



# CAPITOL COMMISSION™

To Live Is Christ

Tuesday, 20 January 2015

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## CAPITOL BIBLE STUDY

### 153<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly

- **TUESDAY @ 7:30 AM** in 403 CAP
- **TUESDAY @ 12 NOON** in 123 CAP

Capitol Commission Bible Studies are held every Tuesday morning at 7:30am in 403 CAP, and again at 12 Noon in 123 CAP. The weekly Bible study is nonpartisan and non-denominational. The study for the 2015 General Assembly is the book of Philippians.

I pray that this study will be edifying to you. I am here to serve you and to be a resource for prayer and counsel. Please accept my study in the Word of God, as an evidence of my desire to be serving you. – Dr. Ron J. Bigalke, Georgia State Minister, Capitol Commission

### Capitol Commission Bible Studies

are  
Tuesday, 20 January 2015

### Philippians 1:12-30 – “To Live Is Christ”

Similar to how electricity works, the victorious life of faith has two kinds of charges: a negative and a positive. The negative charge is self-negation. “For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain” (Phil 1:21). Although his circumstances were not the most desirable (to say the least), the Apostle Paul was not envious, jealous, resentful, or self-oriented. The reason that his own will did not respond to his circumstances is because he had another focus of attention: Christ.

The Lord Jesus permeated his life, and thus the climax of his concern was for Christ to be proclaimed. God electrified his life! “To live is Christ” because the Lord Jesus is the positive charge. The result of Christ’s work is a circuit that nothing can disengage, and thus a current that is unstoppable. The victorious life is found in Christ.

### CHRIST IS JOY

The Apostle Paul already articulated several biblical ministry goals as he petitioned God on behalf of the church (Phil 1:9-11). He was thankful for their Christian life, fellowship in the gospel, and confidence in the sovereign work of God in their lives. He then prayed that their love would abound “still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment” so that the church would approve the best things of life from the many good things in life, for the purpose of being “sincere and blameless until the day of Christ,” and to be fruitful in righteousness “to the glory and praise of God.”

As the word is used thirteen times in Philippians, the theme of this epistle is “joy.” Moreover, since Christ is mentioned thirty-eight times, the content for such joy is evident: “rejoicing in the Lord.” The epistle even contains an example of Jesus, “who for the joy set before Him, endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb 12:2). Verses 12-30 are the second part of the section that teaches how to rejoice in extreme situations, which is directly applicable to all the Capitol community.

Capitol communities are populated with many individuals who feel the pressure to make loving and necessary decisions for Georgia with “real knowledge and all discernment” (to quote the words of Phil 1:9). As Philippians 1:12 begins with the Apostle’s description of his own circumstances and how the sovereign Lord God used it for the advancement of his will and purpose, may this week’s Bible study be an encouragement to all whose assurance is in the providence of God.

#### WHERE IS GOD IN THE MIDST OF CIRCUMSTANCES?

##### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- (1) God is never unaware or lacking in power, but always working all events for the furtherance of his will and purpose.
- (2) God is in the midst of difficulties, and often advances the gospel and matures his people through challenges.
- (3) God is not one to ever abandon His people. Believers are never alone, and therefore should seek first the opportunity to exalt God with their lives, and pray well-being for all involved in difficulty.

### CHRIST IS MOST IMPORTANT

(Phil 1:12-20) Following his statement of trust in God, the Apostle Paul expressed his knowledge that his imprisonment was “in the cause of Christ.” By comparing his meetings with Felix, Festus, and Agrippa (Acts 23:24; 25:1-27; 26:1-32), it is apparent that Paul’s imprisonment in Rome was unfair and unjust. Paul was in prison for two years waiting for his case to be considered. Moreover, some were “preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will” (Phil 1:15).

*First Corinthians 10:13 – No temptation has overtaken but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, so that you will be able to endure it.*

Unfortunately, there will always be individuals who take the opportunity to exploit someone else in the midst of trouble. Indeed, since we live in a fallen world, such actions are not unique and should

### Capitol Commission Bible Studies

Tuesday (20 January) @ 7:30am – 8:00am, 403 CAP

Tuesday (20 January) @ 12 Noon – 12:45pm, 123 CAP

(lunch provided from sponsorship by State Representative Tom Rice)



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# Capitol Commission Georgia

## To Live Is Christ

be expected. Even the Apostle Paul was subjected to such mistreatment, which can be to our encouragement. Knowing that others have experienced the same or similar trials can help us to endure (1 Cor 10:13).

