

May 1st Sermon notes

Work is a major gardening tool the Lord uses to cultivate our relationship with Him. He uses all the energy, effort and prayers as seed or fertilizer. He wastes nothing.

Text: (Philippians 1:21) *For to me to live is Christ and to die is gain.*

Philippians 1:21 is a perspective that covers more than how to do our work. It puts work and even retirement in a larger context: Christ is my life. Not just on Sundays but every day of my life. He is the center of my life and the controlling influence of every other part of it.

1. I get my identity from Him.

- To live is Christ means my value comes from His assessment.
- You are a celebrity no matter where you work.
- In Acts 23 Paul had a high-stakes failure, but it says the following night the Lord stood near him, and said “take courage.”

2. I get my values from Him.

- I am becoming more like Him day by day.
- To live is Christ means I don't leave the values He has given me at home or in the car.

3. I get my direction from Him.

- The Holy Spirit is our live-in guide, coach, and instructor. He gives me the words I need. Or prompts me to be silent.
- Your faith is never a hostage to your emotions. Prayer is not a performance for which you need to be “up” to engage in effectively.
- “I love the adventure of trusting You, Lord, even when I don't *like*”

4. I get my strength from Him.

- When you look at the apostle Paul, do you see an amazing man of God at work, or do you see an amazing God at work in an ordinary man? Paul's example is that of the power of God's grace.
- Allow others to support your work life with prayer. You don't have to do it alone.
- When the focus is faith and love, our fellowship with one another and with the Lord can involve anything.

Conclusion

To live is Christ is not a ball and chain. It is liberation from the small prison cell of a worldly perspective to God's eternal truth.

