

2/7/99

Philippians 2:17-30

Paul has given to the Philippians a picture of Christ, the epitome of humility, the model which they were to follow.

That even as God exalted Christ and gave him a name which is above every name, so Christ will exalt those who humble themselves for the purposes of God.

In view of this, Paul provides three examples of men who have put to practice what he gave as counsel, in order to demonstrate three things. Phil. 2:17-30

1. The possibility of Christ in us.
2. The practicality of Christ through us.
3. The power of Christ by us.

These men are Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus.

To begin with, take note that Paul is a model of humility in the very fact that he occupies only two verses with himself, five for Timothy, and six for Epaphroditus.

2:17-18 Paul the example of Christ.

2:17 Paul presents himself as joyful sacrifice.

1) Paul saw himself as being poured out, a libation or drink offering that accompanied offerings. 2Cor. 12:15; 2Tim. 4:6

a) It was poured on the altar evaporated to steam.

b) The aroma was a sweet smelling aroma to God. Num. 15:4-12

* He is the lesser of the two, the Philippians being the better, the sacrifice itself, once again modeling the mind of Christ and the least of the saints!

c) Paul see himself in the priestly role of that every believer has. 2Cor. 9:12; 1Pet. 2:5

* Paul sees himself as both the as the sacrifice as his Lord!

2) Paul believed what he taught, he saw himself as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God. Rom. 12:1-2

a) He was working out his salvation with fear and trembling, knowing that it was God who was working in him both to will and do of His good pleasure. Phil. 2:12-13

b) He was doing everything without murmuring or disputing. Phil. 2:14

- c) He was attempting to be blameless, harmless and without fault in the midst of a twisted and corrupt generation as a light bearer for others who were saved and lost around him. Phil. 2:15
- d) He was holding fast the word of life, that he might rejoice in the day of Christ. Phil. 2:16
- 3) Paul was sold out to the work of people because he was first sold out to God.
 - a) From his conversion he began to preach in Damascus. Acts 9
 - b) He left Jerusalem and preached around Tarsus.
 - c) He taught at Antioch for one year and sent relief to poor saints in Jerusalem.
 - d) He headed three missionary journeys.
 - e) He was stoned in the first at Lystra.
 - f) He was chased out of Thessalonica, Berea and mocked at Athens in the second journey.
 - g) He nearly lost his life in the third journey at Ephesus and in Asia.
 - h) When he returned to Jerusalem, after 25 years of service, he was nearly killed by the Hebrews.
 - i) He spent two years in Ceasarea as a political scapegoat.

- j) And two more in his own hired house in Rome where he was writing from. Acts 28:30
- k) Now he was in the palace.
- l) His list of sufferings are impressive. 1Cor. 4; 2 Cor. 4, 6, 10
 - * Besides those things that are without, that which comes upon me daily, the care of all the churches. 2Cor. 10:28
- 4) Paul rejoiced for them in his service of their faith, after the his ability in Christ. 2:1-5
 - a) He had a great zeal for Israel. Rom. 9-11
 - b) He cared not for his life. Acts 21:13
 - c) He was manifesting the fruit of the Spirit apage love, the first evidence being joy. Gal. 5:22
- 2:18** Paul asks the Philippians to rejoice with him.
 - 1) Why? Because he was an offering to God in service to them.
 - 2) This was his appointed duty.
 - a) Christ was his life. Phil. 1:21
 - b) Christ was his mind. Phil. 2:5
 - * 2Tim. 1:12; 4:6-8

2:19 Paul would soon send Timothy.

- 1) Paul was eager to know the Philippians state through the visit of Timothy shortly.
 - a) Without doubt to hear about their response to the letter regarding their unity and oneness in Christ.
 - b) To be encouraged on their proper response to his imprisonment and if they received Epaphroditus in the proper manner.
- 2) Paul was as interested in them as they were interested in him at Rome.

2.20 Paul pays the highest to Timothy.

- 1) He has no one like-minded, that is Christ minded as he has exhorted them.
 - * Literally equal soul or same spirit, one time in N. T. Phil. 2:4
 - a) Others before him.
 - b) In humility after His master Christ.
- 2) He would care for their state with sincerity.
 - a) He would not be a hypocrite in his service.
 - b) He would be a person of single eye service and genuine.
- 3) Timothy was Paul most trusted servant.
 - a) Timothy joined Paul in his second journey, at Lystra. Acts 16
 - b) Father was Greek and his Mother Jew.

- c) Mother's name was Eunice, his Grandmother Lois, who had brought him up in the scriptures. 2Tim. 1:5
- d) He was with Paul in Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Corinth, Ephesus, and Rome. 1Cor. 4:17, 16:10, 11; 1Thess. 3:1-5
- e) He was young, timid and sickly, but well reported of the brethren. Acts 16:2
- f) Timothy was sent by Paul many times, 1Cor. 4:17; 1Thess. 3:6; 1Cor. 16:10
* Paul's concern at this point was for the Philippians!
- g) Timothy was called by Paul to come as he was about to die. 2Tim. 4:13, 21

2:21 The general bent of man.

- 1) All seek their own. Jer. 17:9
- 2) All do not seek the things of Christ Jesus.
 - a) Without any doubt Paul had in mind those at Rome, who were of a party spirit. 1:16
 - b) Without exception, without Christ enabling us, we fall into this category.

2:22 Timothy's integrity.

