

Philippians 1:20, "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."

My prayer this morning is for the children of God to have a greater understanding and increased faith of the better day that awaits the family of God. The Apostle Paul, in the verse previously cited, is teaching how his knowledge, coupled with his faith, gives him an earnest expectation of living in a place "far better" than the one he was in when he penned these words. Paul's earnest expectation gave him:

(1) A heartfelt peace that he will not be disappointed (vs 20, ashamed). When the Apostle Paul says "that in nothing I shall be ashamed", he is saying that I will not be 'let down' in any way when I finally get to heaven. So many times in this world, people, businesses, and even our political leaders 'let us down' and leave us feeling disappointed. But brothers and sisters, when the elect child of grace stands in the presence of the One who loved them and gave His life for them, they will be completely satisfied.

(2) Courage for his faith (vs 20, boldness). The Apostle Paul, throughout his writings, reveals that his hope was not in this world, but in the world to come. Since Paul knew that this world was temporary and that an eternal rest waited for him in glory, he had boldness to preach the gospel even in the face of opposition. Paul did not run in fear of persecution, because he knew the worse that anyone could do was take his natural life. And if that happened, it would send him home to glory to be with Jesus Christ his Lord.

(3) A stronger desire to live an obedient life to the Lord (vs 20, magnified in my body, vs 21, for me to live is Christ). The Apostle knew that it took the shed blood of Jesus Christ for him to have a home in heaven. Since his hope was not in this world, he would be willing to live his days on earth, not for his own glory, but to the glory of Jesus Christ his savior.

(4) A strength to face death (vs 22, strait betwixt two, a desire to depart, and to be with Christ). The Apostle, because of the hope he had, was not shaking in fear of death, but understood that being with the Lord Jesus Christ was "far better" than living in this world. Paul said in verse 21 "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

(5) A zeal for others to experience the same (vs 23-25, for your furtherance and joy of faith). Paul wanted other children of God to have what he had. He wanted the comfort and peace of Jesus Christ, which passeth all understanding, to dwell in the hearts and minds of the family of God. Paul was willing to spend and be spent to give his knowledge away so others could be comforted in this precious hope.

(6) An excitement to see others with the same expectation and hope (vs 26, your rejoicing). Paul was always encouraged to see other children of God place their hope in heaven and not in this world. In verses 25 and 26, he declares his happiness is in their "furtherance" and "rejoicing" of the expectation of glory.

(7) An energized effort for unity in the truth (vs 27, striving together). Since Paul knew that we would all be together one day in heaven, he directs his efforts to see unity in this world (not at the cost of truth, but in truth). In Ephesians 4:13, the Apostle tells us the gifts of the ministry should strive "Till we all come in unity of the faith". Brothers and sisters, that faith is the truth about Jesus Christ and Heaven above. May we all strive together to share the knowledge of salvation by grace, that other children of God may be in the unity of the faith having their hope and earnest expectation of being with Jesus increased. Amen!

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