

**Message Date: October, 4, 2020**

**Message Title: Bulletproof**

**Preached by: Pastor Mike**

**Scripture--Philippians 1:12-30 (vs. 20-21 shown)**

*...it is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

**Main Idea--With the Right Measure and Godly Treasure, We “Bulletproof” Our Lives from Being Totally Devastated by Adversity**

**Bulletproof requires--**

- **The Right Measure** (vs. 12-18)

*...what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel... (v. 12)*

Addendum #1--Can the gospel really be preached insincerely, for selfish ambition?

- **Godly Treasure** (19-26)

*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (v. 21)*

Addendum #2--What happens to us at the point of death?

- **Enduring Pleasure** (27-30)

Addendum #3--How can suffering be a privilege?

*For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (v. 21)*

**Application--**

- Apply the Right Measure (*...what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel...*) to a situation you are now going through. How does that alter our perspective? How does that change how we respond to it?
- *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. (v. 21)* Is that absolutely/sometimes/mostly/rarely true for you? What needs to be dethroned so that you can “bulletproof” your life by affirming this?

## **Worship and Small Groups**

BY Michael C. Mack

We all know that worship is an essential part of the Christian's life, both individually and corporately. But does worship belong in small groups? That is like asking, does a heart belong in the human body? Does an operating system belong on a computer? Does peanut butter belong in a PBJ sandwich?

Worship is the heart of a small group. It's what makes it run. It's what holds it together. It's what makes a sweet aroma, pleasing to God. When God's people gather together, it is just natural for them to worship. And, when they do, unbelievable things happen. Scripture demonstrates that when we worship in our homes, God shakes things up!

*"They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved" (Acts 2:46, 47).*

*"About midnight, Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken" (Acts 16:25, 26).* This is a great illustration of "cell worship"!

*Jesus and His disciples worshiped together in the Upper Room at the Last Supper (Luke 14:26). The believers praised God together on Peter and John's release from prison, and "the place where they were meeting was shaken" (Acts 4:23-31).*

### **Why Don't We Worship More in Small Groups?**

Worship belongs in small groups, but many factors keep groups from entering into it:

**Intellectualism.** When knowledge of the Bible is the main objective, God gets crowded out. Agendaitus is the problem. The group simply does not have time in their tight schedule for worship and meaningful prayer. They may have Martha's Syndrome: they are too busy doing things to sit at the feet of the Master.

**Self-Centeredness.** "I don't want to worship in our small group. I can't sing." The focus of worship is not on our voices; it is on God. The question must be asked, "Whom does this group exist for?" If the answer is "me and my family and our needs," it's time to go back to the beginning and discuss purpose and mission.

**No True Experience in Worship.** Some group members may have not experienced real worship and the power of prayer personally, so they don't look for it or miss it in the group. Jesus said the "true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks" (John 4:23). Unfortunately, some Christians have not learned to worship in spirit and truth.

**A View that Worship and Evangelism Are Diametrically Opposed.** Non-Christians may not be able to enter as completely into the worship experience as a fully devoted follower of Christ, but even being in the room with sincere people who are praising God and seeing God move in response will draw a person to God. Worship changes people. Just like it changed the Philippian jailer and his family!

**Spiritual Warfare.** Satan does whatever he can to prevent us from spending time with God. He hates when we come together to worship God in spirit and truth. He wants to lead us into being me-centered or us-centered rather than God-centered. When we worship, we welcome God into our presence, where two or three (or more) are gathered. What is a group where God is not present?

Secular. Truly transformational small groups are groups that are focused on God, His will, His Word, His ways.

### **What God Does When Groups Worship**

In worship we ascribe worth to God. We give Him praise for Who He is rather than what He has done. We acknowledge and affirm His character, His power, His sovereignty. A small group that is yielded to God will naturally spend time in worship and prayer. When they do, God is able to use the group to pour His love and power into the group through each other. People grow in Christlikeness and life balance as they come close to God through worship and prayer. Their relationship with God grows as they spend time with Him, individually, in a small group, and corporately. As Calvin Coolidge put it, "It is only when men begin to worship that they begin to grow." The result of spending time with God as a group through worship and prayer is that the group can minister with each other to others as the overflow of their hearts pours into the lives of the world.