

Precious Like-mindedness

Scripture Passage

“Yes, and if I am being poured out [as a drink offering] on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me. But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state. For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with [his] father he served with me in the gospel. Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.” (Philippians 2:17-30 NKJV)

Thesis

We are to be as Paul, concerned for the advancement of the things of Christ, which is the advancement of the Gospel.

Commentary

You can hear the love Paul has for these Philippians when he talks about their care. He was concerned to send them someone like-minded. He wanted to send them someone who cared more about the things of Christ than their own things.

Now many hear something like this and immediately apply it to church service. That is being their every time the doors open, being on five or six committees, and saying amen to every emphasis in the Sunday-morning message. However, this is not the things of Christ.

I would never want to discourage you from going to church or helping with the administration of your church, I just want you to understand that serving God is more than doing church. Epaphroditus came close to death for the work of Christ. Many will help when their gain is comparable to Christ's gain, but few will sacrifice for the Gospel.

The advancement of the Gospel is that about which Paul is talking. Whether it is in the heart of one saint to encourage him to faithfulness, or in the ears of hundreds of sinners for the conversion of their soul, the Gospel is the work of Christ.

Do you go to church to fulfill some sense of duty, or to get some kind of personal satisfaction? God would have us come together to hear His word, encourage one another to holiness, and pray. These men cared deeply about the things of Christ. They cared deeply for each other.

Would you the next time you are at church, ask the person next to you in the pew, “How are you doing spiritually? Is there any way I can pray for you?” Over the years, I have found many people who care whether I attend church, but few who are concerned about the condition of my soul. Don’t assume because a person attends church regularly that they are fine spiritually. Do to them, as you would have them do to you, and ask about their wellbeing. Revival begins with you!

Father, forgive us for we are a very selfish people. We cannot glorify you in this condition. Flood our hearts with compassion for others. Send your Holy Spirit to guide us in a new direction. Cause us to focus on people and not programs, on love and not legalism, and on your things and not our own. People are hurting in the midst of professing believers, and no one seems to care. Give us eyes to see their pain, and ears to hear their cries. Revive our hearts, and we will give you all the glory, amen.