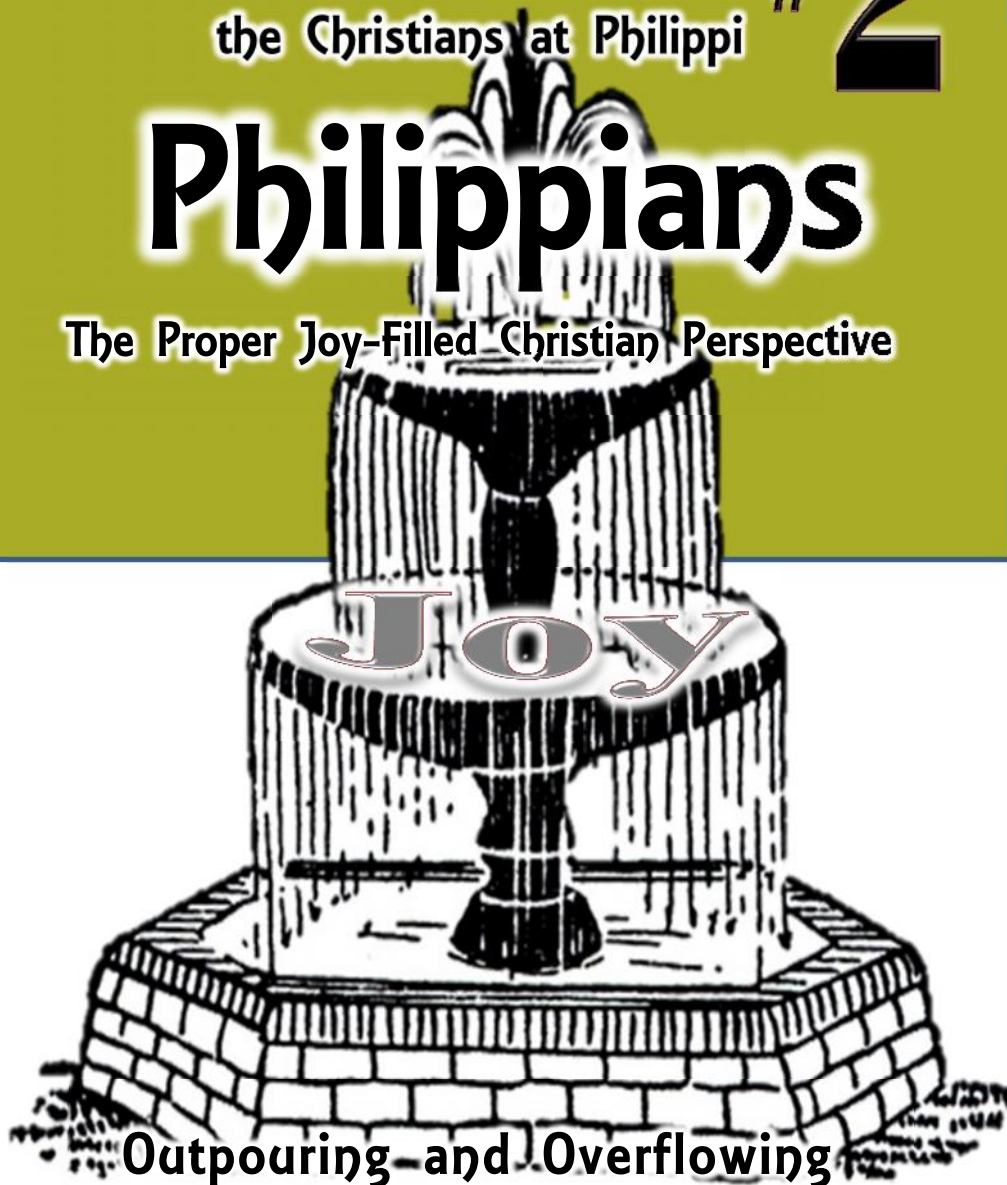


Paul's Letter to  
the Christians at Philippi

#2

# Philippians

The Proper Joy-Filled Christian Perspective



Outpouring and Overflowing

From the Pulpit Ministry of Christ E Free Church  
April-July 2018



# Jesus Christ

Our Highest Calling

Our Greatest Purpose

Our Soul's Source and Joy

And Our All-Consuming Passion

## Table of Contents

List or Themes: p.5

Introduction, p. 6

Christian Humility; 2:1-11, p.11

Holding Forth the Gospel; 2:12-18, p.33

Helping In Ministry; 2:18-30, p.48

Free Downloadable Resources, p.73

## **JOY / REJOICE / GLAD (16x)**

1) Php 1:4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with **joy**,

2,3) Php 1:18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I **rejoice**. Yes, and I will **rejoice**,

4) Php 1:25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and **joy** in the faith,

5) Php 1:26 ESV so that in me you may have ample cause to **glory** in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

6) Php 2:2 complete my **joy** by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

7,8) Php 2:17 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.

9,10) Php 2:18 Likewise you also should be **glad** and **rejoice** with me.

11) Php 2:28 I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may **rejoice** at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious.

12) Php 2:29 So receive him in the Lord with all **joy**, and honor such men,

13) Php 3:1 Finally, my brothers, **rejoice** in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

14) Php 4:1 Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my **joy** and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

15,16) Php 4:4 **Rejoice** in the Lord always; again I will say, **rejoice**.

## **OUR MIND, OUR THOUGHTS; Christian perspective (18x)**

Our thinking process; our memory banks; our mental outlook or perspective on life.

1) Php 1:3 ESV I thank my God in all my **remembrance** of you,

2) Php 1:7 ESV It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my **heart**, for you are all partakers with me

of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

3) Php 1:12 ESV I want you to **know**, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,

4) Php 1:27 ESV Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one **mind** striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,

5,6) Php 2:2 ESV complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one **mind**.

7) Php 2:5 ESV Have this **mind** among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

8) Php 2:6 ESV who, though he was in the form of God, did not **count** equality with God a thing to be grasped,

9) Php 2:20 ESV For I have no one **like him**, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.

10) Php 3:7 ESV But whatever gain I had, I **counted** as loss for the sake of Christ.

11) Php 3:8 ESV Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and **count** them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

12,13) Php 3:13 ESV Brothers, I do not **consider** that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: **forgetting** what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

14,15) Php 3:15 ESV Let those of us who are mature **think** this way, and if in anything you **think** otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

16,17) Php 4:7 ESV And the peace of God, which surpasses all **understanding**, will guard your hearts and your **minds** in Christ Jesus.

18) Php 4:8 ESV Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, **think** about these things.

## **RETURN OF CHRIST**

**Php 1:6** ESV And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

**Php 1:9-10** ESV 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,

**Php 2:14-16** ESV Do all things without grumbling or disputing, (15) that 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, (16) holding 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.

**Php 3:8-9** ESV Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ (9) and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—

**Php 3:10-11** ESV that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, (11) that by any means possible I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

**Php 3:20-21** ESV But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, (21) who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.

**Php 4:4-5** ESV Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. (5) Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand;





# *Philippians*

*The Proper Joyful  
Christian Perspective*

## Chapter

# 2

*“The Surrendered Perspective”*



“We are never more Christ-like than when we demonstrate a Surrendered Christian Perspective, through an attitude of person humility, in following Jesus’ example of serving others in our lives, our relationships and in our ministries.”



# “Christian Humility in Light of the Example of Christ”

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**Series Title:** “*The Book of Philippians: The Proper Joy-filled Christian Perspective*”

**June 24, July 1, 8, 2018**

**Sermon:** “Humility with Christ as Example”

Chapt. 1: The *FOCUSED* Perspective: The Proper Christian perspective is not one focused on our circumstances, but on God’s purpose in those circumstances.

Chapt. 2: The *SURRENDERED* Perspective: We are never more Christ-like than when we demonstrate a surrendered Christian perspective, through an attitude of personal humility, in our lives, our relationships and our ministries.

## INTRODUCTION

***“We are never more Christ-like than when we are demonstrating a surrendered Christian Perspective, through an attitude of humility.”***

In his book, “Touching Godliness Through Submission”, KP Yohannan quotes Roy Hession from his book, “The Calvary Road.” And in the chapter “Christ, Our Example” , KP Yohannan shares quote about Christian submission:

The title “the Lamb” . . . describes His character. He is the Lamb in that He is meek and lowly in heart, gentle and unresisting, and all the time surrendering His own will to the Father’s. . . . Anyone but the Lamb would have resented and resisted the treatment men gave Him. But He, in obedience to the Father and out of love for us, did neither. . . . No standing

up for His rights, no hitting back, no resentment, no complaining! . . . When the Father's will and the malice of men pointed to dark Calvary, the Lamb meekly bowed His head in willingness for that too.

The Surrendered Christian Perspective: There is a very misleading Christian perspective floating around that seems to think, that once you are saved and forgiven in Christ, that you immediately receive a new level of practical holiness which instantly transforms you at the moment of salvation into a "sanctified" and mature believer.

Some hold that at the moment of salvation and the Holy Spirit indwells the believer, they cease to sin.

I believe that Scripture teaches that Salvation is not our destination, but rather is the first step on a lifelong journey for the true believer. The lifelong journey is a lifetime process of growing in the faith, of God purging and purifying us through His progressive process of ongoing sanctification. Along this journey, we are more-and-more, AND day-by-day, molded and conformed into the likeness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

So all of us are at different points in this Sanctification process. We are farther along than we were when we first trusted in Christ, but we are not where we will be at this time next year- hopefully. The whole of our Christian life is a maturing process of a growing personal sanctification, becoming more holy and more like our Lord Jesus. He is our God and our Savior, yet He is also our Example of character and Christian living.

## **MY SURRENDERED PERSPECTIVE IN CHRIST (2:1-4)**

The Proper Christian Perspective is one focused on *My Life and the life of others*. This is the first indication that there is not only opposition from outside the Christian community in Philippi (1:28-

opponents or adversaries); but that there was strife simmering within the Christian community.

