Philippians 2026 Series -Lesson 19

"Our Lives Are to Be a Living Sacrifice and Service of Faith"

Spheres of Grace Ministries International, Inc.
by
Dr. Troy S. Welch, Pastor-Teacher
6809 E Hudlow Road
Hayden, ID 83835
(805) 701-6643

Introduction:

In our continuing study of the Book of Philippians we come to Philippians 2:17-18 where we will explore the idea that our lives are to be a *"Sacrifice and Service of Faith."*

In our study last time we observed that when we Hold Forth the Word of Life it is an encouragement to those who have ministered to us that they have not run in vain nor labored to the point of exhaustion in vain.

Early in my pastoral ministry I was asked why I did not take Mondays off like so many of the pastors in that area did, My answer was, "I don't want to take a day off when I feel so miserable due to the small turnout and lack of response from my people. I would rather have the day off when I was feeling great."

Well, that was before I learned that I was not responsible for the result, just the ministry. It was that discovery that has allowed me to remain in the pastoral ministry for more than seventy-three years. The alarming number of pastoral dropouts could be eliminated if we all understood that we are not responsible for the result. It is essential that we understand that we are not responsible for the result but are responsible for our ministry regardless of the result.

So, let's not misunderstand the Apostle Paul's statement in verse sixteen where He challenged the Church at Phillipi to Hold forth the Word of Life that he might have something to rejoice about at the "Awards Banquet in the Sky" which is called "The Judgment Seat of Christ," and that he had not run or labored in vain concerning them. He follows that statement with verses seventeen and eighteen with the challenge that he was but a drink offering being poured upon their "Sacrifice and Service of Faith," and then commands them to have joy and rejoice with him.

Let's look at the text...

Text: Philippians 2:17-18

17 ***Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy, and rejoice with you all.***

18 ***For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.***

I. Exegesis of Text:

"Yea, and if" **(alla)(ei)(kai) But since in fact…**

This is a first class conditional "*if* clause" that means "if and it is true."

In our previous study we heard Paul instructing the Philippian believers to hold forth the Word of Life in order that he would not have run in vain or labored to the point of exhaustion in vain. Now here he says, *But since in fact I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith - I rejoice..*

Paul indicates that he is being offered upon the sacrifice and service of their faith. What does that mean? Let's look at it... since I am being offered..

"I be offered" **(spen-do-mai) I am continually being poured out...**

Verb - expresses action
Indicative Mood - the mood of reality
Present Tense - Continuous action
Passive Voice - He is not pouring himself out - but is being poured out

This word "spen-do-mai" is a technical word used for a "drink offering" that was to be poured out upon some of the sacrifices. It is first mentioned in Genesis 35:14 where Jacob set up a pillar at Bethel and poured a drink offering and oil upon the rock.

The books of Leviticus and Numbers identify the "Drink Offering." There were five daily sacrifices, the Burnt Offering, The Meal Offering, The Peace Offering, The Sin Offering, and The Trespass Offering. The Drink Offering was to be poured on some of the sacrifices as a sweet-smelling aroma to God. Wine was poured on the burning sacrifice, and it would go up in steam.

Paul tells us that he was being poured out on the sacrifice and going up in steam as a sweet aroma to God. Paul was in prison. He was being afflicted - might even die.... He describes that as "being poured out." But notice what the sacrifice was upon which he was being poured..... The commentary of a well know Bible teacher says that Paul was being poured out on the sacrifice of Christ. But let's see what the Scripture says.

"upon the sacrifice and service of your faith,"

See! Paul was not being offered as a drink offering on the sacrifice of Christ - we can add nothing to the complete all sufficient sacrifice of Christ. Paul viewed

himself as being poured out as a drink offering on the *sacrifice* and service of the *faith* of the Philippians to whom Paul ministered.

The words *sacrifice* (thusia) and *service* (lei-tour-gi-ah) are nouns in the same case and gender and are joined by the Greek conjunction "kai." The first noun is preceded by the article (the word τῇ) but the second noun is not preceded by the article. Greek grammar identifies them as being a reference to the same person. It is the sacrifice of the Philippian believers and the service of the Philippians believers generated by their faith upon which Paul is being poured out. His circumstances are being presented as a sweet aroma to God.

The Philippian believers were making sacrifices and performing a service as a result of their faith. Let's look at this in detail.

II. The Doctrine of Sacrifice and Service of Faith:

Point One: Faith is to be the source of sacrifice and service.

Faith **(pis-teohs) a total dependency upon someone or something**
Noun – person, place, or thing
Genitive Case - case of source
Feminine Gender- faith is a response

Faith for the Christian is defined by the use of acrostics:

Salvation: Forsaking All I Trust Him
Christian Life: Following Applying In Trusting Him
Eternity: Future Anticipated I Trust Him

The Philippian believers had placed their dependency upon Jesus Christ. They had forsaken all other means of salvation and trusted Christ as Savior. They were following and applying the teaching of Christ in living the Christian life. They were anticipating a future eternity in trusting Christ. The reference here is to the living of the Christian life by faith - their faith produced sacrifice and service.

