

Paul's Mental Attitude on Life and Death (vv. 18-24)

His Confidence in the Outcome (vv. 18-20)

VERSE 18 What then (τί γάρ [*interrog.pro.nom.nt.s. tis what? + conj gar "then"*]?)

Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice (πλὴν ὅτι παντὶ τρόπῳ, εἴτε προφάσει εἴτε ἀληθείᾳ, Χριστὸς καταγγέλλεται, καὶ ἐν τούτῳ χαίρω [*conj plen nevertheless; "Only" + conj hoti that + adj.dat.m.s. pas "every" + noun dat.m.s. topos way + conj eite whether + noun loc.f.s. prophasis "in pretense" + conj eite whether; "or" + noun loc.f.s. aletheia truth + noun nom.m.s. Christ + pres.pass.ind.3s. katangelo proclaim + conj kai + prep en + pro.loc.nt.s. touto this + pres.act.ind.1s. chairo rejoice*]).

Yes, and I will rejoice (ἀλλὰ καὶ χαρήσομαι [*conj alla but + conj kai also + fut.dep.ind.1s. chairo rejoice*]),

VERSE 19 for I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayers and the provision [support] of the Spirit of Jesus Christ (οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι τοῦτό μοι ἀποβήσεται εἰς σωτηρίαν διὰ τῆς ὑμῶν δεήσεως καὶ ἐπιχορηγίας τοῦ πνεύματος Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ [*perf.act.ind.1s. oika know + conj gar + conj hoti that + pro.nom.nt.s. touto this + pro.dat.s. ego "my" + fut.dep.ind.3s. apobaino lead to + prep eis to; "for" + noun acc.f.s. soteria deliverance, salvation + prep dia + d.a.w/noun gen.f.s. deiesis petition; "prayers" + pro.gen.m.s. su + conj + noun gen.f.s. epichoregia provision, supply, support + d.a.w/noun gen.nt.s. pneuma Spirit + noun gen.m.s. Jesus + noun gen.m.s. Christ*]),

VERSE 20 according to my earnest expectation and hope, that I will not be put to**shame in anything** (κατὰ τὴν ἀποκαραδοκίαν καὶ ἐλπίδα μου, ὅτι ἐν οὐδενὶ αἰσχυνοθήσομαι*[prep kata + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. apokaradokia earnest expectation + conj kai + noun acc.f.s.**elpis hope + pro.gen.m.s. ego “my” + conj hoti that + prep en + adj.pro.loc.nt.s. oudeis nothing**+ fut.dep.ind.1s. aischunomai be ashamed], but **that with all boldness, Christ will even*****now, as always, be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death** [ἀλλ’ ἐν πάσῃ

παρρησίᾳ ὡς πάντοτε καὶ νῦν μεγαλυνθήσεται Χριστὸς ἐν τῷ σώματί μου, εἴτε διὰ ζωῆς εἴτε

διὰ θανάτου *[conj alla + prep en + adj.loc.f.s. pas + noun loc.f.s. parresia boldness + conj hos**as + adv pantote always + conj kai “even” + adv nun now + fut.pass.ind.3s. megaluno exalt +**noun nom.m.s. Christ + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.nt.s. soma body + pro.gen.m.s. ego “my” +**conj eite whether + prep dia + noun gen.f.s. zoe live + conj eite whether + prep dia + noun**gen.m.s. thanatos death]).***ANALYSIS: VERSES 18-20**

1. Paul’s report of his external circumstances (vv. 12-17) is followed by a report on his mental attitude toward it all (vv. 18-26).
2. This reporting is introduced with “What then?” which is to say “What then [shall I say about all my troubles]?”
3. “What then” is a rhetorical devise (cf. Matt. 9:9; 16:26; 23:19; 27:23; Mk. 8:36, 27; 15:14; Lk. 8:25; 23:22; Rom. 3:3; 4:3; 1 Cor. 5:12; 7:16; 2 Cor. 12:13).
4. It is followed with “Only that” or our “Quite simply.”
5. “That in every way” means in every context whether good or bad.
6. This is made specific in his words “whether in pretense whether in truth.”
7. Here this is referring back to the aforementioned reporting that among the emboldened Christian witnessing in Rome that there were two approaches; the one was based on a desire to harm Paul and the other was based on love.
8. “In pretense” (*prophasis*) refers to the hidden agenda to stir up more animosity against Paul whom they were jealous of because he had this grand stage to defend the gospel.
9. For this word see also Matt. 12:40 and 1 Thess. 2:5.
10. “In love” by contrast refers to those who had Spirit-filled pure motives.
11. “Christ is proclaimed” refers to the content of the witness of these two categories of believers.
12. Both gave an proper and clear gospel witness.