**Phil.2:1-4** <sup>1</sup>Therefore *if* you have any encouragement in Christ, *if* any comfort from his love, *if* any common sharing in the Spirit, *if* any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup>*then* make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. <sup>3</sup>Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup>not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

*Paul Addresses the possibility of a Surrendered Perspective in Christ.*

“**ifs**”; point us to the possibilities; “**then**”; implies certain obligations in light of those possibilities. (v1-2a)

In this section, Paul points us to God as our Source of eternal, spiritual blessings in this *present* life. He mentions 4 “**ifs**” in v1); And in doing so, he is basically asking; “If these “*ifs*” are true, “*then*” something must change or an action must be taken. The “*ifs*” represent possibilities, or more accurately, **realities**. But the “*then*” represents obligations that must follow or give evidence to these realities in our Christian lives.

In Ch.2, Paul gives us the Proper Christian perspective as being the perspective that is Surrendered to God, in Christ Jesus. So that we might say, that “**If** there is any encouragement in Christ, (which there certainly is), and if there is any comfort in His love, (which there certainly is), and If there is any participation in the Spirit, (which there certainly is), and If there are any affections and compassions, then the following must be true and must be demonstrated. In other words, If we have these aspects of a surrendered perspective or a Christ governed outlook on life, ministry and relationships, then that Christ surrendered Perspective

must show itself in our thoughts, our feelings, our treatment of others and in our service to Jesus Christ.

(i) v1) *If there is any encouragement in Christ.* But it is not generic encouragement. It is not due to circumstances of life or because of nice flattering words by another person. But the encouragement comes from where? From being “*in Jesus Christ*”. Is there any encouragement from being “in Christ”? (YES) What might that be? Strongly encouraged by the hope we have. Forgiveness of Sins. Salvation of our soul. The Gift of Everlasting Life. We are reconciled to God. We have been born again into the family of God.

**Heb 10:24-25** ESV And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

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*The SURRENDERED Christian Perspective is  
A Life of Humility with Christ as our Example*

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And the implication is, that if we do have any encouragement as believers in Christ, then that encouragement must manifest itself in our perspective on life and ministry, AND it must evidence itself in our relationships!

These points from Paul, force us to consider the eternal, spiritual blessing we have in this present life, through God as our Source. These points should affect our thinking, our attitudes and how we relate to one another.

ILL) Warren Wiersbe refers to the book of Philippians as God’s Christian psychology book, because Paul writes to affect our thoughts, our attitudes, our perspective and as a result will work itself out in our daily Christian living.

**Phil.2:1** <sup>1</sup>Therefore *if* you have any encouragement in Christ, *if* any comfort from his love, *if* there is any fellowship in the Spirit, *if* any tenderness and compassion,

**(ii) v1)** *If there is any consolation (comfort) in His love*

In His love, God has predestined us to be adopted into His family(Eph.1:4-5)

In His Love, God demonstrated his own love for us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.(Rom.5:8)

When we are discouraged, or at a funeral, or witnessing, we tend to refer to the Holiness of God and the sinfulness of man, and the love of God demonstrated at Calvary.

Billy Graham says “there is no greater encouragement for a man, than to hear the love God has for him in Christ.”

**Psa 119:76** ESV Let your steadfast **love comfort** me according to your promise to your servant.

**(iii) v1)** *If there is any fellowship in the Spirit.* Is there anything the Spirit of God allows us to share in common? In Christ and through the Holy Spirit the church has fellowship or community together. We share a spiritual family. We participate in the shared, spiritual purpose. We have the same eternal home in common and the shared earthly calling.

**(iv) v1)** *If any tenderness and compassion* in the Christian life, in the Christian family and in the Christian experience, *then* this is what it should look like. These are the present, eternal, spiritual benefits of being “in Christ”.

*Therefore...*

**Our Surrendered Perspective should be reflected in our treatment of one another. (v2b-4)**

**Phil.2:1-2** <sup>1</sup>Therefore *if* you have any encouragement in Christ, *if* any comfort from his love, *if* any common sharing in the Spirit, *if* any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup>**then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind.**

Make my joy abound; or cause my joy to be outpouring and overflowing; **With Positive Commands to the church**

(i) by being like-minded.(v2) Or *same* perspective- the surrendered perspective; the same world-view of Christian outlook on life.

(ii) same love. (v2) - that would be God's unconditional, unmerited agape love.

(ii) being of one spirit. (v2)

(ii) one mind.(v2) **same** purpose; shared convictions

The **same** mind; the **same** love; of **united** spirit; the **same** purpose. This is not promoting cookie cutter Christians, so we are all just look and act alike. But what it is referring to, is for each of us as Christians, having the same eternal, kingdom perspective – the same surrendered perspective as Christ had. It means having the same love for one another, as Christ has love for us; IT means sharing the same purpose and mission for life and ministry, as Christ had.

I have come to seek and to save that which was lost. (Lk.19:10)  
Who's with me?

“Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to obey all I have commanded you and behold I am with you even, unto the end of the age.” (Mat.28:20)



## In Our Surrendered Perspective, Christ is our example of Humility (v3-4)

\* Key Word: **Deference** = humble submission and respect; to defer to the needs or preferences or input of others. Another way Paul urges the church to cause his joy to increase is ...

**With Negative Commands to the church— Remember:**  
**A Surrendered Perspective begins with an attitude of humility.**

**Phil.2:3-4** <sup>3</sup>Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup>not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

As Christians, having a Surrendered Perspective, means **deferring** (Key word here) my will to the will of our Heavenly Father, and deferring my interests to the interests of other earthly residents. And that's a tough thing for many of us.

We can't seem to defer even the television selection without arguing over it. Some can't seem to decide on which restaurant they will go to without giving in and then sulking over it. So this is a challenge for Christians. How do I get along, when I am forced to defer to another person's selection or to someone else's interests or preferences over my own?

*Do nothing out of...*

(i) My Selfish ambition ( v3) Selfish ambition is apart from others good and God's glory. The goal of selfish ambition is to acquire, achieve and to make one's self known or promote one's own agenda, without consideration for the input of others or what may be best for others involved. This is promoting one's self. "Me above everybody else." There is no place for that in the church. Valuing yourself over others in the church has no in the Church family.

**Deference**: refers to the value we place on others, over ourselves. It is putting others first, before yourself, reveals our value of others. Selfish Ambition minimizes the importance, value or feelings or value of others, while maximizing our own self value. There is no place for that kind of attitude among believers in Jesus.

(ii) *My vain conceit*: (v3) This is pride, selfish motives or interests, personal pursuits, vain glory; or empty praises. When we focus on ourselves and promote ourselves, and glory over ourselves; when we brag and declare our own personal praises, that is considered conceit or EMPTY Praises.

Why? Because if you have to brag on yourself, then there's the good chance your bragging is empty, and misplaced. But when someone else notices something we have done or achieved and you are praised by others who genuinely appreciate what you have done or achieved, then that is praise that is meaningful. And for most of us, it is not a pleasant thing to be around a person who brags on themselves. It is vain glory and empty praises and it is extremely annoying.

If we feel like we have to keep reminding everybody about how great we are, then chances are we really aren't that great, otherwise everyone else would already know. Character, love, humility and compassion often speak for themselves. A vain conceit, prideful, self- focused perspective is crippling for a Christian and can render the work in the church as dysfunctional.

(iii) *My interests of others*: (v4)

**Key Word**: Deference: or Selflessness. This embodies The Surrendered Christian Perspective. Being interested in the interests of others over my own interests, displays the humble Christ-like attitude of putting other's first. Humility is a trait that is slippery and can quickly get away from you. I remember a story from a pastor of ours, who shared that he was on a trip and an elderly lady

was stopped on side of the road – maybe a flat tire. But he thought he'd stop and help this lady. As he began helping, he began thinking this is the Christ-like, humble thing to do. But before long he found himself thinking; “Boy if someone from my church could just drive by and see me now...”. How quickly a Christ honoring attitude of humility can turn right around and become *self*-focused before we know it.

Others first. To defer to the value of others over ourselves exhibits the humble attitude of “others are better than I am”. How Christ-like “humility” sounds as we discuss it in church, but oh how detestable it becomes when we begin putting it into action throughout the week. It just goes to show, “we got a long way to go!”

***“We are never more Christ-like than when we are demonstrating a Surrendered Christian Perspective, through an attitude of Christ-like humility.***

## **MY SHARED PERSPECTIVE IN CHRIST (2:5-8**

\* My Christian Life should reflect The Incarnation of Jesus Christ.

**Phil.2:5-8** <sup>5</sup>In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped; <sup>7</sup>rather, he MADE HIMSELF nothing by taking the very nature<sup>8</sup> of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup>And being found in appearance as a man, he HUMBLED HIMSELF by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!

It seems that many are interested in Christ as Savior, but not as interested in following His example of humility in our view and treatment of others.

## **The Mind of Christ in me (v5-    *Incarnation***

\* We will not be focusing so much on the Theology of the Incarnation, as the practical aspects of allowing the Incarnation of Jesus Christ to be our example of the Proper Joy-Filled Christian Perspective, as well as the proper Christian treatment of one another.

We are given a command toward Christ-likeness; A command to share this perspective as an attitude in our own lives, through our own Christian mindset.

**(i) v5) *The Christian Relationships & the Exercise of the mind.*** (v5) We are invited to share the same attitude of Christ. To allow this perspective to fill our minds and hearts, therefore governing our living, especially how we view and treat others. In Christ, we share many spiritual blessings. The invitation to us is to willingly share Christ's perspective and to demonstrate His humility in our relationships with others.

If we don't presently have this, we should purposefully seek it.

**(ii) v6) *The Greatness of God is Exemplified in the Humility of Christ*** (v6) We tend to think of the Greatness of God as being connected with things, such as Creation; Parting of the Red Sea; Walking on the Water or the end times events. We tend to think of the power of miracles as "Great". Jesus was not God-**like**, but was Himself, God the Son. Though He was great, He did not view others as less. And we are never more Christ-like than when we are fully surrendered to the perfect will of our loving, Holy, Heavenly Father.

