



10/14/26

Philippians 2:19-30

We had skipped over this passage when we were going through Philippians in the reading plan. But now is the perfect time to circle back to it. It's such a great picture of how we take our stand and serve the Lord, even when we face the difficult darts of the devil. He is always happy to cause opposition and trials. But the Lord uses every trial as an opportunity to draw us closer to Him and to strengthen us IN THE LORD. So with that, I look at Philippians 2:19-30 to see what God wants to teach me.

Vs. 19-24 ~ "I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare."

Paul was in prison, and he couldn't get there to visit the church. So he planned to do the next best thing. Send Timothy. Timothy would be an encouragement both to him and to the Philippian believers. This passage has proven to me just how geographically challenged I am. I thought the reason Timothy would be genuinely concerned for these believers was because he was from the same area as them. But he wasn't. He was from Lystra, which is in Turkey. Philippi was about 500 miles away by sea. Timothy was just concerned for them because he loved Jesus and so he loved them. That's what happens with a heart devoted to the Lord.

"For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ."

I'm not exactly sure who Paul is talking about here... just people in general? I know he's not talking about every single other person, because he's about to talk about Epaphroditus who clearly did not seek his own interests. But one thing I can be sure of... there are people from all walks of life and all generations whose actions eventually reveal that they don't seek the interests of Jesus. Many of them are in the church. The lure of the devil distracts them from being concerned about the things that matter to God... even if they started out with good motives. Where their hearts truly are will be proven with time. Timothy's actions proved him to be genuine and faithful... even over time.

"But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel."

Like Timothy, a faithful follower of Jesus will prove to be faithful in serving the Lord in the message of the gospel over time... through adversity. Those who seek their own interests will give up when things get too hard. Timothy never gave up. He served faithfully with Paul the way a son would take on the family business with his dad. It was personal. It was more than going through the motions. It proved the test of time and the tests of Satan's attacks. Nothing derailed Timothy's faith.

"I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also."

Paul's hope was to have Timothy stay with him long enough to see what was going to happen with him, and then send him to the Philippians. It was also Paul's hope that he would be able to come and see them as well. Someone who truly loves the Lord will truly love His people. Paul didn't want to go to them out of duty, but out of delight. He loved them. And, he did get to go back to Philippi, on his third missionary journey. A true blessing from the Lord.

Vs. 25-30 ~ "I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me."

Now we come to Epaphroditus. I told my husband that I want to name our new puppy (when we get him) Shiloh Epaphroditus (I'm not sure he agreed to the middle name). Shiloh means peace. I like Epaphroditus because he was so committed to the Lord that he risked his life to get the gift from the Philippian church delivered to Paul. He was so devoted to his mission that he almost died. And that didn't even concern him. What concerned him was that he heard the Philippians were afraid for him and he wanted to reassure them that he was okay. Like Timothy, Epaphroditus was only concerned about the interests of Christ, not his own. I want to have faith like that.

I also see here that Paul said God had mercy on Epaphroditus by saving his life when he was sick. And Paul said, "God didn't only have mercy on him, He had mercy on me, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow." This tells me that I'm allowed to grieve over loss. Yes, I know that when a believer leaves this earth he's ushered into the presence of Jesus, and that's a wonderful thing. But I also know that the loss of someone we love leaves a hole. So while I can celebrate that they're in the presence of the Lord when He takes them home, I can also grieve over the hole they've left behind.

In this case, Epaphroditus was kept here on earth, and Paul was sending him to the Philippian Church so that they could have a sweet reunion. Paul told them to welcome him with joy and honor someone like Epaphroditus, who risked his life to get their gift to Paul.

I see in this passage that serving the Lord is sacrificial and sometimes even life threatening, but it is never a regret when it's authentic. Serving Christ means that I don't seek my own interests. That takes humility and a willingness to be uncomfortable. Serving Christ means that I work in unity with other believers to accomplish what I could not do on my own.

O Lord, please help me to never skip past passages like this one. Help me to learn from the examples of those who have so faithfully served You regardless of the cost. Amen.

Have a blessed day!
Jonna