

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, Perth
November 1st, 2020
Worship Leader: Rev. Stephen Dunkin

Welcome and Announcements

- **Next Sunday,** Rev. John McIntyre will be leading worship
- **November 15th** – Rev. Beryl Orok
- **November 22nd** – Rev. Stephen Dunkin
- **November 29th** – Rev. John Robertson
- **December 6th** – Rev. Stephen Dunkin

Call to Worship

(Based on Psalm 27 & John 4:23)

Let us worship God, our light and our salvation.

The Lord is the stronghold of our lives.

We desire to live in God's house
and to seek God in his holy temple.

**We have come with shouts of joy,
to sing and to make music to the Lord.**

Let us worship God in spirit and in truth.

**Teach us your ways and make straight our paths
in this hour of worship and always.**

Prayer of Invocation

All glorious God, we give you thanks.

In your Son, Jesus Christ,
you have given us every spiritual blessing
in the heavenly realms.

You chose us, before the world was made,
to be your holy people, without fault in your sight.

You adopted us as your children in Christ.

You have set us free by his blood;
you have forgiven our sins.

You have made known to us your secret purpose,
to bring heaven and earth into unity in Christ.

You have given us your Holy Spirit,
the seal and pledge of our inheritance.

All praise and glory be yours, O God,
for the richness of your grace,

for the splendor of your gifts,
for the wonder of your love. **Amen!**

Hymn: **“All Creatures of Our God and King”, Prayers of the Saints**
(Click on the link below to view the video. The words will appear on the screen.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MUZD0hgtSgE>

1. All creatures of our God and King
Lift up your voice and with us sing
O praise Him, Alleluia
Thou burning sun with golden beam
Thou silver moon with softer gleam
O praise Him, O praise Him
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

2. Let all things their Creator bless
And worship him in humbleness
O praise Him, Alleluia
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son
And praise the Spirit, Three-In-One
O praise Him, O praise Him
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

3. All the Redeemed washed by his blood
Come and rejoice in his great love
O praise Him, Alleluia
Christ has defeated every sin
Cast all your burdens now on him
O praise Him, O praise Him
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

4. He shall return in power to reign
Heaven and earth will join to say
O praise Him, Alleluia
Then who shall fall on bended knee
All creatures of our God and King
O praise Him, O praise Him
Alleluia, Alleluia, Alleluia

Call to Confession

The Psalmist says:

Come and hear, all you who fear God,
and I will tell what he has done for my soul.
I cried to him with my mouth,
and high praise was on my tongue.

If I had cherished iniquity in my heart,
 the Lord would not have listened.
 But truly God has listened;
 he has attended to the voice of my prayer.

Prayer of Confession (based on Psalm 130)

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD!

O Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive
 to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

**If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,
 O Lord, who could stand?**

But with you there is forgiveness,
 that you may be feared.

**I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
 and in his word I hope;
 my soul waits for the Lord
 more than watchmen for the morning,
 more than watchmen for the morning.**

O people of God, hope in the LORD!

**For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
 and with him is plentiful redemption. Amen**

Assurance of Pardon

The God who challenges us
 is also the God who encourages us.
 The God who confronts us with our sin
 is also the God who accepts us.
 Be assured that God is with us even now,
 accepting, guiding, and forgiving us.
 Thanks be to God.

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
 Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.
 Give us this day our daily bread.
 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the Evil One.
 For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,
 Forever and ever. Amen**

Responsive Reading Psalm 16

Preserve me, O God, for in you I take refuge.

**I say to the LORD, “You are my Lord;
I have no good apart from you.”**

As for the saints in the land, they are the excellent ones,
in whom is all my delight.

**The sorrows of those who run after another god shall multiply;
their drink offerings of blood I will not pour out
or take their names on my lips.**

The LORD is my chosen portion and my cup;
you hold my lot.

**The lines have fallen for me in pleasant places;
indeed, I have a beautiful inheritance.**

I bless the LORD who gives me counsel;
in the night also my heart instructs me.

**I have set the LORD always before me;
because he is at my right hand, I shall not be shaken.**

Therefore my heart is glad, and my whole being rejoices;
my flesh also dwells secure.