Position, pride, even possessions, may cause us to view others as less or lower than ourselves. Jesus could have exercised his *deity* in order to make people follow Him. He could have used his *power* to keep from being crucified, but he did not. When the soldiers

came to Gethsemane to arrest Jesus and Peter took out his sword to defend the Lord, Jesus would have no part of that.

**Mat 26:52-54** ESV Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place. For all who take the sword will perish by the sword. (53) Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? (54) But how then should the Scriptures be fulfilled, that it must be so?"

Jesus evidenced the Surrendered Perspective and exemplified an attitude of humility for all of us to follow. That is the example that Jesus gives us, that we reject the perspective that I, or You or We are better or higher than others. He leads us to follow in His steps by submitting fully to the will of our Heavenly Father.

**(iii) Jesus' Submission is our Key to Pleasing God (v7)**

**Phil.2:7-8** <sup>7</sup>rather, he MADE HIMSELF nothing by taking the very nature<sup>b</sup> of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup>And being found in appearance as a man, HE HUMBLLED HIMSELF by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross!

He Made Himself Nothing; Jesus willingly submitted to God or surrendered Himself to His Father's will (v7). "He Made Himself nothing" or "Made Himself of no reputation"; or Literally: He emptied Himself. Theologically; this is referred to as "the **Kenosis**" or the emptying of Christ. He took on the very nature of a human servant.

HE did not empty Himself of his deity. HE did not empty Himself of His Holy Character or eternal attributes. But He did lower himself as pertaining to his heavenly privileges. He voluntarily limited Himself in the demonstration of His power. HE chose to veil Himself in terms of His glory, but He was never lacking as God nor did he diminish any of His divine essence or attributes.

In John 13, John records the Last Supper and at that time, Jesus washed the disciples feet; surprising all and offending Peter; Jesus demonstrated his Surrendered perspective by taking on the role of a lowly house servant and washed the feet of the disciples.(Jn.13:4)

I have set an example before you.(Jn.13:15) He made himself of no reputation. Regarding this passage of Scripture and of Christ emptying Himself -- J. Oswald Sanders writes: "...All the heavens were littered with the glories He laid aside..." HE did not cease to be God, but He voluntarily laid aside the display of His Godly glories and willingly limited the use of His divine powers; and for a time discarded his heavenly position..."

If we are surrendered to our Heavenly Father as Jesus was; and if we humble ourselves in the attitude of our minds, as Jesus did, then we will serve others as Jesus served. We would follow His example

(iv) Jesus is our example of Godliness (v8) Incarnation

Jesus willingly submitted to His Father's will (v8) This is known as "the **Humiliation**" of Christ. Not that Jesus was embarrassed or ashamed. This was not that kind of humiliation. But He humbled himself. It refers to abasing one's self; lowering one's opinion or position before others.

It is both interesting and important that we understand this. In v7, Jesus made HIMSELF nothing. He emptied HIMSELF.(v.8) Jesus Humbled HIMSELF. It was willful. He was surrendered and HE is our example of an attitude of Christ-like, God-pleasing humility. Though He was great, He did not view others as less. Jesus had a surrendered perspective to the Father, for life and ministry. As He neared the end of His life, Jesus was confident that His life and attitude pleased His heavenly Father.

We might consider this humbling question.

I have glorified you on earth, and have accomplished the work you gave me to do. (**Jn.17:4**)

Going back to the command in 2:5; “Have this perspective in you as Christ had”, which was the attitude of humility, lowliness, and others first above self. Consider this question.

Do you share that perspective of your life and purpose? Do you possess that confidence that if you died today, as a child of God, you could stand before God the Father and state without shame or without exaggeration; “Father, I have glorified you on earth; I have finished the work you gave me to do.”

**CHRISTIAN**; if any of us here, do not presently have such a confidence, then today, the greatest necessity in your life and mine – the highest priority at this very moment – before your heart beats another beat, is not “what you will have for lunch?”, or “what good deed you will do this week?”. But the all-consuming concern must be for each and every one of us is, “Oh God, what must change in my life NOW. In order for me to be confident on that great day when I stand before you and give account for every thing I’ve ever done, and every word I’ve ever spoken and every idle moment I’ve ever spent, along with every attitude I have harbored in my heart in this earthly life what must change in *me*?

Genuinely following Jesus means surrendering to the Father and humbling ourselves before others. It is a perspective of the mind and an attitude of the heart.

So we continue with a look at “Our Personal Humility, in light of Christ’s Example”. Our focus this morning, is often our focus during Christmas time. Today we focus on what is often referred to theologically, as the “Incarnation of Christ”. That is, the Son of God, stepping out of heaven’s glories and being born as a human in Bethlehem, in the person of Jesus the Christ.

Our focus is also on the Exaltation of Christ. That is, God the Son being exalted by God the Father, to the place of worship and the means of salvation for all peoples, throughout all the world.

This is part 3, of our own personal humility, as we follow Jesus Christ as our example of genuine “humility” and what that means for us as believers, in 2018.

Q: Who among us would like to be flooded with the outpouring and overflowing grace of God? That is what God wants for us.

## OUR GLORIOUS PERSPECTIVE IN CHRIST (2:9-11)

\* My Life and God. *The Exaltation of Jesus Christ.*

For Context we will be reading Phil.2:5-11

**Phil.2:5-11** <sup>5</sup>In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>Who, being in very nature<sup>a</sup> God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped; <sup>7</sup>rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. <sup>8</sup>And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! <sup>9</sup>Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, <sup>10</sup>that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**2:5-8** is focused on the ***Incarnation*** of Christ.

**2:8** is focused on the ***Humiliation*** of Christ.

**2: 9-11** is focused on the ***Exaltation*** of Christ.

Today let us be reassured of this one thing: When humbling ourselves before God, we lose no good thing, in fact we gain so very much. And specifically, we gain or grow in Christ-likeness.



“We are never more Christ-like than when we are demonstrating a Surrendered Christian Perspective, through an attitude of personal humility, in our lives, our relationships and our ministries. “(v7)

God addresses pride as sin. We already know that. But what may be eye opening is that the absence of Christ-like humility, is the presence of God-opposing pride. We want to gain humility. We want to lose the pride.

### **God Rewards Humility (v9-11)**

\* When we allow Christ to be our example in Personal humility, we do not lose, but we gain. God rewards Personal humility. We are never more Christ-like than when we are genuinely humble, not fake, but have a genuine Surrendered, Humble perspective toward ourselves and toward others.

What we think we may lose, by humility, is only the loss of temporary, earthly things, that are ultimately passing away anyway. What we gain by humility is eternal heavenly blessings.

**1Peter 5:5b-6** <sup>5</sup>... All of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, because, ***“God opposes the proud but shows FAVOR to the humble.”*** <sup>6</sup>Humble yourselves, therefore, under God’s mighty hand, that he may lift you up in due time.

Favor is God’s blessings; His gracious, undeserving favor or treatment or gifts demonstrated to or expressed towards those who evidence genuine Christ-like humility. For those who are proud, they find themselves to be enemies with God, as He *opposes* the proud. But for those who are humble, they find themselves recipients of untold, immeasurable blessings from heaven’s perspective.

**(Eph 1:3) Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual**

### **blessing in the heavenly places,**

Heaven's values often oppose earthly values. Humility on earth, will be rewarded, acknowledged or honored in heaven; or at least we will be more aware of it or informed of those blessings then. But God promises that now, We have every spiritual blessing in Christ.

It seems to me that we can go through life thinking God's goodness has left us behind. But when we get to heaven, we will know, even as we are known and I believe we will know fully, of all the spiritual blessings and favor that we possess and even experienced here in this earthly life, but perhaps were oblivious to, because we were distracted with lesser things.

#### **(i) Christ's Reward of the Name (v9-10);**

\* God rewards Humility and He rewarded Christ with a name. We see the exaltation of the name of Jesus by God. Christ is above all and over all.

**Phil.2:9-11** <sup>9</sup>Therefore God exalted him to the highest place **and gave him the name that is above every name,** <sup>10</sup>that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**Q:** Why did God the Father exalt the Son? (v9) "Therefore God exalted Him...". Was it because He made Himself nothing? Or that He emptied Himself?(v7) Was it because he took on the form of a servant? Was He exalted because He humbled Himself?(v8) Or was it because he died on the cross? It seems to be *all the above*. Because of His overall humble attitude and surrendered perspective and obedience, the Father exalted Him.

Hebrews tells us that Christ is exalted at the right hand of the majesty on high (Heb.1:3). And prior to His heavenly exaltation, God gave Him the exalted *name* of Jesus, exalted because of what that name would come to mean to the world. This is not so much speaking theologically, but practically about the name of Jesus.

When Mary was ready to give birth, Mary and Joseph didn't discuss what to name him. "Honey, what you think we ought to name Him?" They didn't get out a Hebrew book of names. They didn't name him after his uncle or Grand Father. They didn't name him Joe Jr. Instead, we know from Mat.1:21 that when the angels came to announce to Joseph that His wife was going to give birth by the power of the Holy Spirit, that he was instructed to give him the name Jesus,-- "for he shall save his people from their sins." Why? Because the name of Jesus, which is Yeshua or Joshua in Hebrew, means "*Jehovah is salvation*". And God gave Jesus his name because of the ministry of saving souls. So the name of Jesus, represented His ministry and his purpose.

So that, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, Peter declared:

**Act 4:12** ESV And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

The name of Jesus; Son of God; Savior of the World; Messiah; The church's Good Shepherd; and the world's only Hope. His name, refers to Christ being the Way, the Truth and the Life; The only way to heaven and the only means of attaining forgiveness of sins, salvation of the soul and the gift of eternal life. The name of Jesus represents all the spiritual blessings that Christ came to offer those who truly believe.