Point Two: In living the Christian life we are to appropriate grace (God's Resources At Christ's Expense) by faith (Following Applying In Trusting Him):

Point Three: There will be two activities produced when the believer is operating from the source of faith:

"sacrifice" **You see! Faith means to forsake all in following and applying His teaching. The Philippian believers were sacrificing themselves just as we are told to do in Romans 12:1, *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.***

This is not a requirement for salvation but is to be a result of salvation. Perhaps we would not be so quick to seek salvation if we knew that as a result of salvation we would be assigned a course of life that meant living out a design God assigned us. Yet, if we fully understand that it is by seeking His design and adopting His principles that we will have the joy and inner happiness we seek, we will not hesitate to call upon His name for salvation. Then, there is also that little matter of an eternity in the Lake of Fire and Brimstone.

We are to present this sacrifice of our bodies a living sacrifice as a daily offering. (Romans 12:1). This is what we were created for in the beginning. Our sacrifice is to be *holy, acceptable unto God.* We acquire holiness at salvation and acquire acceptance by maintaining fellowship in I John 1:9. The passage in Romans describes this as our "reasonable service." The word *"reasonable"* in the Greek means logical. Presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice is our logical service

"Service" **The word *service* (leitourgia) is a reference to the service a priest performed in offering a sacrifice at the altar. It is applied in the Church Age to the spiritual service to which God has both appointed and equipped us. We each have a "ministry" for which we are responsible. The Philippian believers were performing theirs from the source of their faith. Romans 12:1 said, *"...which is your reasonable service...."***

Point Four: Faith without works is dead (James 2:20)

Our faith must be in an object that produces the work:

a. In Salvation the object must be Christ.

b. In Living the Christian life the object must be the Word of God.

God, in Grace, provides His righteousness to make us acceptable

God, in Grace, provides His resources to make us able

Point Five: We are to be doers of the word and not hearers only deceiving our own selves:

James 1:22-25:

But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth [therein], he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed.

I am holding up the mirror of God's Word for you today. Don't take a quick glance and hurry on by in your mental journey to more fanciful thoughts - but stop and see yourselves in the light of the Word.

Point Six: Giving of yourself as a sacrifice and the performance of spiritual service must be Spiritually assisted.

It is only as we are motivated and controlled by the Holy Spirit that we are able to provide an acceptable sacrifice and effective service.

Galatians 5:22-26 says,

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.* 26 *Let us not be desirous of vain glory, provoking one another, envying one another.

Anything performed while we have unconfessed sin in our lives is wood, hay, and stubble and will be burned up according to I Corinthians 3:12-14.

Point Seven: So, faith in Christ and His Word results in a life of sacrifice and service. (Philippians 2:17)

But don't despair! The happiness you seek is a reality when we present our bodies as *"…living sacrifices…"*

III. Completion of Exegesis:

Now let's resume our exegesis of the verses we are studying in Philippians. Paul says,

I joy, and rejoice with you all.

He says, *"I rejoice and continue to rejoice with you all."* Even in the midst of his circumstances Paul understands that he is being used as a sweet aroma to God as a result of the sacrifice and service of the Philippian Believers

Ah, But Paul does not leave it there, he commands the Philippian believers to rejoice with him.

Verse 18: *For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.*

This is in the imperative - a command. There is an important principle here that we miss in the King James reading – The literal reading of this verse says, *"…for this same cause also you are commanded to maintain your joy and to rejoice with me."*

We are to rejoice with others even in the midst of their affliction knowing that God is causing all things to work together for their good.

This word "joy" is the Greek word χαιρετε (chairete) which is a present active imperative verb from the same root as our word "grace" (χαρις) (charis). As we have frequently observed-but cannot over stress -our joy is directly tied into our orientation to grace. We must understand the doctrine of grace and implement it into every aspect of our life to have and maintain joy regardless of the circumstances.

The word rejoice is a present active imperative of the same verb as joy but has the suffix which means "with." Paul says we are to join together with him in the joy he is experiencing because of his orientation to grace. He understands the plan of God and that God is causing all these things to *"work together for good to those who love God to those who are the called according to His purpose."* Paul is saying don't be discouraged by our circumstances but join us in rejoicing.

Conclusion:

Several Points In Review:

1. **We may become a drink offering - poured out to become a sweet aroma to God. Paul wants the believer to understand that is a strong possibility.**

2. **We are to present our bodies as a sacrifice to God daily.**

3. **We are to perform service to God according to the ministry for which He has appointed and equipped us.**

4. **We are to rejoice with others - even in affliction - understanding that God is working all things together for good to them who love God to those who are called to His purpose.**

5. **Regardless of the circumstances we are to maintain a proper orientation to grace in order to experience joy in our own circumstances and in the circumstances of others, both receiving grace and treating others in grace.**

   Others may not understand it when you say, "Praise the Lord," when they are in the midst of difficult circumstances, so you might want to keep that praise just between you and the Lord, but help them see that God is in the mix and is working all these things together for their good. Meantime rejoice that you are there for a "Drink Offering" willing to be poured out upon their sacrifice of faith,

But it All Begins at Salvation:

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...
The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...
With the heart man believes unto righteousness...
But with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...
For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!

"… and your joy no man taketh from you…"
(Luke 16:22)