

The Best is Yet to Come

2019 will go down in history as one of the hardest years of my life. Me and my wife both lost parents this year. The process of losing them was a battle too. So it wasn't just that we lost them, it was how we lost them and what we went through in the process of losing them. But I say all of this to come to this understanding that "the best is yet to come" does not look like what we want it to look like, and we can't determine God's goodness based off of our circumstances, or the plans He has for us based off of what we've gone through, because God is good regardless. God has been so good in the worst year of my life.

I want to read a scripture to you from the book of Philippians today.

Now before we jump into the scripture let's get a little bit of context of where we are. Who is writing this and who he is writing it to?

Paul is writing this in prison in Rome pretty much awaiting his execution.

He is writing it to the church in Philippi. The Philippians were one of the first cities to receive the gospel and have a church in Europe. They were one of the first places Paul visited. They supported Paul from the beginning when he was with them and until the end even when he was not with them.

Philippians 1:3-6, 9-11 NIV

"I thank my God every time I remember you. In all my prayers for all of you, I always pray with joy because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now, being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.

And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God."

Now Paul encourages them by saying the work that God has started in you He will complete it. In other words, none of your work for the Kingdom of God is in vain. God will complete what He has started in us. Don't be discouraged when things are not looking up.

Remember Paul is writing this from prison and is likely anticipating his execution. Yet he can say with confidence God will complete the work He started. In them, in him, and in all of us.

Where is this confidence coming from sitting in a jail cell waiting to be executed? This confidence comes from an eternal perspective, for a Kingdom that does not decay, because the God He serves works all things out for good.

One of the questions I want to ask today is how do we determine good?

Discern and Trust not Feel and Determine

What God says is good can look very different than what you “feel” is good.

The Lord does have good things for us even if the present is not good right now. But let’s not misinterpret His goodness because of our circumstances.

The best is yet to come, right? It is! What’s best is not always understood as what is best though. What is good is not always understood as good.

His ways are not our ways and His thoughts are not our thoughts. But I can guarantee you His ways are better than your way and His thoughts are better than your thoughts. So trust.

When you’re a kid your parents tell you things not to do to protect you, and tell you things to do for what’s best for you. But as a kid you don’t understand why they tell you the things they tell you to do or not to do. But you get to trust them.

Paul prays for the Philippians that they would discern what is best. And again in Romans 12 Paul talks about the renewing of our mind so that we can learn what is best.

Romans 12:2 ESV

“Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect.”

The Lord wants to renew our minds for many reasons but one of them is for us to be able to discern what is His will that is good and acceptable and perfect.

It’s not a feeling or a measurement based off of circumstances it’s a trust and a discernment based off of your Heavenly Father.

The problem is we look for what is good and acceptable and perfect for us instead of discerning what His is will, which is actually good, acceptable, and perfect.

The best is yet to come. It's not some fairytale lie because your circumstances don't line up with what you think good and best is.

Seek First

The Philippians were not necessarily supporting Paul they were supporting the advancement of the gospel.

This is why Paul said they can have confidence that the best is yet to come because they are putting their trust and support in a kingdom that will not fail.

Which leads to my closing point. Let's seek first the Kingdom and let God worry about what is best.

Matthew 6:33, 34 NIV

But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

The best is yet to come but a lot of time we sit around with our hands in our pockets waiting for it to come. I believe there's a difference between trusting and waiting. Trusting is acting upon what you are waiting for. So let's not just wait for the best to come, let's seek first the kingdom of God and trust that the rest will be added to us.

We don't need to know what the best is or when it is coming. We get to trust in the One Who promises it.