**Phil.2:10-11** <sup>10</sup>that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup>and every tongue

acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

As Christians, we praise and worship and celebrate Jesus. We declare Him Lord, to the glory of God. But one day, all the inhabitants of the world will declare Jesus as *Lord*. And it seems these will be those who are genuinely saved by His name. But also those who have rejected that name, will declare Jesus Christ is Lord, some from heaven but some perhaps out of hell will proclaim His Lordship.

**(ii) *The goal of every mind, tongue and heart (v11)***

**“Gods’ glory”** (v11); All creation will one day bow in worship to the person of Jesus. At the name of Jesus, the world will be saved and the world will bow and confess that Jesus is Lord, ***to the glory of God the Father***. (v11);

This was God’s purpose in the garden of Eden. (1) God’s people would be filled with His praises. (2) That God’s people would fill all the earth.. And as a result, (3) God’s praises would fill the whole earth.

**Hab 2:13-14** ESV Behold, is it not from the LORD of hosts that peoples labor merely for fire, and nations weary themselves for nothing? (14) For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the **glory** of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.

The message of the gospel is the message of world missions. And it is yet to take place and yet to be fully, fulfilled. The gospel is readying the world for the glory of God.

At that point, every person, personally and individually will confess that Jesus Christ is LORD. AND every language – ref. to the gospel of Christ spreading out to all the world, to all peoples, of all tribes, with all languages. It also refers to the people of God filling the whole earth. The gospel of Christ spreading throughout

the whole earth and to every language; and the praises of God, filling all the earth; and His glory filling the whole earth, as the water's covers the sea.

This is God's plan for the inhabitants of the world. And where does it start? *With us!* Through following Christ as our example and developing genuine, personal Christ-like humility.

**Christian:** We are never more Christ-Like, than when we are exemplifying a Christ Surrendered Perspective in life, in ministry, and in our relationships, through an attitude of humility.

**Question:** Does my life demonstrate A Life of Humility with Christ as my Example?

**Q:** Does my heart long to see the whole world reached for Christ?

**Q:** Does my heart long to see my own community reached for Christ?

Jesus surrendered His life and will to the Father's Plan. He had a surrendered perspective to the Father. His example is for us.

We are not looking at The Incarnation of Jesus Christ from a theological perspective, but from a practical perspective. A practical Perspective as Christ as our example. How He lived is how we should live. How He ministered is how we should minister. How he surrendered to the Father is how we should surrender to our heavenly Father; for our lives, for our relationships and for our ministries.

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***“God opposes the proud,  
but is gracious to the humble.”***

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**Reflections Questions: ASSIGNMENT:**

(1) What are we afraid of losing, that would keep us from being fully surrendered to God? When we surrender to God, we lose no

good thing; but on the contrary, we stand to gain God's very best for ourselves.

(2) Why would we not want to humble ourselves before God, knowing that HE is waiting to be gracious to us? What could possibly hold our attention and affections so as to keep us from giving Him Everything.

### **3 Points for personal consideration in developing the Proper Surrendered Perspective:**

(1) Acknowledge that a Surrendered Christian perspective is what God desires and is what He deserves from you personally. Anything we hold back from God is potentially an idol and is something God opposes.

(2) Realize that A Genuine Interest in humbling myself and putting other's needs and interests before my own, is a good sign and is what God expects from me personally. A concerned interest in personal humility is evidence that Christ-likeness is being developed deep inside of us.

(3) A willingness to take action to value and serve others and to honor God with my life, ministry and relationship, demonstrates that we really mean business with God in our spiritual development.

(4) And if I am missing any of these elements – am I willing to pray for God to begin cultivating them in my attitude and perspective? If we pray, we can expect to experience much of God's grace. If we refuse, God may withhold that grace or favor or blessing from us.

A Humble attitude and a surrendered perspective does not come upon us, as we might walk into a store and try on a pair of pants to feel how they fit; or to look into the mirror admiring ourselves and determine whether or not that style looks good on me.

Genuine Humility does not become a part of us like putting on a new style of clothing. Genuine humility becomes a part of our lives, because something first dies inside us. Self has to die. Then something must be born within us and the heart of Christ and His likeness must begin to grow in us.

*Genuine Personal Christ-like Humility*

**(Mat 5:3)** Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

“Blessed” = highly favored are the *humble*, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.

**(Mat 5:5)** Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.

“Blessed” = Highly favored are the *humble*, for they shall inherit the earth.

**Mat 16:24-26** (24) Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, <sup>1</sup>let him deny himself, and <sup>2</sup>take up his cross, and <sup>3</sup>follow me. (25) For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it. (26) For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?

As our example, Jesus humbled Himself and died on a cross. As we follow His example, we must be willing to <sup>1</sup>deny ourselves and <sup>2</sup>take up our cross (die to self) and follow Him, or follow His example.

Be willing to die to self, so the life of Jesus will be part of our life, relationships, and ministries.

*“We are never more Christ-like than when we are demonstrating a Surrendered Christian Perspective, through an attitude of*

*personal Christ-like humility, in our lives, our ministries and in our relationships.”*





# “Holding Forth the Gospel of Christ”

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**Series Title:** *“The Book of Philippians: The Proper Joy-filled Christian Perspective”* **July 15,22, 2018**

**Sermon:** “Holding Forth the Gospel of Christ”

**Text:** Phil. 2:12-18

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Chapt. 1: The *FOCUSED* Perspective: The Proper Christian perspective is not one focused on our circumstances, but on God’s purpose in those circumstances.

Chapt. 2: The *SURRENDERED* Perspective: We are never more Christ-like than when we demonstrate a surrendered Christian perspective, through an attitude of personal humility, in our lives, our relationships and our ministries.

## **I. Humility in Light of Christ (2:1-11)**

## **II. Holding Forth the Gospel of Christ (2:12-18)**

*\* Joyful Obedience: The Light of Jesus and the Kingdom of Heaven*

Phil. 2:14 [note: Mat 5:9 ESV “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”]

## **INTRODUCTION**

*“We are never more Christ-like than when we are demonstrating a surrendered Christian Perspective, through an attitude of humility, in our lives, relationships and ministries.”*

Have you ever wondered how life and ministry is intended to balance out? Is the sovereignty of God dominant, or is the free will of man more dominant? Perhaps we might see that they somehow supernaturally and slightly mysteriously work together, like faith and works. Both are important components of salvation. Faith is exercised to bring about salvation, while works is a demonstration of saving faith. Faith and works are to work together. They are to be inseparably connected, yet both are individually distinct.

Likewise, the will of man and the sovereignty of God are close working partners. One does not discount the other. They work together in perfect harmony, and should not be viewed apart from one another, yet both are individually distinct.

## THE WILL AND OBEDIENCE OF MAN (2:12)

\* Today we begin by looking at the principle that God deserves obedience in the lives of His people. Our key word is ***OBEDIENCE***.

**1Sam 15:22** ESV And Samuel said, "Has the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to listen than the fat of rams.

Ch.2 begins a description of a disciplined and surrendered Christian perspective. WE have just reviewed the humble attitude demonstrated by our Lord Jesus who is our example. So it is only natural that Paul would follow up Christ's example with "therefore" in v.12. "Therefore" takes what is previously stated and follows it with something we are to do, in light of the previously described example. After humbling himself (v8), He became obedient unto death.

**Phil.2:12** <sup>12</sup>“*Therefore*”, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose

### **Their history of obedience (v12a**

\* IN this section we get a good indication of the history of the obedience of the saints in Philippi. Paul commends the Christians there their faithful service and obedience to Christ. It is almost like the commendation from Christ Himself. “Well Done good and faithful servants”. (Mat.25:21)

**1Cor. 15:58** Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor in the Lord is not in vain.

Paul is in jail, yet he is joyfully confident that his labor in the Lord has not been in vain. It has been worth it. His circumstances are not ideal, yet what God has done in the lives of Paul’s connections, has filled him with a joy, unquenchable.

“Always Obeyed” (v.12) – What is Paul addressing here?

REPUTATION. Paul’s reason for joy is the faithful obedience of those whom he mentored in the faith. What do you care about, what people think about you? We are often told, “you shouldn’t care what others think about you.” Well, we should not be people who live, for the sake of popularity. Nor should we allow the negative criticisms of others to detract us from reality. But it seems we should care about our reputation.

“A good name is to be chosen rather than great riches...” Prov. 22:1

The “name”, represents the person; their manner, character and

personality. As in Phil. 2:9, Jesus was exalted by His name. The name of Jesus was exalted because of the exalted person it represents.

The “name” represents the reputation of the person. Our reputation is our character evaluation by others, which if accurate, can be valuable. Bragging is our way of informing others on our good traits and accomplishments, but our reputation is an outside and perhaps, far more accurate evaluation that others have noticed about you. Paul commends them for their obedience in Holding Forth the Gospel of Christ, as evidencing faithful obedience, as partners in ministry, while he himself, was in prison in Phillipi.

If you were to be evaluated today, how would you be rated on Holding Forth the Gospel of Christ? What is your reputation in sharing Christ with others?

And when Paul was gone, they continued in their obedience to Christ. In his absence the Philippians continued to serve Christ, by sharing the gospel, making disciples even in his absence. Even though they were a suffering Church, they were a healthy, obedient church. They had a history of faithfulness in gospel ministry.

*We can personally learn from...*

### **Their Charge to continue (v.12b**

\* All of us as Christians can personally learn from this exhortation to the Philippian church. Faithful Christian obedience is not automatic nor is it accidental. The Christian journey is not one which can be lived on AutoPilot. A pilot can flip on the plane’s AutoPilot system and the plane will basically fly itself. It will calculate and adjust its direction, its heading, its airspeed, and its elevation, while the pilot is giving his attention to some other aspect of the flight.

