

Sermon Title: The Tug-O-War of an Authentic Christian

Sermon Text: Philippians 1:19-26

Sermon Purpose: To call the hearer to realize and rest in the every Christian Tug-O-War.

Sermon Proposition: There are 3 aspects of the authentic Christian's Tug-O-War.

Introduction: The Apostle now reveals that both the threat of impending death and the conflict of living on in the flesh, were incapable of stealing his joy. He is feeling confident that despite his negative circumstances the Lord causes triumph.

I. The Tug-O-War confidence of an authentic Christian. V.19

A. The confidence of the protection of the Lord. V.19a

Job 13:16 He also *shall* be my salvation, For a hypocrite could not come before Him.

Romans 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to *His* purpose.

1 Timothy 1:5 Now the purpose of the commandment is love from a pure heart, *from* a good conscience, and *from* sincere faith,

1 Timothy 3:9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

2 Timothy 1:3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as *my* forefathers *did*, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day,

Paul trusted in the divine responsibility of God.

B. The confidence in the prayers of the saints. V.19b

Paul desired the prayers of the saints, this is the human responsibility of the help we all need.

The prayers implies intense intercession by the churches.

James 5:16 Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

Romans 15:30 Now I beg you, brethren, through the Lord Jesus Christ, and through the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in prayers to God for me,

Ephesians 6:18-19 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints-- **19** and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

2 Thessalonians 3:1 Finally, brethren, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may run *swiftly* and be glorified, just as *it is* with you,

C. The confidence in the power of the Spirit. v.19c

(**Acts 1:8; Ephesians 3:20**)

Matthew 10:19-20 "But when they deliver you up, do not worry about how or what you should speak. For it will be given to you in that hour what you should speak; **20** "for it is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father who speaks in you.

Zechariah 4:6 So he answered and said to me: "This *is* the word of the LORD to Zerubbabel: 'Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,' Says the LORD of hosts.

John 14:16 "And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

D. The confidence in the promotion of Christ. V.20a

The Greek word indicates a keen anticipation of the future, as someone stretches their neck in the present to see it, that which lies ahead. This is a concentrated intense hope of certainty which ignores all other interest. The Apostle's deep desire and hope are for the:

1. progress of the gospel
2. the perseverance of his converts
3. the accomplishment of God's redeeming purpose.

In this hope and expectation, the Christian is never "put to shame." There is no cowardling, running from the battle or the works, or fear of embarrassment. Paul as all Christians are acquitted, and will be. (**Psalm 25:2-3**)

Isaiah 49:23 Kings shall be your foster fathers, And their queens your nursing mothers; They shall bow down to you with *their* faces to the earth, And lick up the dust of your feet. Then you will know that I *am* the LORD, For they shall not be ashamed who wait for Me."

Romans 9:33 As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Isaiah 45:14-17 Thus says the LORD: "The labor of Egypt and merchandise of Cush And of the Sabeans, men of stature, Shall come over to you, and they shall be yours; They shall walk behind you, They shall come over in chains; And they shall bow down to you. They will make supplication to you, *saying*, `Surely God *is* in you, And *there is* no other; *There is* no other God."

15 Truly You *are* God, who hide Yourself, O God of Israel, the Savior! **16** They shall be ashamed And also disgraced, all of them; They shall go in confusion together, *Who are* makers of idols. **17** But Israel shall be saved by the LORD With an everlasting salvation; You shall not be ashamed or disgraced Forever and ever.

Isaiah 40:15-16 Behold, the nations *are* as a drop in a bucket, And are counted as the small dust on the scales; Look, He lifts up the isles as a very little thing. **16** And Lebanon *is* not sufficient to burn, Nor its beasts sufficient for a burnt offering.

Paul focuses on the truth that now and always Christ will be praised because of the bold witness of His followers about Christ, whether in living or dying. Christ would be highly honored in and through the believers body or earthly life. On earth, if Christ is not glorified in the body of His followers. He is not made known at all. This is to be done whether in life or in death. (**Romans 12:1; Galatians 2:20**)

2 Corinthians 4:10 always carrying about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our body.

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? **20** For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's.

Philippians 4:3 And I urge you also, true companion, help these women who labored with me in the gospel, with Clement also, and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names *are* in the Book of Life.

E. The confidence in the plan of God. V.20b

"In one sense Paul's life is still a risk and at the mercy of his captors. Yet he knows that ultimately he stands under the providential care, control, and commands of God, so that no evil, circumstance, or situation can touch him except by divine permission." [**Peter T. O'Brien "The Epistle to the Philippians" The New International Greek Testament Commentary NIGTC pp.117-118**]

II. The Tug-O-War confession of an authentic Christian. V.21-23

A. The confession related to the personal benefit. V.21

Living is Christ! If Paul continues on living, every aspect of Paul's life would continue to reveal and magnify Jesus Christ. For Paul life is summed up in Jesus Christ, Christ is his sole reason for living and being.

Likewise, his death would be gain since death would usher him into Christ's presence. Death frees the authentic believer of earthly burdens and lets them focus on totally glorifying Christ.

Philippians 3:8-10 Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ **9** and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which *is* from the law, but that which *is* through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; **10** that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death,

Acts 21:13 Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

Paul and all Christian's should fully understand and refuse to allow wealth, power, influence, possessions, prestige, social standing, good or bad health, business, careers, professional success, and all other such things as temporary. Many people acknowledge this truth, but not many live as if it is true.

Quote from Adoniram Judson, "If I had not felt certain that every trial was ordered by infinite love and mercy, I could not have survived my accumulated suffering."

[[John MacArthur Commentary NT Commentary, Philippians, pp.77](#)]

B. The confession related to the mutual benefit. V.22

The physical life of the Christian is to be a life of maturity, service, and pursuit of Christ. To know Christ intimately whether in life or death is our passionate longing. Paul knew that the only reasons to remain on, is to glorify Christ, bring souls to Christ, and to mature the believers. (**Philippians 1:15-18**)

Colossians 1:28-29 Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. **29** To this *end* I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

2 Corinthians 4:15 For all things *are* for your sakes, that grace, having spread through the many, may cause thanksgiving to abound to the glory of God.

Yet Paul was undecided which option between life and death should be desired more. He felt pressured (lit "in a dilemma") between the two. The Greek word picture a traveler on a narrow path, with rock walls on either side allowing them to go only straight ahead.

Luke 19:43 "For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side,

2 Corinthians 5:1 For we know that if our earthly house, *this* tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

Luke 23:43 And Jesus said to him, "Assuredly, I say to you, today you will be with Me in Paradise."

Revelation 7:15-17 "Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. **16** "They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; **17** "for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

III. The Tug-O-War conclusion of an authentic Christian. Vv.24-26

- A. The certainty of the conclusion. V.24

- B. The confidence of the conclusion. V.25
“Progress” pictures the blazing of a trail, so that an army can advance. Paul wanted to cut a new path for the Philippians to follow to victory; the increasing of their faith would result in a path of increasing joy.

- C. The celebration of the conclusion. V.26