

Introduction: A tale of two fires

The Divine Equation: C + P = E

Circumstance + **P**erspective = **E**xperience

Living above my circumstances occurs when my _____ interprets my circumstances rather than my _____ determining my perspective.

The fundamental question: How can we develop the kind of **perspective** that transcends our circumstances?

The answer:

Four keys and four questions from Philippians chapter 1

Key #1: _____

Question #1: Where is your focus?

A lesson from the life of Paul

- Paul's circumstance Philippians 1:1-11
- Paul's _____ focus

³ I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all, ⁵ in view of your participation in the gospel from the first day until now. ⁶ For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:3-6

- Paul's _____ focus

⁷ For it is only right for me to feel this way about you all, because I have you in my heart, since both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers of grace with me. ⁸ For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

Philippians 1:7-8

⁹ And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; ¹¹ having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

Philippians 1:9-11

1. How to develop an upward focus

Philippians 1:3-6

- A Choice = _____
- An Action = _____
- An Attitude = _____

Summary = our _____ always follow our focus!

2. Three observations about an outward focus

Philippians 1:7-8

1. Difficult circumstances reveal our true _____.
2. Living above our circumstances occurs when our hearts are so full of people, there is no room for _____.
3. Sometimes God allows adverse circumstances to realign our _____!

Summary = our focus always follows our _____!

3. How to develop an outward focus

Philippians 1:9-11

- _____ about those who have loved you the most.
- Pray for those you _____ about the most.

Conclusion: Where's your focus?

- Upward or Inward?
- Outward or Inward?

Discussion Questions:

1. What is the most "pressing" or difficult circumstance you are facing in your life right now?
2. How does your circumstance compare to being held in prison, and awaiting possible execution?
3. What specific steps could you take today to develop an upward and outward focus even amidst your difficult situation?