

## Phil 08 – SERVANTS - Phil 2:17-30

Coming off of Pastor Jeff's msg – 1st week –

*“What make or breaks a Leader”* - Today = “Servants”

We have so many servants here – For which I am thankful

So many who have laid their life down for the service of the Lord

We think – “well not laid their Physical Life down – as unto death –  
but indeed laid this life down (this life on this earth)

Given up so much for the sake of the gospel

In a culture where moment by moment entertainment is the driving force –  
where there is opportunity to live consumed with enjoyment & recreation

There are servants who set all that aside to serve for a kingdom that is  
N.O.T.W.

We have those servants here -

& it is an awesome thing to watch them at work –

Serving for the Lord – setting aside their own wants / needs  
to give of themselves for the eternal cause

Seemingly normal people – simply showing up to give of their time & energy –  
but from the eternal perspective it is so much more than that

It's part of the “movement” of the body of Christ –

it's part of what is continuing the motion of Christ's church on the earth

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In our 1st msg – Paul talked about us “Working out our Salvation” –

In V.14 – he exhorted us to do all things w/o complaining & disputing –  
that no one would be able to criticize us . . .

That we would shine as “Lights in the World”

Now – Paul is give us a look into 3 servants of the Lord (incl'd'g himself) –  
& we get to see – the “humanness” of the work of the gospel -

The eternal work of the ministry takes place as each of us sacrifice our lives –  
& pick up our “part” of the ministry of Christ

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Paul begins with himself – but it’s just a transition from last week’s  
“working out our salvation” – to this week’s text on “Servants”

### **Phil 2:17-18**

***17 Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.***

***18 For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.***

The picture here Paul is painting is NOT that  
his being “poured out” is the primary focus

But that the Philippians Sacrifice & Service is the primary focus –  
He views his own life as a minor part of that (just a drink offering)

Paul’s focus in on the sacrifice & service of the faith of the church –  
& it is in that – that he is glad & rejoices –

altho Paul paints His role as the minor one here . . .

It’s safe to assume – that the Lord would probably not be calling us to  
to the LEVEL of sacrifice of the Apostle Paul

& yet – He does call us – to some extent - to set our own lives aside  
For one another - & for the eternal work of the gospel

& that is what Paul is rejoicing over in this text –  
& that I what we see in the body here –

& it’s one of the greatest encouragements in serving the Lord –  
not unlike the encouragement it was for Paul . . .

To give 2 examples of this “Sacrificial Service” -

1<sup>st</sup> Paul brings up Timothy - & the encouragement Timothy is to him

## **Phil 2:19-22**

**19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state.**

**20 For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state.**

**21 For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.**

**22 But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.**

Paul knows he can send Timothy back to the church  
& he will return w/ encouragement

& in **v.20** Pauls says “for I have no one like-minded” – the idea is;  
*I have no one quite like Timothy who will sincerely care for you*

Paul knows Timothy is one of those servants;

Who are doing the right thing,  
For the right reason,  
With no concern for themselves

Then – **in V.21** – Paul seems to make a Broad, Sweeping Statement

**21 For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.**

But the idea is – “**It is NORMAL for a person to seek their own interests, & not the things of Christ**” – BUT NOT SO WITH TIMOTHY

& again – we see the same thing in the ministry today –

When we see a person laying aside their own interests –

& taking up the care & concern for the body of Christ . . .

it is a unique & supernatural thing !

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& then in V.22 Paul gives Timothy 1 of the greatest compliments

a servant of God can get – **But you know his proven character**

Proven Character takes time to Show –  
& always shown best in the most difficult circumstances

& then Paul says of Timothy –  
***as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel. –***

& so Paul says in V.23-24 . . .

### **Phil 2:23-24**

***23 Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me.***

***24 But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.***

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& then Paul moves to Epaphroditus – a man mostly unknown –  
yet worthy of very high honor because of his service for the Lord

### **Phil 2:25**

***25 Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;***

Epaphroditus was a servant who set aside his own life for the good of the body  
Almost to the extent of losing his own life

1<sup>st</sup> Paul calls him – My Brother – this was a term unknown until Jesus Christ

### **Gal 3:28**

***28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.***

We know this as the Norm – but it was a radical concept in the 1<sup>st</sup> Century

& then he calls him - ***fellow worker, and fellow soldier*** -

There is something that happens when 2 people work for the Lord together -  
There is a bond that is built – a oneness that is difficult to break

& when we really go into the trenches together – just like in a war -  
We carry one another – we strengthen one another

Epaphraditus was a Fellow Worker & Fellow Soldier –  
He was a servant who set his own life aside  
to serve God – by serving the body

Then Paul calls him - ***your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;***

because it was Epaphraditus who brought support to Paul  
from the Philippians while Paul was in Rome

& in doing so – he had almost died

### **Let's re-read Phil 2:25 - & thru V.27**

***25 Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;***

***26 since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.***

***27 For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.***

This shows such a human side of the Bible –  
this was a real person – with real Longing & Distress -

Who really almost died from getting sick while serving God by  
taking supplies (& money) from Philippi to Paul

When we are serving the Lord – we are working in the real world –  
with real problems & real struggles –  
& yet - in the midst – we are part of a real eternal work

So Paul thanks God that he spared Epaphroditus –  
so that Paul would not have sorrow added upon sorrow

But then he also sent him back to the Philippians for their encouragement

## **Phil 2:28**

***28 Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful.***

This is the servants in the church looking out for one another -

Each one more concerned about the other - above their own concerns

## **& so Paul says in V. 29-30**

***29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem;***

***30 because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.***

Receive such a servant in the Lord with all gladness –

& hold such men in esteem

There are those who do not regard their own life –

but allow it to be used up/poured out for the Lord –

We thank God for those who serve at this level –

may we learn from them –

may we join them in this level of service

may we know the eternal joys that they know from choosing to make their lives

NOT their on – but Christ's

We are thankful for those among us who serve tirelessly in this way