in as an opportunity for witness. What situations can provide opportunities for us to speak about Jesus?
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- What are the contrasts between the way we talk about Christ and the way Paul did? Why is there a difference?
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- How did Paul help to make the Good News known?
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- How did Paul's imprisonment encourage others to share their faith?
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## Motives

- How did Paul react to others' motives for sharing the Good News? (vv 15-18)
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- Are there ways in which we are critical of the work of other Christians?
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- How does Paul's example challenge such attitudes?
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- What are the right motives for sharing the Good News about Jesus?
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- In what ways can we do Christian work out of a partisan spirit?
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## Suffering

- What was Paul's attitude to his imprisonment?
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- How can Paul's assurance reassure us in the difficult situations we face?
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- Look at the example of Paul's experience of suffering (see 2 Corinthians 11.23-29).  
How do we experience suffering?
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- How can difficult situations serve to advance the Gospel"?
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## Life and Death

- How did Paul view the future? Why did he have that confidence? **(vv.1 9-26)**
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- How do we feel about death? Do we look forward to it and life with Christ beyond it? if not, why are we so earth-bound in our thinking?
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- Share what it means for you to say "to live is Christ".
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- Why did Paul want to live? What goals for Christian service do we have?
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## ACTIVITY: OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS

*What is so exciting, inspiring, maddening about Paul is the way in which what would lead most people to despair and whingeing leads him to see Christ at work. "I want you to know that the things that have happened to me have really served to advance the gospel".*

*Things which might seem to be disasters do often by the grace of God enhance our lives and reveal his activity.*

*This exercise can be played lightheartedly and seriously. And perhaps it should be both.*

Make a set of cards or slips of paper and label them Disaster, Excuse, Opportunity until they are all used up. You need a few more than the number expected for the group.

Deal out the cards marked Disaster/Excuse/Opportunity.

One person with a **Disaster** card invents and briefly describes a disaster.

The **Excuses** group then demonstrate how this disaster has had terrible effects on the person's life and use it as an excuse for not doing X,Y,Z, or behaving in way A,B,C.

Then the **Opportunity** group show how strange to relate and against what you would expect the disaster turned out to have positive consequences after all.

Do a few for fun, e.g. "As you are getting ready to leave for Church on Sunday morning you accidentally leave the sink tap running - and plug it in."

"The visiting preacher at the Prison falls flat on his face as he walks up the steps to give a talk to the prisoners."

Now do some for Paul based on this passage.

"With Paul in jail other Christians take on the preaching - some with very questionable motives."

"It becomes clear to Paul that he may have to face the death sentence."