

Uniting Heaven and Earth:
Christ in Philippians and Colossians

James Rafferty 2026 Q1 L3 Christ Will Be Magnified

NEXT WEEK LESSON 4 **Unity Through Humility**

Lesson 3

**January 10-16*

Life and Death

Sabbath Afternoon

Read for This Week's Study: *Phil. 1:19-30, 1*
Cor. 4:14-16, 2 Cor. 10:3-6, John 17:17-19,
Micah 6:8, Acts 14:22.

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

UNFORTUNATELY Death, we're often told, is
HAS BECOME just part of life. That's a lie. YET
IN THE BIBLE Death is the opposite of life, the
enemy of life. Death was no more built into life
than wreckage was built into a car. Paul
emphatically says that Christ died to "destroy
him that had the power of death, that is, the
devil; And deliver them who through fear of
death were all their lifetime subject to
bondage" (Heb. 2:14, 15).

Although ready to die for Christ, Paul was
confident of his long-term fate. The most
important thing for him in the meantime was, by
his own life or death, to honor Christ and to

preach the gospel to as many as possible.

Perhaps that is one reason we have so many
epistles bearing his name. Through his writings,
he could reach many people and places, including
places that he himself had never visited.

Life is short, and it is vital to make the
biggest impact possible for God's kingdom within
the span of the years that God grants us. No
small part of that impact has to do with our
encouraging "the unity of the faith." As we
shall see beginning this week, this theme was
one important reason for Paul's writing to the
Philippians.

**Study this week's lesson to prepare for
Sabbath, January 17.*

Sunday

January 11

"Christ Will Be Magnified"

Read Philippians 1:19, 20. What seems to be Paul's expectation as to the outcome of his trial? What does he consider even more important than being acquitted?

For I know that this shall turn to my salvation through your prayer, and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death.

Although Paul was no criminal, this was not the first time that he had been imprisoned, and he was no stranger to persecution. To the Corinthians, he detailed his sufferings up to that time: "in prisons more frequently, in deaths often. From the Jews five times I

received forty stripes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods; once I was stoned; three times I was shipwrecked; a night and a day I have been in the deep; in journeys often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils of my own countrymen, in perils of the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; in weariness and toil, in sleeplessness often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness" (2 Cor. 11:23-27, NKJV).

But lest we think these sufferings were uppermost in his mind, Paul immediately adds, "besides the other things, what comes upon me daily: my deep concern for all the churches" (2 Cor. 11:28, NKJV).

Read 1 Corinthians 4:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 2:10, 11; Galatians 4:19; and Philemon 10. What

relationship does Paul have with the churches he established and the people he won for Christ?

Like Jesus, who spared nothing to save us, Paul was willing to "spend and be spent" for the sake of fellow believers (*2 Cor. 12:15, NKJV*). But, paradoxically, the more a person's actions resemble that of Jesus, the less they are loved or appreciated by some. "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (*2 Tim. 3:12*). But faithful Christians remain perhaps the most powerful way to glorify God and to reveal the truth of the gospel (*compare Phil. 1:7*). "Paul's patience and cheerfulness during his long and unjust imprisonment, his courage

and faith, were a continual sermon.”—Ellen G. White, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 464.

Look at how you live and how you treat people, especially people who don't treat you nicely. What kind of witness for Jesus do you present?

ROMANS 9:1-3