Paul commends the Philippians for their obedience, but charges them to continue and to be increasing in faithful obedience to Christ. He urges them to be purposeful in their obedience and refrain from living on AutoPilot. There is no Christian AutoPilot system. We might say he was encouraging them to guard against backsliding. If we think we are on auto pilot, then there is a good chance we are subtly losing altitude.

**Backsliding** is not necessarily a matter of losing one's salvation, but of losing your passion or fervor. It's the dimming of one's ministry vision or a slacking in Christian obedience. This would be not be a matter of salvation, as much as it is a matter of diligence in continuing to faithfully serve Christ; continuing to share the gospel and make disciples of our Lord Jesus. It may have been meant to warn them about allowing their first love for Christ to fade.

AutoPilot is allowing the system to do your work for you. Backsliding can be viewed as "thinking you're on AutoPilot, when in fact there is no such system". Backsliding may be deminishing or passion or giving way to an increasing complacency, all the while thinking that we are still on course and still fired up for Christ.

**"Work out your salvation"** – DILIGENCE - Don't let up. Don't slack up. Don't give up. If you are comfortable, then you are probably not growing. If you are not growing, then you may be backsliding. We often think that phrase is referring to "***Saving yourself!***". But "Work out your salvation" is directly related to faithful, continued, perseverance in both the faith, as well as in active obedient service for Christ. It is even a reference to Christ's faithful obedience in 2:8. It is not about gaining saving faith, but about exercising saving faith.

*“with Fear and Trembling”* (v.12) – SOBER-MINDED-- literally means “with fear and trembling”. It refers to taking into consideration or responsibility to God and our accountability before God. Its about realistically considering the weight of an issue.

In the parable of the soil (Mat.13:20) , there was <sup>1</sup>hard soil which was unreceptive from the beginning. <sup>2</sup>Then there was the Rocky soil, which was overwhelmed by the troubles and persecution because of the faith. And there was <sup>3</sup>the Thorny soil, which was the person who is distracted by the worries of life, but also derailed by the deceitfulness of riches. Both of which choke out life and are hindrance to growing, persevering faith.

The 2 soils started out looking good, but neither finished well. There is no AutoPilot for gardening. Gardening isn’t automatic nor is it accidental. It takes Dilligence and perseverance, and lots of it. All these hindrances in the garden are enemies of perseverance. They are enemies to faithful obedience; enemies to a life that would exemplify the obedience of Christ as our example.

And just because we have been obedient in the past, does not mean we will automatically continue to be faithfully obedient in the future. So Paul feels the need to urge them to be continually and willfully obedient. Don’t let up. Don’t slack up, as you continue Holding Forth the Gospel of Christ. Don’t coast. Don’t rely on “auto-pilot”. Live purposefully for Jesus Christ!

So far we have learned about Holding Forth the Gospel of Christ (or the Word of Life). We have looked at the Sovereign plans of God and the free will of man’s obedience and how they are intended to work together in perfect unity, in our lives, our relationships and our ministries.

We also considered a personal evaluation question. “How am I doing in the area of personal willful obedience in Sharing my faith and the good news of Jesus? “Holding forth the Gospel of Christ” necessitates the willful obedience in the Christian faith.

*“Holding Forth the Gospel” also necessitates faith in...*

## **THE PURPOSE AND PLAN OF GOD (2:13)**

\* The Proper Christian Perspective is that God desires to move in our lives for His good and perfect will. God’s Divine Sovereignty and man’s free will work *together* for balanced ministry. Our key word here is TOGETHER.

**Phil.2:13** <sup>12</sup> Therefore, my dear friends, as you have always obeyed—not only in my presence, but now much more in my absence—continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, <sup>13</sup> for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

*As we exercise our free will, we must also realize that...*

### **God is Alive & Active! (v13a)**

It is important to realize that in Christian growth and ministry, God is Alive, Involved and Active in all areas of life. When we are working to serve Him, He is also moving and partnering with us. God is involved in our spiritual growth and involved as the Active Element in what He calls us to do. He mentions “Good works” again. But now Paul lets us know that neither our salvation nor our spiritual growth is something we do alone or that we muster up in ourselves. Remember....

**Php 1:6** And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you [He] will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

Then in 2:12, he writes to work out your salvation. Now here in v13, he gives us a view from the other side; that we are not alone in our journey, our struggles or our perseverance.

**Phil.2:13** for it is God who <sup>1</sup>works in you <sup>2</sup>to will and <sup>3</sup>to act in order <sup>4</sup>to fulfill his good <sup>5</sup>purpose.

4 aspects of God's involvement with man's obedience in ministry partnership. It is God Himself who is involved, and working in our lives to bring about what He desires and what we partner with him to accomplish. Notice it says, <sup>1</sup>"it is **God who works**", in you <sup>2</sup>"**to will and** <sup>3</sup>**to act**" in order for <sup>4</sup>**Him** to fulfill in you, <sup>5</sup>**His** good purpose or good pleasure in your life, relationships and ministries.

<sup>1</sup>This is the force of action. <sup>2</sup>This is God's intent and desire.

<sup>3</sup>Along with this is God putting forth the effort to accomplish that work. <sup>4</sup>God Himself will complete His will and work in and through us. <sup>5</sup>This is the focus of all that God does and wants to do through us.

It is not merely man's free will and obedience, but the dominant focus here is on God's divinely sovereign purpose, plan and personal involvement.

**1Th. 5:23-24** Now may the God of peace himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit and soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. (24) He who calls you is faithful; **HE** will surely do it.

The weight of accomplishing God's purpose and plan for us is not just in our obedience but in God's faithful sovereignty. The proper Christian perspective must see the will of God and the obedience of man are not at odds, but are intended to work together in perfect harmony. The Key Word is: **TOGETHER**.

*It should bring us joy to realize that...*

**Purpose, Plan and Partnership** (v13b)

God has a purpose and a plan of which we are all a part and play a



part. So we see the sovereignty of God and the free will of man is intended to work together in perfect harmony. But if you pressed me “which is dominant, the will of man or the sovereignty of God?” I would say God’s sovereignty is dominant and will always win. Consider the alternative. If God’s eternal plan was dependent upon the free will of man, then conceivably we would be eternally destined to an uncertain future at best, and a hopeless eternity at worst.

And yet, it seems the free will of man is what God has ordained to share in as an important partnership for kingdom work. God’s purpose or intent has a sovereign plan. And His plan includes each of us as Christians in partnership, and choosing to work *TOGETHER* with Him. God is faithfully working to accomplish His good purposes in your life. A Purpose without a plan is little more than a *bright idea* or *good intentions*. But God, not only has a purpose, but He also has a plan. God is Alive and Active, that is, Actively working out his purpose and plan in His church as a whole, and in our lives individually.

God has a plan for us, partnering with Him, to reach our community, as we are ***connecting with others, in order to connect them to Christ and to other Christ followers, which is His church.***

So a purpose without a plan is little more than a bright idea or good intention. God has a Purpose. Therefore He has a Plan. He is actively working to fulfill that plan and accomplish His purpose in your life. IT seems that we have the opportunity to choose to partner with him or not. What is needed is for each of us to be in sync with what God desires to do and work in our lives, so we are not opposing His work, but surrendering to that work and partnering with Him in his plan.

God is a god of both good intentions, as well as effective activity. We must exhibit the surrendered Christian perspective, demonstrated by an attitude of humility in our lives, relationships and ministries, in order to be in harmony with His plan for each of us.

*We would do well to joyfully realize that...*

**We are included in God's Good *Pleasure*** (v13c)

**Phil.2:13** for it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.

*"Good pleasure"* / good thoughts; good intention; God's sense of delight. It would refer to God's involvement in your life and His plans for your future not being by His own coercion. God does not work in your life because you are one more thing on his divine "to do" list. It is God's desire to use you and to develop your spiritual life and giftedness. It is God's good pleasure that He be actively blessing you as part of His plan for the universe. Our will and God's plan are intended to work together; not either or; but working together in perfect harmony for His eternal purposes. Your life has an universal impact. 5

...

## **THE INFLUENCE & IMPACT OF THE CHRISTIAN (14-18**

\* The proper Joy-filled Surrendered Christian Perspective realizes this: that our lives influence others by our example, whether good or bad. Our key word here is **EXAMPLE**. One of the greatest challenges in the life of any human being, is that either we often don't have a sense of purpose in living, or that we feel our personal purpose is way too small and insignificant. Billy Graham often asked these questions: (1) Do you know where you came from? (2) Do you know what you're doing here? (3) Do you know where you're going? ***IDO!***

Are you discouraged in Life? You may be are **unaware** of how God works in the lives of His people. Are you bored with life? Then you probably have little or no clear kingdom **vision** of what God wants to do through you. Are you consumed with your own pursuits? You may be lacking in spiritual **desire** for the eternal purpose that God has for your life. This will affect the influence and impact of the believing Christian, in the lives of others.

**Phil.2:14-18** <sup>14</sup> Do everything without grumbling or arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.”<sup>[c]</sup> Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky <sup>16</sup> as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. <sup>17</sup> But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. <sup>18</sup> So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

Paul lived with a God Focused Divine vision or perspective for his life. This is crucial, in order for every Christian to be productive and victorious in your faith.

Ch.2 is the Surrendered Christian Perspective, and that means a heightened awareness of God’s greater plan and a personal willingness to be caught up in that plan.

**ILL)** The Will and Purposes of God are like a mighty raging river, flowing through eternity. It is impossible to swim or navigate. In that river of God’s will, all questions are answered, all problems are already solved and all decisions are already made. Its raging torrent, digs out deep valleys and heaps us high mountains. It totally changes the landscape, washing away entire forests, nations, and even people in its unsubduable current. Its force carries all its

content to its divine end and eternal destination – or perhaps, to its eternal “pre-destination”.

And I believe, it is not as important to figure out where that river is taking me, as it is to simply and daily; jump in and allow that river to carry us along in its current. The question is not, “Is God going to lead me?” But “am I willing to be carried along in the river of God’s will, even if I don’t know where it will take me.