- 1) Timothy had a proven character, through the years of service with Paul.
 - a) The word proven "dokimen" was used for the testing of metals. 2Cor. 2:9; 9:13

b) They knew it personally as Timothy had been there three times. Acts 16:13; 19:22; 20:3

- 2) Timothy served with Paul as a son, being his son in the faith, not serving Paul. 2Tim. 1:2
- 3) Timothy's service was in the gospel, according to the example of Christ and the standard of the word. 2Tim. 3:10-11

2:23 Timothy's deployment.

- 1) He would send him as soon as he found out the outcome of his defense.
* The phrase to see, "aphorao" means to look away, fixed on something in the distance.
- 2) He would settle their minds as to their concern with the most recent news.
- 3) He knew Timothy was dependable, available, faithful, and a reliable messenger.

2:24 Paul's confidence.

- 1) He was trusting what Jesus was doing, specifying "in the Lord" is not a mere empty expression but the identity of God's direction. Phil. 1:25
- 2) He confidently once again tells them, he would be joining them soon.

2:25-30 **Epaphroditus the example of Christ.**

2:25 His character.

- 1) He called him a brother, born of the same father, belonging to the same family and having the same spirit
- 2) He called him a fellow worker, a companion in labor, under same Lord with the same standing.
- 3) He called him a fellow-soldier, one who hazards his life for the gospel. 2Tim. 2:3
- 4) He called him a messenger, a commissioned delegate to the apostle to comfort and help with a gift. Phil. 4:15
* The word "your" is emphatic in the Greek!
- 5) He called him one who ministered "leitourgos" to his needs.
 - a) The word is used of a man who would fund a city function at his own expense, because he loved the city. Rom. 13:6; 15:7-8
 - b) In the LXX it is used of the special consecrated priest and Levies. Ex. 29:9
* Epaphroditus means charming and he was a Gentile.

2:26 His condition.

- 1) He was home sick, longing for them.
 - a) The word is the same to describe his longing for the Philippians. Phil. 1:8

b) The word is used a strong yearning for total allegiance of a man's heart. Ja. 4:5

2) He was concerned about their concern for his sickness, after the example of Christ.

a) The word distressed "ademoneo" means full of anguish, weighed down and or depressed, a heaviness.

* There must of been others that came with Epaphroditus to Rome, they must of witnesses his illness and after a while returned to Philippi.

b) It is used of Jesus as He approached the agony of Gethsemane. Matt. 26:37; Mk. 14:13

* The origin of the word mean, away from home, thereby being besides oneself.

2:27 His critical state.

1) He was indeed sick almost unto death, at the very door.

2) He received mercy of God in that He allowed him to recover.

3) God had mercy on Paul also by not having to sorrow over his death.

a) Paul certainly had the gift of healings, for he prayed for many and they were healed.

b) Paul admits that God at times chooses to work apart from the vessel and not through the vessel.

c) Paul also shows us that it is not the will of God for all to be healed right away or at all, every time, God is sovereign.

d) Paul at the same time knew that it did not ultimately rest on his faith to believe as a mark of his spirituality, as so many today teach in the positive confession faith doctrine or seed faith doctrine.

e) Paul teaches us that He did not control the gift of healing in his life but God did. Heb. 2:4

* He mentions that he left Trophimus sick at Miletus. 2Tim. 4:20

f) Paul acknowledges that sickness is a part of life and fallen world without it being related to sin, lack of faith or even the chastening of the Lord

2: 28 His commission to return.

1) Paul would send him back that the Philippians might rejoice and he with them for their happy reunion. vs. 28

2) Paul says he was doing it "more eagerly" meaning more diligently, here again we see Paul's concern for others.

- 3) Paul desired to relieve their sorrow by sending Epaphroditus to them.
- a) Being in prison, he is concerned about what is best for Epaphroditus, lest he have a reoccurrence.
 - b) Being in prison, he is concern about what was best for the Philippians.

2:29-30 His commendation.

- 1) Paul tells them to receive him in the Lord with all gladness. vs. 29a
 - * Knowing the problem of lack of unity, he feared that some would perhaps think he had failed or gone back on his mission.
- 2) Paul tells them to hold such men as Epaphroditus in esteem and honor, literally precious. vs. 29b; 1Pet. 2:4, 6
 - a) Men who are examples of Christ, not considering themselves before others, men of reputation based on character.
 - b) Men like this are to be held in high regard and valuable to the church body. 1Cor. 16:15-18
 - * In prison you visited me. Matt. 25:41-46
 - c) This is the secret of greatness, to be the servant of all. Mk. 10:35-45
- 3) Paul tells them the reason for his commendation of Epaphroditus. vs. 30

- a) Because for the work of Christ he came close to death, he was the Lord's bondservant.
- b) Because he regarded not his life regarding his life, he lived out the he died in Christ.
 - * Associating with prisoners made one suspect and in danger of their life!
- c) Because he risked his life due to supplying what lacked in the Philippians service to Paul.
 - * We are not told exactly what, be that he took on other work, labored to the point of exhaustion, etc.
- d) The phrase not regarding "parabouleuomai" is a gambling word, to stake everything on a turn of the dice.
 - 1)) From the word "parabolos" venturesome, reckless, as in Alexandria there grew up an association of men know as the "Parabolani".
 - 2)) Among the hazardous duties of this "suicide squad" these people chanced visiting the ill and contagious in prison, risking their lives.