13. The doctrinal content of the jealous antagonistic group is not in question here; Paul accepts it as valid.
14. Otherwise he could not legitimately say what he does at the end of v. 18.
15. Here Paul completely crushes in his mind any feelings of personal annoyance arising from the unscrupulous antagonism he faced from those believers who resented him.
16. Paul focused on the fact that “Christ is proclaimed” in the very heart of the empire.
17. “And in this I rejoice” is perhaps unexpected, but it serves to eliminate any pettiness on his part.
18. He was focused on the positives that come from bearing witness to Christ at a time when emotions ran high with regard to the Christian faith.
19. The emphatic “Yes, and I will rejoice” is designed to declare that he will not change his attitude with the passage of time.
20. In v. 19 Paul expresses his confidence that he will be delivered from his imprisonment.
21. “For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance” refers to all the variables that were at play during his ordeal.
22. For the verb “will turn out” or “will lead to” (*apobaino* result in, lead to) note Lk. 21:13 “it will lead to an opportunity for your testimony.”
23. “It” refers to appearing before various authorities as a result of persecution.
24. And so here Paul is referencing the whole situation that will lead to his defense and subsequent release.
25. See vv. 25 & 26 where Paul clearly describes his expected release and subsequent visit to the Philippians.
26. In this regard he makes mention of the expectation of the prayer support on the part of the recipients.
27. “And the provision/supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ” refers here to the ministry of God the Holy Spirit which will give Paul the words when he appears before the Roman court (cf. Mk. 13:11 “When they arrest you and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say, but say whatever is given to you in that hour; for it is not you who speaks, but *it is* the Holy Spirit.”).
28. The fact that Christ sent the Holy Spirit explains the reference here.
29. Paul expands on the topic of his deliverance in v. 20.
30. “My earnest expectation (*apokaradokia* eager longing; also at Rom. 8:19) and hope (*elpis* hope) is here directed not at his release, but is used in connection with his impending appearance before the Roman court.
31. “That I will not be put to shame in anything” is in reference to Paul’s testimony before the Roman authority.
32. In open court with a variety of spectators Paul will defend the gospel on all points.
33. He is confident that he will not be at a loss for words and that he will not be confounded in an unfriendly atmosphere.
34. It wasn’t like this was his first time to face such an audience.
35. “But will all boldness” contrasts “be put to shame.”
36. For this noun (*parresia*) see Mark. 8:32.
37. This noun carries the idea of direct, plain, and public discourse accompanied with confidence apart from an equivocation (Jn. 11:14; 18:20; Acts 3:13; 4:29, 31; 2 Cor. 3:12).

38. In Eph. 6:19, writing from this same imprisonment, Paul solicits their prayers saying, “and *pray* on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel.”
39. This theme repeated here in v. 20 where he expresses his confidence (e.g., “according to my earnest expectation and hope”) in a positive outcome for himself and by extension for Christians everywhere.
40. The noun translated “earnest expectation” (*apokaradokia*) could also be rendered “eagerly expect” (NIV).
41. It occurs one other place in the NT at Rom. 8:19: “For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God.”
42. “Hope” here refers to a positive temporal outcome of his up-coming trial before the Roman elite.
43. Paul has the God on his side and he knows the Lord will support him when it comes time for him to defend the Christian faith and rebut the charges brought against him.
44. He informs the Philippians that he is confident “that [he] will not be put to shame.”
45. Here we have an example of Ph 2 prosperity/blessing for a believer under duress.
46. Paul anticipates his verbal defense to be accomplished “with all boldness” (cf. Acts 4:31 “And when they had prayed, the place where they gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and *began* to speak the word of God with boldness.”; 2 Cor. 3:12 “Having therefore such a hope (Ph 3), we use great boldness in *our* speech.”; Eph. 3:12 “in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him.”; 6:19 (see point 38 above); 1 Thess. 2:2 “but after we have already suffered and been mistreated in Philippi, as you know, we had boldness in our God to speak the gospel of God amid much opposition.”).
47. For the verb (*parresiazomai* speak boldly) see: Acts 9:27, 28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; Rom. 15:15; Eph. 6:20.
48. In the process of Paul’s “defense and confirmation” of the Christian faith he is aware that his conduct and speech will result in “Christ...exalted in his body.”
49. “Even now, as always” refers to the present, past and future as he lives out his Ph 2 in the capacity of an apostle.
50. The verb “exalted” (*megaluno* enlarge, extend; hold in high honor) could also be translated “magnified” as it is in Acts 19:17.
51. Whatever the outcome, Paul is conscious of the fact that “Christ will...be exalted” whether he survives (“by life”) or dies (“by death”).
52. According to what follows in this chapter, Paul expected to be released from incarceration (cf. v. 25).

Reflections on Living and Dying (vv. 21-24)

VERSE 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain (ἐμοὶ γὰρ τὸ ζῆν Χριστὸς καὶ τὸ ἀποθανεῖν κέρδος [*pro.dat.s. ego + conj gar + d.a.w/pres.act.inf. zao to live + noun nom.m.s. Christ + conj + d.a.w/aor.act.infin. apothnesko die + noun nom.m.s. kerdos gain*]).