***Lord, Whatever it Takes! Wherever it takes me!***

This is the Surrendered Perspective and the Humble attitude of a devoted follower of Jesus Christ. Our greatest Goal must not be to figure that river out. Our greatest goal must be to jump in, and allow that river to wash us away and carry us along, to its intended end. Whatever it Takes! Where ever it takes us!

*As we think about that, it is important to realize that...*

**Attitude is everything** (v14-15a

\* Our attitude will eventually determine and influence our reputation.

**Phil.2:14-15a** <sup>14</sup> Do everything without grumbling or arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a **perverse** and crooked generation.”“ Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky

***Attitude is everything.*** Grumbling reveals our own displeasure with the will and workings of God. Grumbling shows that we really don’t trust God’s plan. Anger shows we may not truly love one another. Both reveal our attitude and form our reputation in the minds of an onlooking fallen world.

***This is the influence and impact of the Christian life, relationships and ministries.***

We are to live in a manner which contrasts our Christian life with the life and attitude of an unbelieving and sinful culture.

Grumbling, criticizing and complaining; anger and arguing can destroy our witness and personal testimony as quickly as any sin.

## **Reputation is next to everything** (15b-16b)

\* **Prov.22:1** “A good name is more desirable than great riches...”

Remember in 2:9-10, it was the **name** of Jesus that represented the person and work of Jesus. The name, His name, our name represents the reputation associated with that name.

**Phil.2:15b-18** <sup>15b</sup> Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky <sup>16</sup> as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. <sup>17</sup> But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. <sup>18</sup> So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

***Attitude is everything. Reputation is next to everything.*** Jesus is the Light of the world. (Jn.8:12) We are to let our light shine. (Mat.5:14-16) Once our attitude is right; that is the genuine attitude of humility, after the example of our Lord Jesus Himself; And as our reputation is developed in the minds of the world around us that God has called us to reach; then our Christ-likeness will shine like lights in the darkness of the sinful world. It doesn't mean the sinful world will like us or that we will always enjoy fruitful, meaningful ministry because of that. But that the light of Christ in us, will shine forth into the dark culture in which we live. This is to be set apart from the world while living in the midst of it. **“IN”** the world, but not **“OF”** the world; not aligned with the world, not like the world.

*This is the influence and impact of the Christian life, relationships and ministries.*

*Even in our situations and struggles, it is encouraging to remember that in our mistakes and even in our disobedience...*

### **Purpose is Reason for Everything (v.16b-18)**

\* Paul viewed his sacrifice for Christ and His sufferings for the gospel as a joyful thing, because of how God used that for His kingdom work.

**Phil.2:17-18** <sup>14</sup> Do everything without grumbling or arguing, <sup>15</sup> so that you may become blameless and pure, “children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.” Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky <sup>16</sup> as you hold firmly to the word of life. And then I will be able to boast on the day of Christ that I did not run or labor in vain. <sup>17</sup> But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you. <sup>18</sup> So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.

(1) Willful obedience. (2) Ministry Togetherness (3) Making Christ our Example.

**Christian:** This is what is involved as we are “**Holding Forth the Gospel**” of our Lord Jesus Christ. It involves our Christian responsibility, as well as our personal accountability before God.

So How am I doing at living without complaining and without arguing, in order to be an effective witness for Jesus Christ, as we are “**Holding Forth the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to a dark and dying world.**”?

**Personal Evaluation Questions:** On a scale of 1-10;

**(1)** How am I doing at **Holding Forth the Gospel of Christ**? How are you personally responsible? Not how spit polished is your

presentation or how many evangelistic Bible verses you have memorized. But how are you doing at recognizing and responding to the opportunities God brings into your life?

**(2)** How am I doing at making Jesus Christ my Example for over all faithful obedience to my heavenly Father? Not how close you are to achieving sinless perfection, but how are you doing at modeling your life, relationships and ministry after the example of Jesus Christ?

**(3)** How are we doing at trusting God's purpose and plan for us, even though we are unsure where He is taking us? Are we complainers when things don't go our way, or when challenges arise, or when God's purpose leads me in a different direction than I am personally pleased with?

**(4)** How are we doing with our Influence and Impact for the Kingdom of God in our lives, relationships and ministries? How is my attitude? How is my reputation as a Christian? We can have a great reputation as a good person, kind-hearted, fair and personable. We can have a great reputation like that, but still have a weak reputation as a Christian. Being a good person, in and of itself is not enough, in order to be a faithful Christian.

Our Lives must exhibit the Life of Christ. Our words must explain our life, the hope that we have and who Jesus Christ is to us.

***“We are never more Christ-like than when we are demonstrating a Surrendered Joyful Perspective, through an attitude of Christ-like humility, in our lives, our ministries and in our relationships.”***







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# “Helping In the Ministry with Christ”

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**Series Title:** *“The Book of Philippians: The Proper Joy-filled Christian Perspective”*

July 29, Aug 5, 2018

Chapt. 1: The *FOCUSED* Perspective: The Proper Christian perspective is not one focused on our circumstances, but on God’s purpose in those circumstances.

Chapt. 2: The *SURRENDERED* Perspective: We are never more Christ-like than when we demonstrate a surrendered Christian perspective, through an attitude of personal humility, in our lives, relationships and ministries.

\*

*A Life of Humility with Christ as Example*

**Php 2:18-30** (18) Likewise you also should be *glad* and *rejoice* with me. (19) I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be *cheered* by news of you. (20) For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. (21) For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. (22) But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. (23) I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, (24) and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also. (25) 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, (26) for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. (27) 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. (28) I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may *rejoice* at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. (29) So receive him in the Lord with all *joy*, and honor such men, (30) for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Recently Tamarack Wildlife Rehab. Center had a Rare Bird they were caring for. Its name was “Spirit” and it was a white, Red Tail Hawk. A Red Tail Hawk, with a red tail, but its whole body was white with some black markings. It was a rare bird.

There is a rare bird in the church of Jesus Christ today, which is deep and meaningful relationships, formed by serving Christ together. I think it very unfortunate that many Christians never experience the joy and the depth of Christian relationships that are developed between believers in Christ as they serve Christ together. These deep relationships are forged over long term ministry experiences together, as they work through challenges in ministry, as well as in their ministry relationships.

The joy of working together and partnering together with God, to help others either grow in their Christian faith or helping people begin the Christian faith by stepping out of death into life everlasting. As Bill Hybels used to say, “It doesn’t get much better than that!”

Our focus this morning is on 2 men. 2 men any church should be very pleased to have as part of their church family and as part of their ministry team. These are 2 earthly examples of those who are serving with Christ-likeness after the supreme example of Christ’s example of humility in service and a surrendered perspective toward ministry and missions.

## **TIMOTHY (2:18-24)**

\* A Godly Man of Honor. Timothy (or Timotheus) which means, to “honor God”. Timothy is presented as a faithful and reliable servant of Jesus Christ, who Paul connected with in Philippi back

in Acts chapter 16. (please go back and read that chapter for important background information to Paul's letter to the Philippians.) "Timothy"s may not be rare birds, but they are a bit uncommon.

*Paul is speaking of...*

### **Joy-filled service**

(v17-20)

\* Paul is speaking of the joy-filled Christian service and he demonstrates that he possesses that proper Joy-filled Christian perspective, as he encourages his readers to do the same.

Questions: **#1** Where is Paul writing from? (prison)

**#2** Who are the readers of Paul's Letters again? (( (1) the saints in Philippi.)) Who else? (( (2) The saints of Saegertown; each of us here today))

**Php 2:17-18** 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. (18) Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me.

This is specifically, the **JOYFUL CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE** of meaningful ministry together. So unfortunate that so many Christians have never experienced that. Personalities, opinions, tempers, preferences, personal interests, etc, are quite often the more negative forces which mold ministry perspectives and experiences.

The joy-filled Christian is that, because of what we experience together.

**Php 2:18-19** (18) Likewise you also should be glad and rejoice with me. (19) I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you.

Partners in ministry can make ministry a joy or they can turn it into a burden. Take note of the overall gushing report that Paul gives of Timothy. Paul views Timothy as a highly valuable and dearly loved co-laborer in the gospel ministry. Tim's reputation was one of faithfulness, dependability and one who brought joy into the lives of those with whom he served.

Timothy was Paul's own personal missionary; or emissary.

**1Co 4:16-17** ESV I urge you, then, be imitators of me. (17) That is why I sent you **Timothy**, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach them everywhere in every church.

So When Paul speaks of sending Timothy to the church in Philippi, it was not Paul looking to get rid of a helper that is a slacker. He's not getting rid of dead weight. On the contrary, Paul is looking to send his most choice servant and closest partner in ministry to Philippi. He doesn't want to get rid of him, but for the church in Philippi to receive blessings from his presence and ministry. .

*Timothy is...*

### **A Choice Servant in the ministry** (v.20-21)

\* There is an unfortunate scarcity of Christ-like servants in ministry, who experience Christian service as a positive, fellowship building and relationship bonding experience. Too often ministry relationships are rift with personality conflicts, vision disagreements, frustration and divisions.

So the Rare Bird in Christian ministry, is a relationship development that what was joyfully bonding, rather than being miserably endured.

### **(i) The Rare Christ-like Mind (v20)**

\* This is where it begins, in the mind, the attitude and the

perspective.

**Php 2:19-21** (19) I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. **(20) For I have no one like him,** who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. (21) For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

NIV: “Like Minded”; Referring to his attitude, his thinking and His Christ-like Surrendered perspective in ministry.

v.20) “**like minded**” – this refers literally to being of “*equal souls together*”; Being like-minded with Christ **and** like-minded with Paul; His heart, passion and purpose. But this is not merely having a similar vision, sharing great ideas or crafting a vision together. This wording refers not to the action taken in ministry, as much as the relational result or outcome of ministry upon their souls. And their experiences in ministry together for Christ, has built a deep fellowship and positively bonded their very souls together.

