

NOT YOUR AVERAGE CHRISTIAN

DATE: 6/6/10 pm

TEXT: Philippians 2:19-23

INTRODUCTION

III. Vance Havner once made the statement that most Christians live such a subnormal Christian life that if they began to live a normal Christian life people would think them abnormal

III. George Gallup, Jr. said: "While religion is highly popular in America, it is to a large extent superficial; it does not change people's lives to the degree one would expect from the level of professed faith."
(The People's Religion)

Most saved people live an average Christian life
(And I'm being kind when I say average)

→ The average Christian spends little time in Bible study and prayer

→ The average Christian rarely shares their faith

→ The average Christian goes to Church on a regular basis

But - Christian Service and Spiritual Growth are unimportant to them

In all honesty, someone –

Not Your Average Christian – Philippians 2:19-23

- Who spends time in the Word of God and Prayer
- Who is Passionately and Persistently sharing their faith
- Who seeks the will of God and does the will of God (and)
- Who puts Christ first in every aspect of their life is ...

By today's standards - not your Average Christian

The Christian life that many live may be normal by religious standards

But subnormal by God's standards

Many times - what we accept as a Fair Christian life is in God's eyes a Failing Christian life

It may be an Average Christian life ... (to us)

But it is certainly not the Acceptable Christian life (to God)

In our text, we find a Christian that is Not Normal

Paul speaks of Timothy as someone that was not your Average Christian

He was not your Everyday kind of believer

Notice how Paul described Timothy in **v.20** –

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“For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state”

The word *“likeminded”* is made up of two words –
"equal" and "soul"

Paul was saying, *"I have no man with a soul equal to Timothy's"*

Paul was declaring that Timothy was not your Everyday kind of Christian

He was not your Average Believer

Paul writes to the believers at Philippi to let them know they are on his heart and in his prayers