**For you will not abandon my soul to Sheol,
or let your holy one see corruption.**

You make known to me the path of life;

**in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore.**

Ministry of Music: I Will Trust My Saviour Jesus (CityAlight)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=14wnm8KVbb4>

1. I will trust my Saviour Jesus
When my darkest doubts befall
Trust Him when to simply trust Him
Seems the hardest thing of all
2. I will trust my Saviour Jesus
Trust Him when my strength is small
For I know the shield of Jesus
Is the safest place of all

Chorus

Jesus, only Jesus
Help me trust You more and more

Jesus, only Jesus
 May my heart be ever Yours

3. I will trust my Saviour Jesus
 He has said His way is best
 And I know the path He's chosen
 Leads to everlasting rest

Chorus (sing twice)

Jesus, only Jesus
 Help me trust You more and more
 Jesus, only Jesus
 May my heart be ever Yours

Bridge (sing three times)

Oh on that cross, how it was seen
 I can go now ever trusting in the One who died for me
 What could I bring, for Your gift is complete
 So I trust you, simply trust you, Lord, with every part of me

Chorus (sing twice)

Jesus, only Jesus
 Help me trust You more and more
 Jesus, only Jesus
 May my heart be ever Yours

Scripture Reading:

Philippians 1:18b-26

Yes, and I will rejoice, [19](#) for I know that through your prayers and the help of the Spirit of Jesus Christ this will turn out for my deliverance, [20](#) as it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. [21](#) For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. [22](#) If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. [23](#) I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. [24](#) But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. [25](#) Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, [26](#) so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Prayer for Illumination

Lord God,
 help us to know your ways;
 teach us your paths.
 Lead us in your truth, and teach us,
 for you are the God of our salvation;
 for you we wait all day long.
 Through Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

“Christ In Life and Death” Philippians 1: 18b – 26



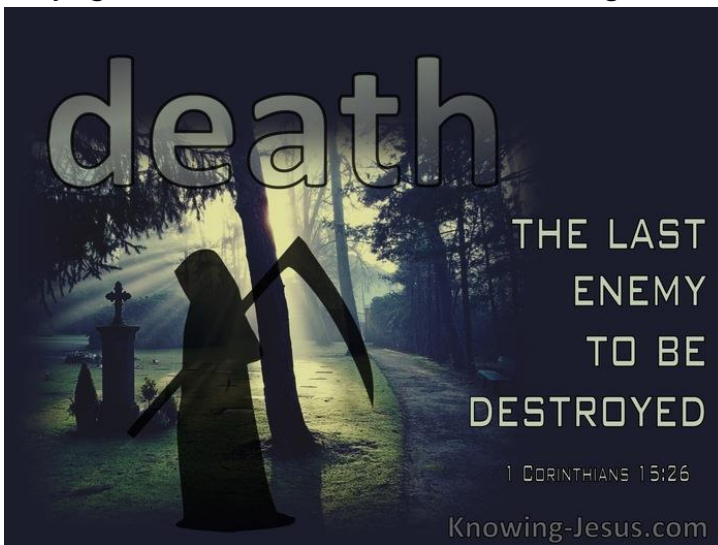
My father, born in 1917, was raised in a family with five children. He had one older sister, two younger brothers and the baby of the family was a girl born in 1929. Her name was Mary Elisabeth Dunkin and my Dad always referred to her as the “the little sister I never knew”. I guess he said that because she would have been just a young girl when he went off to college. I certainly remember my Aunt Elisabeth because she and her family lived right across the road from my

grandparents in Aldershot which is just outside of Hamilton. Her son Danny was obviously my cousin, a year younger than I was and I knew him well. I would look forward to playing with him every time we went to visit my grandparents. Then when I was about 11, Aunt Elisabeth and her family moved west to Three Hills, Alberta where her husband taught voice at Prairie Bible Institute. My family moved to Montreal that same year, so I didn't see much of the family after that.



Why am I telling you this? Well, when she was in her 60's, it was discovered that my Aunt had cancer. She was big on alternative medicine, so she rejected the doctors recommended treatment and instead treated herself with mega-doses of vitamins. You can probably guess the end of this story. Her cancer, which was quite treatable when discovered, progressed to the point where it became terminal. My Dad flew out to Alberta and spent about a week visiting her. One day as they were talking he said something about how terrible he felt about what was happening to her. What I want you to remember out of all this was her response. She said to him, "Gilbert, there are worse things than dying and going to be with Jesus."

