



New International Version is used for questions

1. Read through Philippians 1:12-30. What are some things in this passage that stand out to you?
2. How did Paul view the fact that he was in prison? What do you think made it possible to view it that way?
3. Has there ever been a negative situation in your life where as you look back on it now, you can see how God used it for a good purpose? For that to happen all the time, what must we do?
4. Read Romans 5:3-5. Pastor Rick said that we need to celebrate regardless of what circumstances we are going through, even the bad ones. According to this passage, why? Will even our unpleasant experiences automatically produce something good? Why or why not?
5. Pastor Rick said that we experience freedom when we release the need to control how things turn out. Why is it so hard to give up control of our lives to God?
6. Read again verses 25 and 26 in Philippians 1. What was the reason that Paul believed that God would allow him to continue to go on living? If God controls when we die, and he does (Psalm 39:4), what would cause him to extend our lives? Thought: Are there people in my life who would suffer on a spiritual level if I were gone?
7. Read again verse 27. What do you think it means to conduct yourself in a manner that is worthy of the gospel of Christ? What could happen if we don't?

- you:
2. *Paul saw his time in prison as a very positive way because it was helping him to reach people with the gospel that he otherwise would not be able to, he saw it as an opportunity given to him by God. He was able to see it this way because it furthered the mission of his life, to share the gospel of Christ with unsaved people.*
  3. *For everything in our life to be used by God to accomplish his will, we must choose to respond to everything that happens as something God will use and that he has allowed to happen to us for a good purpose. If we are negative and complain about the “bad” things that happen to us, there is no guarantee that anything but bad will come of it.*
  4. *According to this passage, we can rejoice in the middle of our problems and trials because God uses them to develop our character, the fruit of the Spirit as we respond correctly to them. Romans 8:28 says that God everything in a person’s life to be of benefit to them, but only if they respond correctly by choosing to love God. It is not automatic, it requires a response of trusting God that he only will develop good things in our life.*
  5. *Our desire to be in control of our lives stems from the selfishness that is an inherent part of our sinful natures. We want what we want in life and so we seek to control all of our circumstances so that they turn out the way we want them to. We could say that our desire to be in control is an inherent part of our human natures, so when God wants us to do something that goes against our desire to be in control, like give up control to him, we fight it for all we are worth. Surrendering to God is not something that is natural to us.*
  6. *Paul believed that he would go on living because he would be able to continue to help the Philippians in their spiritual growth and that was more important than him going on to heaven. He was willing to forgo heaven in order to help them. A good reason for God to extend our lives is that he knows that we will use our lives to serve other people and help them to serve God more. When God knows we are only going to be selfish with the time we have on earth, he can choose to bring us home. There are examples of him doing this: Ananias and Saphira in Acts 5, the Corinthians who misused the Lord’s supper in 1 Corinthians 11.*
  7. *To conduct yourself in a manner worthy of the gospel is to live in a way that makes the gospel attractive. We know that how we behave has nothing to do with salvation, but unsaved people do not understand this and when they see a Christian behaving in a way that they believe a Christian should not behave, they see hypocrisy and they will not listen to us when we share the gospel. Christians not living out their faith is the number one hindrance to people being willing to listen to the gospel message, because they see nothing but the hypocrisy.*
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