

Series: Philippines Series 2024

Title: Likemindedness

Text: Php 2: 19-30

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If it was the Lord's will, the apostle Paul hoped to send Timothy to the brethren at Philippi.

Philippians 2: 19: I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. 20: For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21: For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. 22: But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel. 23: Him therefore I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. 24: But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly. 25 Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. 26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. 27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. 29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: 30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

Subject: Likemindedness

Proposition: Christ provides pastors who Christ gives the mind of Christ.

THE LORD PROVIDES PASTORS

Philippians 2: 19: But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you

Paul says, "If it be the Lord's will I will send Timothy to you shortly." Paul may be the elder minister used to send Timothy. But if Timothy goes, Paul knows, it will be the Lord Jesus who sent him. Paul knew it was Christ who called Paul and sent him.

I Timothy 1: 12:...I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

Paul was not faithful of himself. Paul was dead in sin, on his way to persecute the church. Christ arrested Paul and made him faithful--that is why the Lord counted him faithful. The Lord called Paul, revealed himself to Paul and put Paul in the ministry.

Acts 9: 10: And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I *am here*, Lord. 11: And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting *his* hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17 And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized. 19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus. 20 And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God.

In the past, I have interacted with several churches who were seeking a pastor. Those who wait on the Lord are wise. The Lord has provided. But sometimes people think we will put a pastor in the office. Or worse, sometimes men think they will put themselves into the office. The outcome is never good. Only the Lord gives pastors.

Jeremiah 3: 15: I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.

Ephesians 4: 8: When [Christ] ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men....11: And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers, 12: For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

THE LORD EQUIPS PASTORS

Philippians 2: 20: For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. 21: For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's.

Paul has written a lot about likemindedness in this epistle. He writes about it a lot in all his epistles. Here he said of Timothy, "*I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.*" That is high commendation coming from Paul.

Sadly, Paul said of other preachers, "*all seek their own.*"

2 Timothy 4:10: For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica;

This does not mean for certain that Demas apostatized--*we hope he did not*. I think John Gill is correct that the Lord showed mercy to Demas and recovered him. Later Paul wrote to the Colossians,

Colossians 4: 14: Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.

John Gill thinks Demas is short for Demetrius. He thinks it was Demas John wrote about.

3 John 1: 12: Demetrius hath good report of all *men*, and of the truth itself: yea, and we *also* bear record; and ye know that our record is true.

That would certainly exalt the mercy and grace and free forgiveness of God if he recovered Demas.

But at the time Paul wrote this, it is likely Demas had been with him at Rome. But when he saw the danger, he forsook Paul at Rome, probably fearful of being killed. So he sought his own safety.

Think of how differently the Lord Jesus acted toward us. The Lord Jesus saw us bound like Paul was bound. He saw us in chains. But Christ did not seek his own or his own reputation. He did not seek to save his own life. Christ ran right into the fire for us. He laid down his life under the fierce fury of God's wrath to redeem us. That is the likemindedness the Spirit of Christ gave Paul and Timothy and Epaphroditus.

Luke 14: 15: And when one of them that sat at meat with him heard these things, he said unto him, Blessed *is* he that shall eat bread in the kingdom of God. 16 Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: 17 And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. 18 And they all with one *consent* began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. 19 And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. 20 And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. 21 So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. 22 And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. 23 And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel *them* to come in, that my house may be filled. 24 For I say unto you, That

none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper. 25: And there went great multitudes with him: and he turned, and said unto them, 26: If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. 27: And whosoever doth not bear his cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Luke 9: 62 And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.

Christ gives his servants--all his people, including his ministers--a new spirit, not to seek our own interests, but to seek *the things that be of Christ*. Christ's minister cannot regard his own interests over the glory of Christ or even on the same level. Wherever Christ calls you, you must go and leave behind all other things. We have to forget self if we would serve God.

Matthew 13:22: He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful.

1 John 2: 15: Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16: For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17: And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.

What are the things which are Jesus Christ's. One, the preaching of the gospel of God's glory in Christ Jesus, his Son. Two, the Lord's people who Christ bought with his precious blood. By God's grace, by Christ equipping them through the Spirit of the Lord, Timothy and Epaphroditus had this likemindedness.

Philippians 2: 25: Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants. 26 For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. 27 For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had mercy on him;...29: Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation: 30 Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me.

THE MIND OF CHRIST

We do not have to look far to see where sinners get this spirit of likemindedness.

Philippians 2: 5: Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Matthew 20: 28...the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

2 Corinthians 8: 9: For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.

Spiritual death came by the disobedience of one man, Adam. Righteousness and eternal salvation came by the obedience of one man, Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Christ was proven faithful from the cradle, even to the death of the cross. As our substitute and Surety he denied himself in sinless perfection. He renounced his own will in absolute perfection. Our Substitute willingly gave Himself up to God's will in perfection. Christ willing gave his body to be broken and his blood to be shed to save his people from our sins. He willingly bore the wrath of God in order to blot out every sin of his people forever.

Christ's pastors are sinners saved by grace like those they are sent to minister to. But Christ gives his pastor the mind of Christ. Paul said,

2 Corinthians 3: 6: [God] hath made us able ministers of the new testament...

Ephesians 4: 7: Paul said, every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12: 4: Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But in ourselves we have no sufficiency. We are not able even to think that anything is of ourselves. Christ is our Sufficiency.

2 Corinthians 3:5: Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency *is* of God;

By the Spirit of Christ in Epaphroditus did for the Philippians what Christ did for him. He served in place of his brethren--*"Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me."* He served Paul on behalf of the Philippian church because they could not go to Paul. It was due to their inability to serve Paul. That is why Epaphroditus was nigh unto death. It was for the work of Christ. The Lord gives His pastors a love for the Lord and for the Lord's people that exceeds their own interest.

Having been born of the Holy Spirit and given the mind of Christ, Paul's mind was to do what he taught others to do.

Colossians 3:1: If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2: Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. 3: For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.

May the Lord give each of us this mind of Christ to seek the things that be of Christ, not the things that be of this world.

Amen!