They served Christ together. Together we helped other people outside the family of God, step from death into life. Wow. And for Christians, this is priceless! They had experienced that together and it has bonded them together like nothing else; not merely in the faith, but in the ministry. I believe this is a Rare Bird indeed within the church of our Lord Jesus Christ today.

Like Christ’s mind

**Php 2:2** complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

**Php 2:5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

### **(ii) The Rare Servant’s heart of Christ (v20)**

\* This is where the Christ-like perspective is demonstrated in ministry.

**Php 2:20-21** (20) For I have no one like him, **who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.** (21) *For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.*

Ministry is based first on devotion to Christ, and secondly base on compassion toward others who are still in need of Christ.

**Php 2:5-8** ESV Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, (6) who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, (7) but emptied himself, by **taking the form of a servant**, being born in the likeness of men. (8) And being found in human form, he humbled himself by **becoming obedient** to the point of death, even death on a cross.

Timothy had a rare servant's heart after the example of Jesus Himself.

So last week we began by looking at 2 earthly examples of the Christ-like Surrendered Perspective of life, relationships and in ministry. And we began by looking at the ministry and reputation of Timothy.

**Heb 12:1-3** ESV Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, (2) looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God. (3) Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself, so that you may not grow weary or fainthearted.

In other words, focus on the example of our Lord Jesus, who exemplified the Joy-filled Surrendered Christian Perspective, and allowed that joy-filled example to fill and direct his own life.

God's word promises us: "For the Joy of the Lord is your strength." (Neh.8:10). If Satan can rob us of our Joy, he will likewise strip us of our strength. Our Joy, is God's motivation to serve. Our Strength is His empowerment for ministry. Can we see Satan's strategy in striking at our joy? Can we understand his tactics of making miserable, our circumstances and fostering dissatisfaction in our hearts with the life and path God has given us?

It seems that discomfort in life has equated itself with dissatisfaction with what God has given to us. I believe we must realize one thing as God's people:

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***"The devil has no power to steal anything from us,  
that we do not first surrender to him."***

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Paul was filled with joy, as he focused on the interests of others and Timothy was that kind of person as well.

### **(iii) The Rare Christ-like Interests of others (v21)**

I think it a bit humorous, but also a bit frustrating, when I am around a group of people who all have a story to tell and things they desire to communicate. But inevitably the conversations with 4 or 5 people will be, 1 person begins sharing something. Then he takes a breath, then a 2<sup>nd</sup> person begins to tell his story or experience. Until the 2<sup>nd</sup> person pauses to take a breath, and either the first person attempts to pick up where he left off, but then also the 3<sup>rd</sup> person attempts to begin sharing his story. And not necessarily selfishly so, but each person is focused on what? Each person is focused on sharing their own story or experience or opinion, rather than being interested enough in the interests of others, to just wait in line, so to speak, until #1 finishes; #2 finally concludes, so that #3 can finally communicate his concerns or

struggles. Conversations are often like that; a battle of personal interests.

**Php 2:21** For they all seek their own INTERESTS, not those of Jesus Christ.

“They all seek” – that is apparently all the other servants they have experienced, that they all focused on themselves. They are doing their own thing and going their own direction. They are all interested in their own welfare. All have their own self-absorbed perspective, as their priority.

*Looking back on vs 4...*

**Php 2:4-5** ESV Let each of you <sup>1</sup>look not only to his <sup>2</sup>own interests, but also to the interests of others. (5) Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

<sup>1</sup>Look Not (2:4) “Look” is *skopeo*= to scope in on or to focus in on; Blocking out everything peripherally and only able to see that which they want to see, without any sideline distractions.

<sup>2</sup>Their Own interests: (2:21) - Now we all know by now that Paul is not a negative kind of guy. And yet, in honoring Timothy, he reveals the situation which evidently includes other believers. And how sad this statement is.

It appears he is referring to Gospel ministry and serving Christ. Timothy, “I have no one else like you”, evidently because everyone else, and he seems to be referring to other believers, is relatively self-consumed, or focused. Timothy was faithful. He was passionate. He was reliable and dependable and he was other’s focused. He had the interests of others as higher concern than his own interests or desires. And when someone is focused on the interests of others, they are displaying a Christ-like **Surrendered perspective**.



*He also reflected...*

## A Reputation for Christ

(v22-24

\* Timothy did not have to come in and attempt to convince others of his life and character. His reputation preceded him.

**Pro 27:2** ESV Let another praise you, and not your own mouth; a stranger, and not your own lips.

**Php 2:22** (22) But you know Timothy's <sup>1</sup>*proven worth*, how as a son with a father he has <sup>2</sup>*served* with me in the gospel.

<sup>1</sup>Timothy's proven worth; Proven: *dokime* = document; to verify, prove or attest to; faithfulness; tried and true. Do you know how they knew of Timothy's proven worth and his trustworthiness? Not by taking it on himself to inform everyone of his wonderful Christ-like traits or by his own boasting.

The saints in Philippi knew of Timothy's reputation because of Timothy's own reputation which he earned and established in their presence, as he faithfully and sacrificially served in the work of the gospel together. His reputation comes from first hand documented proof of the kind of person he was and the Christ-like example of Jesus Christ that he exhibited.

There is the value of a good name or reputation. Not something we have to tell others about ourselves, but it is what others observed for themselves about our lives, attitudes, behavior and ministries. Faithfulness, is earned. It is proven. It is your reputation, whether good or bad. And developing a servants attitude demonstrates one who is becoming more Christ-like. (2:22b)

In the gospel of Mark Jesus stated this:

**Mar 9:35** ESV And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, "If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and

**servant of all."**

Timothy was definitely demonstrating a humble, servants heart.

So being a choice servant with a reputation of Christ-like faithfulness, Paul then desires to send Timothy to be a blessing to the saints in Philippi. He was sending his Choice servant. And along with Timothy, who was an example of Christ-like service, Paul also plans to send Epaphroditus, as well.

## **EPAPHRODITUS (2:25-30)**

Epaphroditus was another earthly example of Christ-like faithfulness in ministry.

### **A Choice Servant**

(v25)

\* Paul makes mention of some very important qualities of Epaphroditus, which point to his surrendered Christ-like perspective. He exemplified selflessness and a genuine interest in “others first”. He was a servant after the example of Jesus Christ Himself.

**Php 2:25-26 (25) 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,** (26) for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill.

For some reason Paul felt it necessary to send Epaphroditus. Perhaps it was due to a perceived problem or attitude (2:21) or another issue mentioned in chapter 3. Nevertheless, it is important to Paul to get Epaphroditus to the church in Philippi as soon as possible. Epaphroditus was part of the church in Philippi and served there together with Paul. The church evidently sent Epaphroditus to check on Paul in prison. And it is believed to

have been him who delivered this epistle back to the Philippians. Perhaps Paul viewed Epaphroditus as not only a reliable messenger but a faithful mediator as well.

**(i) Brother (v25a)**

**Q:** What does this label imply: Rather than referring to a position, or title, “brother” conveys a close personal Christian relationship. Epaphroditus had developed a close brotherly connection with Paul, through ministry together.

**(ii) Fellow Laborer (v25)**

These are servants for Christ and His kingdom. They spread the gospel message together. They made disciples together. They were co-workers of the closest kind. Yet they were not merely co-workers but co-warriors as well.

**(iii) Fellow Warrior (v25)**

These were soldiers for Christ. This refers to sacrificing themselves for one another. It speaks of one who fought against spiritual darkness with Paul and fought for souls of the lost there in Philippi. In ministry, they would have had one another’s backs, while fully engaged in spiritual warfare! One who fully trusted the other.

**(iv) Messenger (v25)**

This is our word for messenger here is “Apostle”; a carrier of the message of hope with the mission of bringing eternal salvation to the hearer. It would also refer to a messenger who brought encouraging information about the church in Philippi to Paul while in prison.

**(v) Minister (v25)**

In the new testament the word for “minister” can be a word that refers to a house slave; or one that we use to refer to a deacon. But

this word for minister might refer to a public servant whose task is serving, helping others in the faith. The word literally means “people worker”, indication someone who is in the people business. That is what sharing the gospel and making disciples is at its heart – *people business!*

*Back to the humility of Epaphroditus...*

### **The Heart of a True Disciple Maker** (v26-27

\* Since Epaphroditus came to be with Paul he has been missing his home church family. His home church folks were his fellow laborers in the Lord.

**Php 2:26-27** (25) 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, (26) for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. (27) 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.

Christ was obedient unto death. Epaphroditus was obedient almost unto death. He experienced illness in his service. He demonstrated deep devotion. He exemplified what it meant to be a faithful servant. He had a longing heart for the brethren. The heart of a true servant of Christ is people focused! Caring for the lost. Longing for the church family.

**Q:** Do you miss your church family when you or they are away? How often do you long for your church family, when you are apart?

### **Christian Support ministry** (v28-30

\* Timothy and Epaphroditus are 2 earthly examples of choice servants with qualities that reflect the Joy-filled Christ-like, surrendered, Christian perspective.

**Php 2:28-30** (28) I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious.

## FELLOW LABORERS / SUPPORTING SOLDIERS

\* Honorable Servants. *Scripture points out the value of...*

### Trustworthy Partners in Ministry (v20)

**Ecc 4:9-10** ESV Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. (10) For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. But woe to him who is alone when he falls and has not another to lift him up!

The value of trustworthy partners in ministry is undeniable, because faithful partners in the ministry are invaluable. Consider the practice of Jesus.

**Luk 10:1-2** ESV After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them on ahead of him, two by two, into every town and place where he himself was about to go. (2) And he said to them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few. Therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest.

Jesus sent out the 72, 2x2 for support, encouragement, input, prayer the sharing of the work load. It would also benefit in divided sadness and multiplied joys in the challenging Great Commission ministry.