VERSE 22 But if I am to live on in the flesh, this will mean fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose (εἰ δὲ τὸ ζῆν ἐν σαρκί, τοῦτό μοι καρπὸς ἔργου, καὶ τί αἰρήσομαι οὐ γνωρίζω [*part ei if + conj de + def.art.w/pres.act.infin. zao live + prep en + noun loc.f.s. sarx flesh + pro.nom.nt.s. touto "this" + pro.dat.m.s. ego + noun nom.m.s. karpos fruit + noun gen.nt.s. ergo work; "labor" + conj kai + adj.acc.nt.s. tis "which" + fut.mid.ind.1s. aireomai choose + neg ou + pres.act.ind.1s. gnorizo know*]).

VERSE 23 But I am hard-pressed from both directions, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for that is very much better (συνέχομαι δὲ ἐκ τῶν δύο, τὴν ἐπιθυμίαν ἔχων εἰς τὸ ἀναλῦσαι καὶ σὺν Χριστῷ εἶναι, πολλῶ [γὰρ] μᾶλλον κρεῖσσον [*pres.pass.ind.1s. sunecho surround, hem in; "hard-pressed" + conj de + prep ek + d.a.abl.nt.p. + numeral abl.nt.p. duo two + d.a.w/noun acc.f.s. epithumia lust, desire + pres.act.part.nom.m.s. echo have + prep eis to + d.a.w/aor.act.infin. analuo come back, return home; depart + conj + prep sun with + noun instr.m.s. Christ + pres.act.infin. eimi + adj.dat.nt.s. polus much + conj gar + adv. mallon more; "very" + adj.nom.nt.s. kreitton better*]);

VERSE 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake (τὸ δὲ ἐπιμένειν [ἐν] τῇ σαρκὶ ἀναγκαιότερον δι' ὑμᾶς [*conj de + d.a.w/pres.act.infin. epimeno remain + prep en + d.a.w/noun loc.f.s. sarx flesh + adj.compar.nom.nt.s. anagkaios necessary + prep dia + pro.acc.p. su*]).

ANALYSIS: VERSES 21-24

1. In these verses Paul expands upon the thought of v. 20; namely, life and death.
2. Before he reveals the conflict within his soul in respect to the two possibilities Paul introduces it all in a brief and powerful statement (v. 21).
3. There is in this verse a certain logical imbalance for surely not only in life but also in death Paul is bound to Christ.
4. The lack of symmetry in v. 21 is what lends special force to this one sentence outburst.
5. His life finds its total meaning in Christ, his dying—which entails being with Christ (v. 24)—must be viewed as an advantage over living on in the temporal realm.
6. For those who die and their souls are immediately transferred to the 3rd heaven, that is “gain.”
7. This is because they are no longer living in a world with all of its sufferings and dangers.
8. They are set free forever from this body of corruption awaiting the day of their resurrection.
9. For Paul dying and going into the very presence of Christ was the most desirable of the two options.
10. Even though dying and being with the Lord is far superior, there is an advantage to an extended Ph 2, which he cites in v. 22.
11. “Fruitful labor to me” or “fruit from labor for me” (only here) refers to the accumulation of SG3 which cannot be increased for him if he dies and goes to heaven.
12. The two options, dying and living, produced in him a very real tension expressed here as “I do not know which to choose.”
13. The one (death) delivers him once and for all from the sufferings associated with this life and the other benefits him (note “for” or “to me”) in Ph 3 as well.
14. Paul of course realizes that the two options are not his to pick.
15. He recognizes the advantages of the two options hold.
16. He confesses that he “does not know which to choose” if it was left to him (v. 22b).
17. Both options are equally attractive to him and so that left him in a quandary as expressed by “I am hard pressed from the two.”
18. The verb “hard pressed” (*sunecho* pres.act.ind.1s.) is used of people who came to Jesus with untreatable physical conditions (Matt. 4:24); those in the grip of fear (Lk. 4:38); of Jesus hemmed in by the crowds (Lk. 8:45); of Jesus’ mental state with respect to the prospect of bearing sins (Lk. 12:50); of Jerusalem under Roman siege (Lk. 19:43); of Jesus under arrest (Lk. 22:63).
19. Paul lays bare his feelings of a great tension between personal desire and his calling as an apostle.
20. His preferred “desire” (*epithumia*), if he could choose, was “to depart” (prep *eis* w/d.a.w/aor.infin. *analuo*) “and be with Christ.”
21. This he says if “very much better.”

22. For the noun see 2 Tim. 4:6: “For I am already poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure (*anagnosis*) has drawn near.” (2 Pet. 1:15 “And I will also be diligent that at any time after my departure (e.g., death) you will be able to call these things to mind.”; Ex. 16:1 “Then they set out from Elim, and all the congregation of the sons of Israel came to the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the 15th day of the 2nd month after their departure from the land of Egypt.”; Lk. 8:11 “who, appearing in glory, were speaking of His departure (e.g., ascension) which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.”; Acts 20:28 “I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock.”).
23. Paul concludes this excursus with a statement that “to remain on in the flesh” would be advantageous for the Philippians (v. 24).
24. This represents an additional plus the option of living on in the temporal state along with “fruitful labor” (cf. v. 22).