



## MORAIN VALLEY CHURCH

### *Concerned for the Interest of Christ*

Phil 2:17-30 March 11, 2018

#### I. Introduction:

- A. If something happened to you, who would you want to care for your loved ones?
  - 1. Many of us face that big question when we write up a will.  
“If I were to die who would I want to raise my children?”
  - 2. What kind of person would you look for?
  - 3. Do you know someone who fits that bill?
- B. In many ways that is the situation that Paul was in, something happened to him, he was in jail and unavailable to get to the Philippians but he wanted to learn about their condition and he had some concerns for their spiritual welfare.
  - 1. Let me ask you, “if you knew you were going to die soon what kind of person would you want to watch over your loved ones spiritual lives?”
  - 2. Can you name that person who has those kind of qualities?
  - 3. Maybe an even bigger question? “Would anyone name you or me?”
- C. Turn to Phil 2:19 as we see this situation worked out in Paul’s life. Let me remind you of the context.
  - 1. Driving issue was unity
  - 2. We learned that the attitude that is necessary for unity is twofold – valuing others as more important than yourself and caring for others interest as much as you do your own.
  - 3. Then we saw those attitudes modeled in Jesus relationship with His Father.
  - 4. Then we learned that the ability to live this way comes from God working the desire and ability into our hearts!
  - 5. Last week we saw Paul calling them to be lights in the world, both with their lives and their sharing of the gospel

- D. Then we come to where we will start today. Phil 2:19 which I think is a beautiful masterpiece that the Spirit of God worked through Paul as he was writing about some personal concerns he had.
1. What we will see is the theme of the whole chapter woven into personal concerns that just seem like insignificant details about planning a visit.
  2. In this chapter, we see a movement from the greatest to the least. we see the attitudes we are called to modeled first in Jesus Christ, then in Paul the Greatest Apostle, then in Timothy one of the key leaders in the early church and then ending with Epaphroditus, who was a member of the local church at Philippi.
  3. Each one of them is a picture for us of the humble attitude of service that we are to have, valuing others as more important than myself and caring for the concerns of others!
    - a) Each one genuinely loves the people they are in relationship with and has a genuine concern for the things of Christ in the lives of the people they love.
- E. And all of this is interwoven into the planning of a visit. So you do not get lost in the details of this passage since it has so many twists let me tell you what is going on here on the personal details level.
1. Paul, still being in prison, wanted to know about the Philippians' condition. He had hoped to send Timothy to them because of Timothy's genuine concern for them and the things of Christ, but he felt it necessary to send Epaphroditus instead because Epaphroditus had longed to see them and was very upset they had heard about his sickness. When they saw Epaphroditus, they might rejoice, knowing he is better.
- F. So as I read this watch for their love for the Philippians and their concern for the things and work of Christ. Read, starting in v 17 with Paul.
- Today I simply want to do two things. First, look at their examples of a Christ-like attitude and then look at how we are doing.
- II. Three examples of a Christ-Like Attitude
- A. Let's start by looking at the attitude of each of these three men
1. Paul – v17 –
    - a) He viewed his life as being poured out by God as an offering, a drink offering being poured upon them. “My life is being offered up to God in my service of you!”

b) Note he rejoiced over that, his whole life being used as a sacrifice for their lives and their welfare

2. Timothy

a) V20 – genuine concern for their welfare

b) V21 – interest of Jesus Christ

3. Epaphroditus

a) V26 – longed for them and was very upset/distressed that they heard he was sick. His concern was not about his sickness but what it did to his friends back at his church, the way they were troubled about his sickness

b) V30 – he risked his life and came close to death for the work of Christ

B. Let's look where each one of these invested their lives

1. Paul – His life was being poured out as a sacrifice upon their faith, their Christian lives, their growing in the knowledge of God and their walks with God. Read v17

2. Timothy – He was genuinely concerned for their welfare, specifically regarding the things of Jesus Christ. Read v20-21

3. Epaphroditus – Epaphroditus risked his life and came close to death for the work of Christ! Read v 30

C. In summary – these three men loved these people and they loved the things of God! They mixed the two together in their relationship with the Philippians, a genuine concern for the Philippians, along with a genuine concern for their spiritual welfare!

- I believe that God's intended application for this passage was to challenge the Philippians to the same kind of mixed concern for one another! So that leads us to the question ....

III. How are we doing?

A. Does your heart have both of these concerns? Are you genuinely concerned for your brothers and sisters in Christ and are you genuinely concerned for their spiritual life? Are you heavy on one side or the other?

1. Do I love but really do not have a spiritual concern?

2. Or do I have a spiritual concern for the things of God but really do not love people but rather use them to further the ministry?

3. We need to have both to be useful to the Master and to other people!

- B. V20 says I have no one else of kindred spirit – Paul says I can find no other believers that think and feel the same way that I do, having a concern for both you and the things of Christ.
1. Timothy is in a class of his own, the Michael Jordan of believers there by Paul.
  2. Question – If Jesus was asking that question at MVC “Who can I send to care for that believer the same way that I do, concerned for them above my own concerns, concerned about the things of Christ in their life,” Would you and I, make the short list of people Jesus would consider at MVC?
- C. As Warren Weirsbee says “Each one of us lives in either Phil 1:21 or Phil 2:21, which are you?” Read both and give moment to reflect.
- D. Whom are you caring for spiritually?
1. The mission we received from Jesus is to make disciples.
  2. Listen as I Read Mt 28:18-20
  3. When you consider all the Scripture that touches on our mission, we are to, out of our love for God and people, bring lost people to Jesus and help believers become more like Jesus!
  4. This is a discipleship mission! Concerned for people and their spiritual life and what their next spiritual step is in their life. I become God’s instrument for that.
  5. This is one of the key reasons why you were saved! To influence other people for Jesus, both the lost to come to Christ and the believer to become more like Christ!
  6. So let me ask you again, “who are you caring for spiritually?”
- E. Who is caring for you spiritually?
1. Timothy, one of the key players in this passage, was cared for spiritually by Paul.
  2. Paul took Timothy on his mission trips, personally mentored him and entrusted him with work to do. On these trips, Timothy learned from Paul. Read 2 Tim 3:10
  3. Turn to 2 Tim 1:13-14 – Paul taught and entrusted to Timothy the Word of God.
  4. In 2 Tim 2:2 – Paul is now telling Timothy to teach and entrust to other faithful men what he had taught him

- F. Timothy had a dual relationship both having Paul over him, who was concerned for his spiritual life, and having faithful men under him whom he cared for their spiritual life.
- G. So let me ask you in closing, “Who are you caring for spiritually and who is caring for you spiritually?”
  - 1. We have seen the models and heard the challenge from God’s word. All that is left is for us is to obey this challenge as we trust the Spirit of God to work in us the will and ability into us!