A Change of Preoccupation October 21, 2018

*Philippians 2:19-30 Series: Inextinguishable Joy*

I knew he meant it, because I watched him live it. He was a student of the Bible, and his life was full of blessing, and I wanted what he had. – Ray Ortlund

Intro: “Watch me and tell me there's no difference.”

1. I see Jesus in your selfless concern for others.
2. Selfishness is the default human setting.

v. 20 *I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.*

v. 21 *For they all seek their own interests …*

1. God works in us to make us share Jesus’ burden for the world.

v. 21 *their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ*

John 5:30 *I can do nothing on my own. As I hear, I judge, and my judgment is just, because I seek not my own will but the will of him who sent me.*

1. God works in us to bring out genuine concern for others.

v. 20 *genuinely concerned for your welfare*

v. 4 *Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

v. 22 *But you know Timothy's proven worth …*

v. 22 *as a son with a father he has served with me*

v. 23 *I hope therefore to send him …*

* Why are Christian role models so important in our spiritual growth?
* What feels like “genuine concern” when you see it in others?
* How can a person become less selfish?
1. I see Jesus in your partnership for the gospel.
2. God is seeking to knit us together as family.

v. 25 *Epaphroditus my brother …*

Ephesians 2:19 *So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God …*

Romans 12:5 *so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another*

1 Corinthians 12:26 *If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.*

1. God is seeking to lead us together in service.

v. 25 *fellow worker*

v. 25 *your messenger and minister to my need*

Philippians 1:3-5 *I thank my God in all my remembrance of you … because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.*

1. God is seeking to embolden us for spiritual battle.

v. 25 *I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus…*

v. 25 *fellow soldier*

* How can a person become more connected in God’s family?
* Why is it important for us to partner with each other in the gospel and not just serve and witness on our own?
* Being a “fellow soldier” for Epaphroditus meant, among other things, enduring a long and treacherous journey to travel between Philippi and Rome. What does being a “fellow soldier” require of Christians today?
1. I see Jesus in your gracious response to hardship.
2. God gives us grace to think of others in our hardship.

v. 26 *he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill*

1. God gives us grace to stand up when we’ve fallen down.

v. 27 *Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him …*

v. 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.*

1. God gives us grace to confront the risks of serving Him.

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

Philippians 1:21 *For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*

* What are some examples of the gracious response of believers to hardship that have encouraged you?
* In what sense would Epaphroditus’ return trip from Rome to Philippi be harder than his initial trip from Philippi to Rome?
* Where does the Christian life involve risk for you?
* Where do you most need prayer in applying this passage to your life?

Study ahead: Next week, we’ll study Philippians 3:1-11

Notes