

True Joy – The Wisdom of Philippians
The Joy of Sacrificial Service (Phil 2:16-18)
5-2-10
Scripture Reading – Phil 2:14-18

Same Mission

Our mission at TWE

To bring glory to God and many to Jesus by raising up disciples who are so passionate about being new creations in Christ and ambassadors for Him that they joyfully and sacrificially dedicate their lives to representing Jesus well in all they say and in all they do, and to teaching and encouraging others to do the same, wherever God has planted them.

Paul's Mission in Philippi

To raise up joyful, sacrificial servants of Christ who brought glory to God and many to Jesus.

- **Philippians 1:25 (ESV) - Joyful**
²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress *and joy in the faith*,
- **Philippians 2:3-4 (ESV) - Sacrificial**
³ Do nothing from rivalry or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.
- **Philippians 1:9-11 (ESV) – Glory to God**
⁹ And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, ¹⁰ so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, ¹¹ filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, *to the glory and praise of God.*
- **Philippians 1:3-5 (ESV) – Others to Jesus**
³ I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, ⁴ always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, ⁵ *because of your partnership in the gospel* from the first day until now.

One of the ways Paul sought to accomplish his mission through his letter was by pointing the Philippians to examples of people who had dedicated their lives to joyful, sacrificial service for the glory of God and the sake of Gospel.

- Jesus (2:6-11) – “who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame.” (Heb12:2)
- Timothy and Epaphroditus in 2:19-30 (next week)
- Himself 1:12-26 and now again in 2:16-18

Two hopes for the next two weeks

- 1) We’d be inspired by these examples to live more joyful and sacrificial lives for Christ.
- 2) We would have hope that it is possible.

Open in prayer

Paul’s Example

Let’s look at Paul’s example of joyful, sacrificial service for Christ in 2:16-18.

Last week we looked at 2:14-16 where Paul exhorts the Philippians to do *all things* without grumbling or questioning THAT THEY MAY BE lights in the world and point others to Jesus.

In the beginning of this week’s text, Paul cites a *second reason* for doing all things without grumbling or questioning.

Philippians 2:14-16 (ESV)

¹⁴Do all things without grumbling or questioning, ¹⁵that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, ¹⁶holding fast to the word of life, *SO THAT in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain.*

Notice three things about this second reason.

- 1) Paul is not trying to guilt or manipulate the Philippians into obeying.
 - a. They *wanted* to obey God and be lights in the world.

- b. They loved, trusted, and respected Paul and *wanted* to make him proud.
- c. Opposite – The wicked step mother and Cinderella
- d. Not manipulation *but inspiration*

2) Paul had dedicated his life to *running and laboring* for the sake of the Philippians' faith and the faith of others.

- a. Paul knew what God had called him to do and that it wasn't going to be easy.
 - i. **Acts 9:15-16 (ESV)**
¹⁵But the Lord said to him, "Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. ¹⁶For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name."
- b. That's why he likens it to running and laboring.
 - i. **1 Corinthians 9:24-27 (NIV) - Running**
²⁴Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. ²⁵Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last; but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. ²⁶Therefore I do not run like a man running aimlessly; I do not fight like a man beating the air. ²⁷No, I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize.
 - ii. **2 Timothy 2:6 (ESV) - Laboring**
⁶It is the *hard-working farmer* who ought to have the first share of the crops.
 - iii. **1 Corinthians 15:9-10 (ESV) - Laboring**
⁹For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace

toward me was not in vain. On the contrary, *I worked harder than any of them*, though it was not I, but the grace of God that is with me.

3) Paul didn't want his running and laboring to be in vain.

a. Paul knew that the Day of Christ was coming when his work for Christ would be evaluated, and he wanted his work to shine!!!

i. **1 Corinthians 3:10-15 (ESV)**

¹⁰ According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. *Let each one take care how he builds upon it.* ¹¹ For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw— ¹³ *each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.* ¹⁴ If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

b. Though Paul knew that he was merely a seed planter and that only God could bring about spiritual life, growth, and maturity in the Philippians (1 Cor 3:5-9), he also knew that God works through means, and that *his words and his example* might be the God appointed means by which that life, growth, and maturity would come. Therefore, Paul exhorted the Philippians to live joyful, sacrificial lives for Christ and *sought to do the same thing himself*, which bring us to verse 17.

Philippians 2:17 (ESV)

¹⁷ Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

- What was a drink offering?

- o Drink offerings were common in both Jewish and Greco-Roman culture. Which one Paul is referring to here is uncertain.
- o But in either case, the imagery is the same. A drink offering was an additional offering of liquid (usually wine) that was *poured out* upon the main offering of an animal sacrifice.
- o **Numbers 28:1-8 (NIV)**

¹The Lord said to Moses, ²"Give this command to the Israelites and say to them: 'See that you present to me at the appointed time the food for my offerings made by fire, as an aroma pleasing to me.' ³Say to them: 'This is the offering made by fire that you are to present to the Lord: two lambs a year old without defect, as a regular burnt offering each day. ⁴Prepare one lamb in the morning and the other at twilight, ⁵together with a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah of fine flour mixed with a quarter of a hin of oil from pressed olives. ⁶This is the regular burnt offering instituted at Mount Sinai as a pleasing aroma, an offering made to the Lord by fire. ⁷*The accompanying drink offering is to be a quarter of a hin of fermented drink with each lamb. Pour out the drink offering to the Lord at the sanctuary.* ⁸Prepare the second lamb at twilight, along with the same kind of grain offering and *drink offering* that you prepare in the morning. This is an offering made by fire, an aroma pleasing to the Lord.
- o James Boyce, "A Greek or Roman performing such an offering would first kill a valuable animal and then burn it on an altar. Following this sacrifice the ancient worshipper would make an additional offering called a libation. He would take wine and pour it on the altar, thus pouring it upon the sacrifice that was already burning. Because the altar was hot, the libation would immediately disappear in a puff of steam." (pp. 153-154)
- Beautiful picture of a life of joyful, sacrificial service for Christ.
 - o Burnt offering – Philippians' faith
 - o Drink offering – Paul's life poured out
 - o Offered as a pleasing aroma to God

It would have been natural for the Philippians to be saddened by this image of their friend Paul being poured out for them, but Paul encourages them not to be.

Philippians 2:18 (ESV)

¹⁸ Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

- If I'm not sad then why should you be?
- Paul was *glad* to be poured out for the sake of the Philippians, even if it meant death for him because: 1) He cared more about them than he did about himself, and 2) He loved and trusted God and His promises.
- **Philippians 1:21-25 (ESV)**
²¹ For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. ²² If I am to live in the flesh, that means fruitful labor for me. Yet which I shall choose I cannot tell. ²³ I am hard pressed between the two. My desire is to depart and be with Christ, for that is far better. ²⁴ But to remain in the flesh is more necessary on your account. ²⁵ Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith,
- **2 Timothy 4:6-8 (ESV)**
⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that Day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Application

- 1) Are you living a life that is dedicated to *running and laboring* for the glory of God and the faith of others?
- 2) Are you *rejoicing* in the faith of others and are you *glad* to be poured out for it?
- 3) Are you glad for and rejoicing with those who are *pouring themselves out for you*?