

Life Group Lesson 4

When Life Goes Bad Can Actually Be Good
Philippians 1:20-30

PRESS ON

together

Big Idea:

From Sunday: When Christ's will is your greatest pursuit in life, you will have a great life to pursue.

For Today: Whatever happens in life, Christ's will, will always be greater than whatever you face.

Icebreaker question: Here are 4 "would-you-rather" questions to answer. Would you rather ...

1. Have all traffic lights you approach be green or never have to stand in line again?
2. Lose the ability to read or lose the ability to speak?
3. Spend the rest of your life with a sailboat as your home, or an RV as your home?
4. Have unlimited international first-class tickets, or never have to pay for food at restaurants?

As you and your group answer, make sure to share why you would rather.

Video

Today's 9-minute video features Pastor Burkey teaching about Paul revealing the wrestling within his soul and how he takes the next best step. His decisions are fueled by one strong conviction: Christ's Will > than anything else. Paul seeks to pass on that Christ's will > ? conviction on to the Philippians and us to "press on together!"

Read Philippians 1:20-30

In verses 20-22, in the original Greek language, Paul shares his pain with his writing style. Paul who is a great writer, an intentional writer, writes these verses in a broken syntax then he concludes this chapter with a run-on sentence. What drives Paul is the realization that Jesus is in control.

Where do you need to remind yourself today that Jesus is in control?

What seeks to take the place of Christ's will as the top priority in your life?

In verse 23, when he says ***I desire to depart***, the image behind that phrase is a ship untied from the dock ready to set sail, to see the open ocean, to take the trip of a lifetime.

When has God called you to take a step of faith out of your comfort zone? What was the step? What happened? Where is God calling you to take a step of faith out of your comfort zone?

In verse 25, he says, ***"I will continue"***. He's moved by the connections God has made between Paul and the Philippians.

Isn't that the beauty of faith in a church family? God wants us to deeply grow in our relationship with Him and with each other. That's why at Christ Lutheran Church, we talk about *worship, connect,*

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learn and *serve*. When we talk about *connect* that means we connect with others with the goal to develop deep faith relationships.

What lessons have you been learning from Philippians these first 4 weeks? How have they helped you align your life to following Christ's will?

In verse 26 Paul says his desire is to connect with the Philippians so their joy increases! Such joy gives strength in tough times. You are not alone. God is with you. We are with you.

Besides God Himself, whom does God use to give you joyful strength in tough times? Who does God use *you* to strengthen someone else's joy to "press on together"?

Paul, realizing he's said enough about his desires, says in verse 27, "**Whatever happens.**" Paul affirms that he's giving Jesus the last word. Paul's not saying, "Jesus, if you get me out of here, I'll follow you anywhere." Paul is saying, "Jesus, wherever I am, I'll follow you."

What people of such faith conviction to follow Jesus with a "wherever" attitude do you know? How do they reveal such a perseverant faith? How has that inspired you to live that way?

Then Paul sneaks in this description for the Philippians and for us in verse 29, "**For it has been granted to you on behalf of Christ not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for him.**" The Philippians may be thinking that it's one thing to pray for Paul and provide for Paul in his sufferings, but our own sufferings? When have you suffered for your faith in Christ? What has helped you persevere with joy?

Action Steps

Take time at the end of each day in the next week to review your day. Look for moments you live out Christ's will as top priority, and moments when He was not number one. What replaced Him? Why? What will you do tomorrow to keep Him at the top?

Press On Together Prayer

As you close in prayer, I invite you to share with your group, and then take turns praying 2 prayers.

1. A Prayer of Gratitude: Thank you God for ...
2. A Prayer of Grace: Grace: God, I (or ?) need Your grace (help) to ...