*This chapter closes, addressing the Honorable...*

### Treatment of Choice servants / Reputation (v29)

**Php 2:29-30** (28) I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. **(29) So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and**

**honor such men,** (30) for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

“**Receive Him**” refers to receive to one’s self: to accept into trust and life; close Christian ministerial relationship. Paul gives his blessing on Epaphroditus and also urges the church to treat him honorably.

“**Honor such men**”

**Pro 30:32** If you have been foolish, exalting yourself, or if you have been devising evil, put your hand on your mouth.

**Pro 29:23** One's pride will bring him low, but he who is lowly in spirit will obtain honor.

“**lowly in spirit**” = personal humility)

A **Lesson** from the earthly example of Timothy and Epaphroditus: “Work so as to earn an honorable reputation.” And for the Christian, Serve Jesus Christ, so as to honor the Lord with your life and to earn an honorable reputation among the brethren. Qualities worthy of working on, are honorable attitudes, Virtuous speech and actions, in life, in relationships and in ministry.

**“Honor such men”: consider their reputation; Hold them up in high regard.** **Q:** What is Epaphraditus’ reputation? He has a reputation as a choice faithful servant of Jesus Christ. Our culture pedestalizes and makes celebrities out of singers, actors, models, athletes, and many ministers, as well. Timothy and Epaphroditus perhaps are the Biblical celebrities. Scripture doesn’t mention any miracle they performed or any great feat they accomplished in ministry, yet these are the true celebrities of the faith, demonstrating humility attitudes, faithfulness, consistency and an attitude of servitude. True honorable reputation is one of

faithfulness; dedicated service and a sacrificial humble attitude toward others (v30).

He risked his life for Paul and for the gospel. He loved not his life unto death. Perhaps for Servants such as this, celebrity status is warranted. We have a few of those kinds of choice servants in our church; those who are faithful, serving, sacrificial and who put others first; who put the interests and welfare of the church first. These put the interests and welfare of the church first.

**Regarding Epaphroditus, Albert Barnes writes this:**

Paul gives Epaphroditus and other examples like his, high commendations and, at the same time, presents an important duty regarding the proper Christian perspective toward and treatment of those who exhibit such Christ like character. It is right to honor such saintly servants who deserve such honor; respect for the virtuous and honor towards the pious, especially those who demonstrate such fidelity to the work of our lord Jesus Christ.

Sometimes we think, “I know Jesus lived the faithful life of service to His heavenly Father, but He is the Son of God.” “I know Paul lived the faithful life of service to Christ. After all, he was an apostle.” You might even be tempted to think “I know God wants me to live the faithful life of service to Him, but \_\_\_\_\_ keeps me from it.” Somehow we are able to excuse ourselves from really living the life God wants us to live, fully and faithfully “abounding in the work of the Lord...”.

**Things that can threaten faithfulness in ministry:**

- (1)** Possibly never really sensing God’s call upon any area of ministry. A general lack of interest in Kingdom work for the needs of the lost. We might say those folks were -- **Well Meaning** --
- (2)** Failing to count the cost: Beginning something, but becoming overwhelmed with the challenging responsibilities in a particular

ministry and not remaining faithful. We might say those people are **“short sighted”**.

**(3)** A general difficulty in following through with tasks or commitments. This might somewhat characterize someone’s lifestyle in general. We might say they are – **Inconsistent** –

**(4)** Disheartened or frustrated by imperfect people and unexpected circumstances and can’t finish well the things they were previously committed to. The people may be – **Idealistic** –

**(5)** Looking for greener pastures; There were Good intentions in the beginning, but ideas for opportunities or for other opportunities, that may now seem more exciting or attractive than the previous tasks. These people might be described as – **Uncommitted** –

**(6)** Too busy to carry our responsibilities or to meet your own expectations. Personal schedule and life’s demands continue to supersede or crowd out “lesser” Christ-focused , ministry commitments. These may be – **Over Extended** --

**(7)** Possibly not sensing a burden for the discipleship, soul saving ministries of the church. They may not sense the urgency of this kind of eternal ministry involvement because they are – **Detached** – and people business is just not their priority.

**(8)** Those who do not have the interests of others at heart, nor the interests of the ministry itself. These are lacking in Christ-like humility and might be considered to be – **UnSurrendered** – Because they do not share the proper Christian Surrendered perspective, which Christ as our Example has demonstrated for us.

**Q: How can we work towards a cure for unfaithfulness in ministry for Christ?**



Pray for a joy-filled, Surrendered Christian perspective upon your life, your relationships and your ministry involvement!

I know of no other way to defeat unfaithfulness in ministry, and to work towards acquiring faithfulness in ministry. There is no switch, or button or string to pull to make it happen. There is no magic wand to be waved. There is no Time Tunnel to pass through to magically arrive in the future where you may be faithful.

Curing unfaithfulness involves a necessary process of growing, becoming committed, growing in faithfulness, failing and yet renouncing my failure. Being convicted and resolving to be more Submitted to the Kingdom work to which God the Father, calls each of us.

## **2 Personal Evaluation Questions:**

**(1)** What is my reputation in ministry? Am I one who sacrifices my life, comforts, time and self-interests for the sake of the gospel? Am I faithful, reliable, devoted to the work of Christ and the message of the gospel?

**(2)** In the context of service to Jesus Christ, do people think of me as a faithful, reliable sacrificial servant? Am I one who brings joy to the hearts of those with whom we minister?





## **JOY / REJOICE / GLAD (16x)**

1) Php 1:4 always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with **joy**,

2,3) Php 1:18 What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed, and in that I **rejoice**. Yes, and I will **rejoice**,

4) Php 1:25 Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and **joy** in the faith,

5) Php 1:26 ESV so that in me you may have ample cause to **glory** in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again.

6) Php 2:2 complete my **joy** by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.

7,8) Php 2:17 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.

9,10) Php 2:18 Likewise you also should be **glad** and **rejoice** with me.

11) Php 2:28 I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may **rejoice** at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious.

12) Php 2:29 So receive him in the Lord with all **joy**, and honor such men,

13) Php 3:1 Finally, my brothers, **rejoice** in the Lord. To write the same things to you is no trouble to me and is safe for you.

14) Php 4:1 Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my **joy** and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

15,16) Php 4:4 **Rejoice** in the Lord always; again I will say, **rejoice**.

## **OUR MIND, OUR THOUGHTS; Christian perspective (18x)**

Our thinking process; our memory banks; our mental outlook or perspective on life.

1) Php 1:3 ESV I thank my God in all my **remembrance** of you,

2) Php 1:7 ESV It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my **heart**, for you are all partakers with me

of grace, both in my imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel.

3) Php 1:12 ESV I want you to **know**, brothers, that what has happened to me has really served to advance the gospel,

4) Php 1:27 ESV Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one **mind** striving side by side for the faith of the gospel,

5,6) Php 2:2 ESV complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one **mind**.

7) Php 2:5 ESV Have this **mind** among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus,

8) Php 2:6 ESV who, though he was in the form of God, did not **count** equality with God a thing to be grasped,

9) Php 2:20 ESV For I have no one **like him**, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.

10) Php 3:7 ESV But whatever gain I had, I **counted** as loss for the sake of Christ.

11) Php 3:8 ESV Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and **count** them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ

12,13) Php 3:13 ESV Brothers, I do not **consider** that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: **forgetting** what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,

14,15) Php 3:15 ESV Let those of us who are mature **think** this way, and if in anything you **think** otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.

16,17) Php 4:7 ESV And the peace of God, which surpasses all **understanding**, will guard your hearts and your **minds** in Christ Jesus.

18) Php 4:8 ESV Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, **think** about these things.



*Don't close this booklet yet*



# ***Don't close this booklet yet***

*without considering this all important question.*

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## **Is Jesus Christ the Savior or *your* soul and the Lord of *your* life?**

Every person is born guilty of sin and in need of forgiveness.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;  
--Rom 3:23

Our sin is against God, therefore our forgiveness can only come from God.

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only  
begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should  
not perish, but have everlasting life. --John 3:16

God has appointed His Son as the payment for sins and sent Him to die in our place.

For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is  
eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
-- Romans 6:23

God's love is demonstrated through the sacrificial payment of Jesus Christ in our place for our sins.

...but God shows his love for us in that while we were  
still sinners, Christ died for us. ---Romans 5:8

For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord  
will be saved." -- Rom 10:13

But to all who did receive him, who believed in his  
name, he gave the right to become children of God,  
- John 1:12

Before you close this book, why not be absolutely certain that you are truly a citizen of God's eternal kingdom and loving family?

*Trust in Jesus Christ today and receive forgiveness for your sins  
and citizenship into God's family and His Kingdom.*

## The ABCs

**A** - Admit you have sinned and are in need of a Savior.

**B** - Believe Jesus died in your place, and you can no way help yourself.

**C** - Confess your sins to God. He already knows. Also Confess Jesus as you LORD. He desires and deserves to be your Lord.

**Prayer:** Take time to talk to God right now and open your heart and life to His instruction and leadership.

**Connect** with a local Bible believing, Christ centered church.

**Commit** yourself to meeting regularly with other Christians who are growing in their faith.

**Heb 10:24-25** And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, (25) not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

**Act 2:41-42** So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. (42) And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.

For more information or for spiritual help, please contact us at:  
Christ E. Free Church, PO Box 619, 19682 Hill Rd,  
Saegertown, Pa, 16433, Ph: 814-763-2934, [www.christefca.org](http://www.christefca.org)

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*It is our prayer that you find **Jesus Christ** to be...  
your highest calling,  
your greatest purpose,  
your soul's source and joy,  
and your all-consuming passion.*







*Other Free Booklets downloadable at [www.ChristEFCA.org](http://www.ChristEFCA.org)*

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*May each lesson bring a growing submission, a deeper obedience and an increase of the righteous reign of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the fullness of His Spirit, in His Church and throughout our mission field.*

*-- Downloadable free resources at: [www.christefca.org](http://www.christefca.org) --*

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