We believe that death is the worst. Even if we are not afraid of death, we want to avoid it at all costs. When we have a close call, whether it is narrowly averting an accident or facing a serious health crisis, it is not unusual for it to scare the living daylights out of us. I know the feeling well. A number of times in my life I have had a

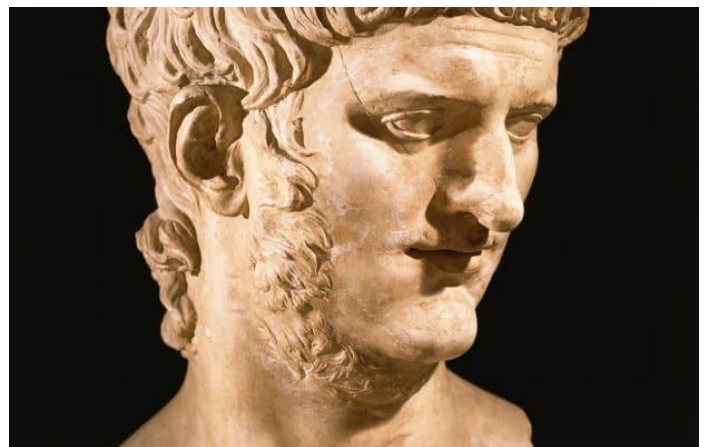


close call and each time it left me badly shaken. Could my Aunt, despite getting the alternative treatment thing all wrong, been right when she said, "There are worse things than dying and going to be with Jesus."?

Death is not nice. Death is not pretty. It is not pleasant to experience personally and it is heartbreaking to lose someone that we love. In 1 Corinthians 15 Paul states that **26 The last enemy to be destroyed is death**. Yes, there is a day

coming when it will be destroyed, but he still refers to it as "the enemy".

However, in Philippians 1 he speaks of death and dying in a very different way. Paul was not speaking philosophically. He was a man in prison and the Roman Emperor at the time was Nero, one of the most blood thirsty emperors that Rome ever had. Nero was no friend of Christians. One of his favourite sports was to dip them in pitch or tar, tie them to a pole and light them on fire. It



supplied light for his parties. Paul didn't know whether he was going to be set free or if he was going to be put to death. It could go either way, but death was a real possibility. Yet he writes in our Scripture lesson: **20 ... it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.** In verse 19 Paul spoke with confidence about how what he was going through in prison would turn out for his deliverance. Now he talks with confidence that in whatever happens to him **Christ will be honored**. Notice that he uses words like **eager expectation** and **hope**. I would find it difficult to use **eager expectation** to describe what was going to happen to me as a result of being in his situation.

When we use the word **hope** we do so with a measure of uncertainty, as in "I hope the Toronto Maple Leafs will win the Stanley Cup this year." That is not a hope with a measure of uncertainty. That is truly wishful thinking! The last time the Maple Leafs won a Stanley Cup was in 1967! We might say with fingers crossed: "Let's hope it doesn't rain on the day of the parade." Biblical hope is very different. Biblical hope carries with it certainty, not uncertainty. It is always focused on God. As one commentator writes, it is based upon the fact that *"God is God and has underwritten the future."* So when Paul says **it is my eager expectation and hope** he is saying this is what he is sure is going to happen. This is his passion. He is not going to be ashamed like someone who declares that the world is going to end on a certain date only to find out it doesn't happen and then runs away like a dog with its tail between its legs. He does not want to be found ashamed of Christ. The only people who will be ashamed are those who have built their hope on a lie. We have seen before that Paul's chief aim was the advance of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. He will not be ashamed because the forward progress of that Gospel would not be halted even by the worst possible outcome of his trial before Caesar.

Paul is certain that **Christ will be honored in (his) body, whether by life or by death**. With courage and boldness he will hold forth the Gospel. Whether he lives or dies, Christ will be honoured. For Christ to be honoured means that Christ will be glorified and magnified. **Paul is confident that his physical body will be the stage on which the glory of Jesus Christ is displayed, whether by his life or by his death.**

In Paul's mind he is faced with a win-win situation. He describes it in this way. **21 For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.** The key word in this verse is the word "**for**". How can Christ be honoured in Paul's body whether by life or by death? "**For**" shows what the foundation on which Paul's life is built. If he lives, then he will demonstrate in his body that living is Christ. If he experiences dying as gain, then he

will show by his death that Christ is honoured. How can death possibly be gain? What kind of distorted logic is this? It is made clear in the next two verses. **22 If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. 23 I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better.** Far better is being with Christ and that is the gain that is referred to in verse 21. The reason that death is gain is because it means being with Christ in a far more intimate way which is far better. Better than what? It is better than anything that life here gives.

