

Philippians 5: An Unstoppable Life

Dr. John Carmichael

[Phi 1:21 NASB95] 21 For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.

- It's like standing on a battlefield with your sword raised, declaring, "No matter what happens, I win." That's the Spirit-filled believer's confidence.
- Paul writes these words from a Roman prison cell, with possible execution hanging over his head. Yet he proclaims the most radical statement of victory: "To live is Christ, to die is gain."
- It's not merely poetic; it's the Holy Spirit's fire burning in the soul of a man whose life belongs completely to Jesus.

What can a Spirit-empowered Christian take from this verse?

God wants us to learn to live an unstoppable life that is based upon Christ.

I. To Live is Christ - Purpose in Every Breath

- a. Philippians 1:21a – "To live is Christ..."
- b. Paul sees life not as survival, but as an opportunity for Christ to shine through him. His purpose is no longer self-driven; it's Christ-driven.
- c. The Spirit fills us so that every moment becomes a stage for Christ's glory.
- d. [Gal 2:20 NASB95] 20 "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the [life] which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.
- e. [2Co 5:15 NASB95] 15 and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf.
- f. Our life is based upon and from Jesus Christ.

II. To Die is Gain - Fearless in the Face of Death

- a. Philippians 1:21b – "...to die is gain."
- b. Paul sees death not as loss, but as a doorway to even greater intimacy with Christ. Death for the believer is promotion, not punishment.
- c. The Spirit takes away the sting of death and replaces it with anticipation of eternal glory.
- d. [1Co 15:55-57 NASB95] 55 "O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR VICTORY? O DEATH, WHERE IS YOUR STING?" 56 The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; 57 but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- e. [2Co 5:8 NASB95] 8 we are of good courage, I say, and prefer rather to be absent from the body and to be at home with the Lord.
- f. You learn to live when you know how to die. Losing the fear of death helps you to enjoy life.

III. The Spirit Empowers Us to Live Boldly Either Way

- a. Paul's statement means no outcome can defeat a Spirit-filled believer. If we live, we serve Christ; if we die, we see Him face to face. That's why the Spirit gives believers courage and fearlessness.
- b. The Spirit doesn't just prepare us to die well; He equips us to live well with purpose and boldness.
- c. [Act 20:24 NASB95] 24 "But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

Philippians 5: An Unstoppable Life

Dr. John Carmichael

- d. Defeating the devil: [Rev 12:11 NASB95] 11 "And they overcame him because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death.
- e. We live boldly because we are not defeated!

IV. Our Focus on Eternity Fuels Earthly Mission

- a. Paul wasn't suicidal—he desired to live if it meant bearing fruit for Christ. Our longing for heaven doesn't make us passive; it energizes our mission.
 - b. A heavenly vision gives us unstoppable passion for earthly ministry.
 - c. [Col 3:1-2 NASB95] 1 Therefore if you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.
 - d. Paul's tension: fruitful labor here, desire to be with Christ. [Phl 1:22-24 NASB95] 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. 23 But I am hard-pressed from both [directions,] having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for [that] is very much better; 24 yet to remain on in the flesh is more necessary for your sake.
 - e. You are unstoppable when you understand that you can not lose!
- **When Christ is your life, nothing can defeat you not suffering, not prison, not even death for both life and death are gain in Him.**
 - **Paul's words remain a defiant anthem: "To live is Christ, to die is gain."**
 - **If you're alive, Christ is your purpose. If you die, Christ is your prize.**
 - **The Spirit makes believers unstoppable because we can't lose either way.**
 - **Today, let's declare: "Lord, whether in life or death, I belong to You!"**