

“Receive and Honor”

Philippians 2:19-30

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Rev. Brian T. Smeal; pastorsmeal@gmail.com

All Scripture quoted from ESV unless otherwise noted

Paul has given some great advice in Philippians 2

- Have a spirit of unity among yourselves; Be humble servants of one another; Do all things without grumbling or complaining; Work out your own salvation

When you embrace a ‘Lone Ranger’ mentality with regard to your Christian faith, you will eventually start to see things and interpret events in a way that will cause you to believe that it’s true

Paul says, ‘You’re not alone.’

- “Work out your own salvation” – but not, “Figure it out for yourself.”
- Walking the path of the Christian faith is not like a 2-acre mirror maze, where you wander all alone, continually bumping keep bumping into yourself, uncertain of the way out
 - We have a line on the floor – God’s Word
 - We have a voice that comes through the heart’s sound system – God’s voice
 - We have a guide to help us walk the path – God’s family
- You are not Alone in your journey of faith

Paul expresses his desire to come see them as soon as, and if, he can. He hopes to send Timothy soon and is sending Epaphroditus immediately. A few things we should know about these men:

- Timothy is Paul’s #1 guy – v.20 – “I have no one like him.” He was born in Asia Minor to a mixed marriage; he had a Greek (non-religious) father and a devout Jewish mother, who then came to embrace the Christian faith. Timothy met Paul on his first missionary journey and accompanied him on his second. From Timothy, we see that *God can use you, no matter what your Backstory is*. Timothy was a shy young man, but He was willing to spend and be spent for the sake of the gospel. If you have skeletons in your closet, it may be time to sweep them out and ask God to help you deal with that ‘junk’ so you can feel free to serve Him more fully.
- Epaphroditus was sent by the Philippian church to bring gifts to Paul while he was under house arrest in Rome, but while there, he became seriously ill – nearly to the point of death (2:27). Some have suggested that Epaphroditus may have been a prominent leader in the Philippian church, or maybe their pastor. Once he had recovered, he (probably) carried the letter from Paul to the Philippian church.

Epaphroditus was a team player, and a man on whom you could count to get things done.

Receive and honor those whose Love runs deep, such as Timothy; a man of Compassion. Receive and honor those whose Service remains true, such as Epaphroditus, a man of Motivation.

Receive comes from the Greek προσδέχομαι – to receive to yourself; give access to your life. *Who you give Access into your life can have a significant impact on your life. Consider the question of who you are giving access into your life. You are the gatekeeper – you decide who gets to speak into your life and who doesn't. Surround yourself with those who will love you, support you, and motivate you*

You are not alone in your Christian faith! God has sent people into your life to support and encourage you. He doesn't always send you who you want – but He does send you who you need. Who has God sent to you? Take time this week to recognize and honor those whom God has sent into your life – because we're in this together.

DIG IN!

Here are some farm-fresh questions that will help you to personalize and apply this morning's message.

1. ***What was most surprising, unexpected, or helpful from today's passage/message? Why?***
2. ***Why might someone believe that God cannot use them to accomplish His purposes? How many of these reasons have you believed about yourself?***
3. ***Name some people who have invested in your spiritual growth. What is the best way to honor them now?***
4. ***Who is the greatest fictional character of all time? Why?***
5. ***Speaking of character, why do you suppose character is so important in a Christian's life? How is character proven? Be specific!***
6. ***Look again at the 5 descriptors used of Epaphroditus in v.25. Which is most descriptive of you? Why?***
7. ***Explain the difference between genuine concern (which is good) and worry (which is bad).***
8. ***Read through the book of Philippians this week. Are you seeing it any differently now?***
9. ***What have you learned through your personal time of Bible reading this week?***