Death takes away everything here on earth. Whatever we are experiencing here on earth is going to go away – except for Christ. If you show in your dying that Christ is superior to anything that this life has to offer then you demonstrate that Christ is honoured; that Christ is magnified; that Christ is magnificent. John Piper says “*Christ is most magnified in us when we are most satisfied in Christ.*”

In a sense I have turned verse 21 around by focusing first on death. Now let’s turn and focus on life. **For me to live is Christ...** Paul is saying that Christ is **magnified in my body** by life. Why? **For me to live is Christ.** The first reason why Christ is magnified in his body by living is found in verse **22. If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me.** The flesh here refers to Paul’s physical body, but the same can be said about our bodies – **the same body in which Christ is going to be honoured and the stage on which the glory of Jesus Christ will be displayed.** The first thing that he does to explain what it means **to live is Christ**, which will magnify Christ in his body, is to say that if he lives he will have **fruitful labour**. Being fruitful is very important. If we go back to the prayer in verses 9 to 11, we see that one of the aspects of that prayer is that believers might be **11 filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ.** For himself, Paul sees **fruitful labour**. What produces this fruitful labour in Paul is not a gung-ho spirit but Christ. To live is Christ. To live is produce fruitful labour, but the fruitful labour is only produced by Christ.



The second reason for Paul to remain alive is found in verse **24: But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.** Here is a man caught between the horns of a dilemma. There are two possibilities – live or die. The one which he favours and is more beneficial to him is to die. That means departure from this life. It means that his ship departs – that it leaves the dock – and he is able to sail away to

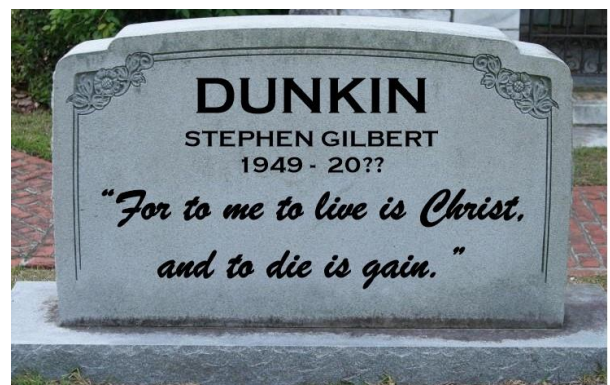
be with Christ **which is far better**; better than anything this life has to give. He would get a ton of joy in the presence of Christ. To live on the other hand is of greater blessing to the Philippians. **But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account.** **25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith...** To live means that their **progress and joy in the faith** is more important than what he desires. When you think of it, eventually, no matter what the outcome of the trial, Paul is going to get the unsurpassing joy of being with Christ.

However, if he sets aside his desire and focuses on the Philippians and puts what will benefit them ahead of his own desires, then they will **progress** and experience abundant **joy in the faith**. If Paul lives, then the **joy** of the Philippians will abound which will **glorify** Christ and make Christ look magnificent.

Paul's goal in life is that Christ would be magnified in his body. This can happen through his living or through his dying. If he dies, Christ looks magnificent for **dying is gain**. The benefit is all Paul's. If he lives, it will magnify Christ because **to live is Christ**. To live means **fruitful labour** because the fruit is produced by Christ. Christ is the one who is glorified, not Paul. His living will mean their joy and progress in the faith. The end result will be that the Philippians will have ample opportunity to glory in Christ.

This is the ideal for every believer. Christ wants to be glorified in your body, either by your life or by your death. Opposite to what most of us believe, death is the preferred option, because that means departure from all the struggles of this life and being face to face with Jesus Christ. However, if for us to live is Christ, and the choice is to remain and be fruitful so that others can progress and experience the joy of faith in Christ Jesus, are we ready to make that choice?

I wonder this morning if we could say the same as Paul. How would we answer the question, "Are you living for Christ?" Could you say; could I say: **For to me to live Christ**. Or would there have to be some modifiers? For me to live is my family – and Christ. For me to live is my career – and Christ. For me to live is achieving my dreams and goals – and Christ. For me to live is sports – and Christ. For me to live is my club – and Christ. For me to live is my hobby – and Christ. For me to live is church – and Christ. I believe that every Christian should live in such a way that when he or she dies, these words could be inscribed on their gravestone.