ENVY AND STRIFE	GOOD WILL
Selfish Ambition Impure Motives	From Love Knowing the Will of God
Whether in Pretense or in Truth, Christ is Proclaimed; and in this I Rejoice	

Believers may experience similar situations as the Apostle Paul. A promotion may be deserved but not received. A necessity of life should have been obtained but it is not. Life is not always fair and just, but God is always sovereignly at work to accomplish his will. Consequently, it is crucial to know that God often advances his purposes through difficulty. As opposed to anxiety, bitterness, or complaining, the believer should seek opportunities to exalt God in the midst of troubles. Challenges in life are not meaningless, but purposeful. While the outworking of evil and bad motivations may obscure understanding the will of God, the believer may always be confident that God intends the troubles of life to be for our good.

**LIFE IS NOT ALWAYS FAIR AND JUST, BUT GOD IS ALWAYS SOVEREIGNLY AT WORK TO ACCOMPLISH HIS WILL.**

Victory in the believer's life necessitates that one never lose faith or confidence in God, but know that the Lord (according to his timing) will reveal what He is accomplishing through difficulties. In the present, seek whatever small or great opportunities exist to glorify God. Even though some were motivated by selfish ambition, Paul could rejoice that Christ was proclaimed. God can use individuals such as Balaam (Numb 22) and Caiaphas (John 11:49-52) to advance the proclamation of his Word.

The first priority in life is Godward. The message is do not complain regarding unfair and unjust situations, but live for the glory and praise of God even at your own expense. Through prayers and the provision of the Holy Spirit (1:19), maintain "all boldness" to honor and not disgrace God. The best end result is always the outcome from honoring the Lord.

### CHRIST IS LIFE

(*Phil 1:21-30*) With "earnest expectation," Paul desired release from wrongful imprisonment. He confessed that despite the outcome, living was in the person and work of Christ, whether he would be with Him in heaven ("to die is gain") or remain on earth "in the flesh."

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Although the former is "very much better" for him (1:21, 23), the latter "will mean fruitful labor" for others, which is more necessary for their sake (1:22, 24). The welfare of others above one's own is the corollary to such a perspective, and therefore what is exalting to God.

**HOW BELIEVERS RESPOND TO ADVERSE SITUATIONS IS EVIDENCE OF THE REALITY OF THEIR SALVATION...**

As a consequence of his current experience, Paul was able to exhort the Philippians to be confident (1:25-26), stand "firm in one spirit" (1:27-28), and be willing to endure suffering for the sake of the Lord (1:29-30). The reason for these exhortations is to assure the church of their salvation "from God."

How believers respond to adverse situations is evidence of the reality of their salvation (cf. Luke 1:74; 1 John 4:18). The same Greek word, *endeixis* ("sign"), is applied to both the opponents and believers. "Standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the sake of the gospel" (Phil 1:27) was a sign against the opponents and that those in unity were recipients of eternal "salvation" (1:28). Moreover, the unity against opposition strengthens those in such unity, and such an attitude is an indication of the salvation experience. How we respond to difficulty matters tremendously.

In every case the idea is of an undeniable manifestation of reality. It is not possible for a Christian to stand firm under persecution and for the world to dismiss it as nothing. It is evidence of a supernatural power. Consequently, it is a token of salvation to the Christian and of destruction to those who will not believe [James Montgomery Boice, *Philippians* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000) 93].

Opposition can overwhelm human character. The believer, however, has experienced a supernatural work – by the plan of God through the cross of Christ and the agency of the Holy Spirit – in his or her life to overcome the challenges of life as evidence to both other believers and even to those who do not believe the gospel of grace.

*Thank you for allowing Capitol Commission the honor to provide Bible studies to you. If you have any questions, please talk with us, or contact us by email or phone.*

#### About Capitol Commission

Capitol Commission state ministers teach ongoing verse-by-verse Bible studies for the entire Capitol community, and also meet personally with many government leaders (and their staff) to proclaim God's grace, to encourage our leaders, pray with them, and provide biblical counsel. Capitol Commission is a charitable and religious nonprofit corporation under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Capitol Commission is supported by the generous gifts of businesses, churches, and individuals. Capitol Commission is not state-funded; rather, those with a heart for the Capitol community fund it.

Capitol Commission's promise to you is that we will faithfully continue, in partnership with the church, to make disciples of Jesus Christ and promote the Biblical mandate to pray for those in authority in the Capitol communities throughout the United States and around the world. Every election cycle brings us hundreds of newly elected legislators into the twenty-four state capitols where we presently have a State Minister. We intend to be there to provide pastoral care for these men and women. *Please join us in this ministry!*

**NEXT CAPITOL COMMISSION BIBLE STUDIES:  
TUESDAY, 27 JANUARY @ 7:30AM in 403 CAP  
and again (with lunch) @ 12 Noon in 123 CAP**