He plans to send Timothy to check on them and see how they were doing

He affirms Timothy to them and tells them that he is not your Average Christian

He wants them to know there is something Special about Timothy

Let's notice 3 things that Paul states about Timothy that explains the praise he gave him

~~~OPENING PRAYER~~~

Not Your Average Christian – Philippians 2:19-23

I. HIS LOVE WAS SINCERE!

We read in v.20 – *"For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state"*

Someone has said that love is a verb, not a noun

Paul loved the believers at Philippi and that love was revealed in the way he cared for them

His care for them was obvious

They could never doubt his love for them

Paul tells them that Timothy is the same way

A. He had a ‘Godly’ Care for them

The word *"care"* means to - *"be anxious about"*

It's to have someone on your mind - to think about that person and to be concerned about their welfare

Paul and Timothy both **cared** about the Spiritual Condition of the believers at Philippi

It was a godly care

III. They weren't wondering how Joe's sword game was coming or if Harry had got that new chariot yet, or if Mary had got that stone floor put in her house

Not Your Average Christian – Philippians 2:19-23

The simple truth is - you cannot get the Average Christian to:

Visit, Work, and be Concerned about those who are lost

Every believer ought to say that by God's grace and God's help ...

They are not going to be an Average Christian

May we all live above the Average in the way we:

→ Care for others

→ Live for God and

→ Seek to win the lost

Timothy was not your Average Christian

How About You?

HIS LOVE WAS SINCERE

HIS LORD SUPREME

HIS LABOR SPECIFIC

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ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church”

When I think of God's work here (@ CBBC)

I'm reminded that the task before us is too great for just one person to do

It demands that believers work together and cooperate

Timothy was Co-operating in God's Work

B. There was 'Consecration' to the Work

(a setting apart for holy service)

It was not just any work Timothy was involved in

But a Specific Work

It was a work "*in the gospel*" Paul said

Timothy was Consecrated to the preaching of the gospel and the winning of souls

Timothy was 'Co-operating' in God's work

Timothy was 'Consecrated' to God's work

Timothy was not your Average Christian!

CONCLUSION

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Their concern - anxiety - and care was for their Spiritual Condition

It was a godly care

The average believer today cares very little about the spiritual condition of others

They can be around the lost and talk about everything but Jesus

They rarely express concern for new converts, the weak and fallen, and other Christians that have needs

Do you have a love and care for your family and friends that are unsaved?

Do you have a deep concern over the spiritual condition of your family?

Are you concerned that you have loved ones unsaved or away from God?

Timothy was the kind of Christian that cared about other's and their relationship with God

III. Chesterton once said, "*There are no uninteresting things, there are only uninterested people.*"

The Average Christian and the Average Church is uninterested and uncaring about the Spiritual Condition of Others

Timothy had a ‘Godly’ Care for them

B. He had a ‘Genuine’ Care for them

Paul said that Timothy was one who would "*naturally care*" for their state

The word "*naturally*" means, "*sincerely, genuinely*"

Timothy was someone who really cared

It was more than Words he spoke

It was Works he showed

III. If you could have X-rayed Timothy's heart you would have found that he sincerely and genuinely cared for others

I think of the feelings of the Psalmist in **Psalm 142:4** –

"I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul"

The Psalmist felt that no one really cared

It's one thing to say you care ...

But it's another thing to show you really care

Really caring is more than what you say with your lips

It is something that you show with your life

Timothy Lived for the ‘Eternal’

HIS LORD WAS SUPREME!

Timothy was not your Average Christian!

III. HIS LABOR WAS SPECIFIC!

We read in v.22 – "*But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel*"

Timothy was not the kind of Christian that you had to wonder about

Paul said to the believers at Philippi – "*ye know the proof of him*"

The word "*proof*" speaks of something that has been tested and proven

Timothy was not your Average Christian only because he was Operating (involved) in God's work

A. He was (also) ‘Co-Operating’ in God's Work

Paul and Timothy worked hand in hand

Paul compared their relationship to a son and his father

I Corinthians 4:17 – "*For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my*

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The rich man in **Luke 12** was Condemned for living for the Temporal

But Timothy is Commended for living for the Eternal

A man is a fool who lives only for this life

But a man is wise who lives for the things of Christ

III. George Barna in his book *The Index of Leading Spiritual Indicators* said, "People may view themselves as Christian, but their intensity of commitment to the faith is lukewarm. Less than half of its self-proclaimed adherents (41 per cent) say they are "absolutely committed" to Christianity. A similar proportion (44 per cent) say they are "moderately" committed to the faith"

The person that is not your Average Christian says –

"Lord, I want to do your will. I want to please you in all things. I want to be all you want me to be. I'll do whatever you want me to do. I will seek first the kingdom of God and your righteousness"

The Lord wants more than a Place in the believer's life

He wants even more than Prominence

He wants Preeminence

He wants to be Lord!

Timothy did not Live for the 'Temporal'

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The average Christian may profess to care ...

But the only ones that really care are those that show it

Timothy had a 'Godly' Care

Timothy had a 'Genuine' Care

HIS LOVE WAS SINCERE!

Timothy was not your Average Christian!

II. HIS LORD WAS SUPREME!

We read in **v.21** – "*For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's*"

Paul said that Timothy was not your Average Christian because the Lord Jesus Christ came first in his life

A. Living for the 'Temporal' (turn to **Luke 12:16**)
(Temporal - relating to life in the world, not to spiritual life)

Paul stated that for many - life was lived for themselves

He speaks of those who "*seek their own*"

The word "*seek*" means - "*to endeavor, to desire*"

For many - life is built around their own wants

The priority of many believers is their own comfort

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The boundaries of life are no larger than their own little world

They are like this foolish farmer that Jesus spoke of in **Luke 12:16-21** (let's read)

This man laid up treasure for himself

He sought only what he wanted

Jesus called him a fool

He was rich as far as this world is concerned ...

But was bankrupt as far as the eternal was concerned

III. George Barna wrote a book called *Baby Busters* (those born between 1965-1983) and he spoke of workplace studies that identified certain concerns about the Busters. Let me mention four:

- They are ambitious, but their ambitions are personal, not corporate.
- They are more individualistic, exhibiting little interest in team work or cooperative efforts.
- They are uncooperative with authority; they feel a need to make their own decisions, but to leave the consequences with the company.
- Loyalty is not in their vocabulary; it is an "all for one, and one for me" strategy.

This "all for one, and one for me" is not only an attitude of Baby Busters ...

But also true of the Average Christian

Not Your Average Christian – Philippians 2:19-23

Many a Christian life is self-centered and self-propagating

They live life seeking their own

Paul will sum it up in **Chapter 3** and **v.19** –

“Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things”

Timothy did Live for ‘Temporal’ things

B. Living for the ‘Eternal’

Timothy was not your Average Christian for he sought *“the things which are Jesus Christ's”*

His life was not limited to the Temporal but lived for the Eternal

He modeled the instructions of **Colossians 3:1, 2** –

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth”

He lived by the rule Jesus gave in **Matthew 6:33** –

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.”