For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. The real question I face is this: Have I lived in such a way as to be able to say that these words have been true of my life? Could I in good conscience say that these words could be inscribed on my head stone and that I would not be ashamed to stand before Jesus at the last day knowing this?

Andrew Chong was a husband, the father of five children, an elder of College Church in Wheaton, Illinois and a Pediatric Orthopedic Surgeon. Before he died at the age of 56 in 2003 he was taken to hospital to have a stint cleared of a blockage. The procedure was invasive and after some time the surgeon came out and indicated that he could not continue because there was too much bleeding. He said to Dr. Chong's wife Catherine, "You better get your family here. He may not make it through the night." So all the children were rush to their father's bedside, where they gathered weeping to say their good-byes.

Dr. Chong had just come out of the anesthetic. He was in intense pain and unable to speak. Seeing his family's distress, he made a curious motion with his finger, which they finally understood as a request for a pen. Of late he had been unable to write in a straight line. But now, very slowly and with intense deliberation he wrote 12 words in a single column.

For to me
to live
is Christ, and
to die
is gain.

Dr Chong anchored the column with "Hallelujah." The writing of that last word took him a full minute as he made sure he spelled it correctly. Finally he spoke: "Nothing has changed. Nothing has changed."

Would you be able to say the same? If you can say from your heart – "**For me to live is Christ,**" then you can confidently embrace the last five words of this verse: "**and to die is gain.**" Hallelujah!

Hymn: "I Surrender All", Fountainview Academy

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hqQvda1Q0xk>

1. All to Jesus I surrender
All to Him I freely give
I will ever love and trust Him
In His presence daily live

Chorus

I surrender all
 I surrender all
 All to Thee my blessed Savior
 I surrender all

2. All to Jesus I surrender
 Humbly at His feet I bow
 Worldly pleasures all forsaken
 Take me, Jesus, take me now,

Chorus

I surrender all
 I surrender all
 All to Thee my blessed Savior
 I surrender all

3. All to Jesus I surrender
 Make me Savior wholly Thine
 May Thy Holy Spirit fill me
 May I know Thy power divine

Chorus

I surrender all
 I surrender all
 All to Thee my blessed Savior
 I surrender all

4. All to Jesus I surrender
 Lord I give myself to Thee
 Fill me with Thy love and power
 Let thy blessing fall on me

Chorus

I surrender all
 I surrender all
 All to Thee my blessed Savior
 I surrender all

Offering

Presenting our tithes and offerings is an act of worship. I want to encourage you to write a cheque and drop it in the mail to the church using your envelope, if you have one. (St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, PO Box 161, 1 Drummond St W, Perth, ON K7H 3E3) **We also have another option for you for giving and that is you can make an e-Transfer.** This note from our treasurer.

E-transfers are now accepted. Please note the new email address for this purpose only. standrewspert offering@gmail.com Please include your Offering Envelope #

in the message section of the INTERAC transfer page you fill in. If you wish any part of your donation to go to a specific fund (eg Presbyterian Sharing) please mention this in your message.

Invitation to Offering

Remember the words the Lord Jesus himself said:
“It is more blessed to give than to receive.”

Offertory Prayer

God of extravagant mercy,
with hands outstretched you have poured out
wonder and pleasure and delight,
goodness and beauty and bounty.
So take these offerings, we pray, as our protest against all
that is evil and ugly and impoverished,
trivial and wretched and tyrannical,
in our world and in ourselves—
and thus may we and others know
ourselves to be blessed. **Amen.**

Pastoral Prayer

Closing Hymn: “Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying”

(Click on the link below to view the video. The words will be on the screen.)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qp5Ck6BsWJQ>

Lord, listen to your children praying,
Lord, send your Spirit in this place;
Lord, listen to your children praying,
Send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

Benediction

Go now, in the freedom of the gospel of Christ.
Encourage one another to lead lives worthy of God
and walk together in service and humility.
Let your words and your lives be one in Christ.

And may the God of lasting love open the way before you;
May Jesus the Messiah be your one instructor;
And may the Holy Spirit lead you on
into the promised land of God’s kingdom and glory.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.