

A CHARMING CHRISTIAN LIFE

DATE:

TEXT: Philippians 2:25-30

INTRODUCTION

In our text we find a man that is not very well known

His name is Epaphroditus (e-paf-ro-di'-tus)

He is only mentioned twice in the Bible and both times are in this book (Here and in chp. 4:18)

He's not a person we hear a lot about

But - he is definitely someone that we should get to know

He may not be one of the most Popular men of the Bible

But he is certainly one of the most Admirable

His name means "*Charming*" or "*Lovely*"

It's a fitting name for he is one of the most charming Christians in the Bible

He was a man that lived up to his name

Let's look at Epaphroditus and consider his example of

A Charming Christian Life – Philippians 2:25-30

“A Charming Christian Life”

~~~OPENING PRAYER~~~

### **I. THE “BALANCE” IN HIS LIFE!**

In v.25 Paul says three things about him that indicates that he was A Balanced Christian

You could say that he was a well-rounded believer

He didn't Major on the Minors and Minor on the Majors

His life was spiritually balanced

**Christians** sometimes get all out of balance in their life

Some go too far to the left and are too excessive

Others go too far to the right and are too extreme

For some nothing is wrong and for others nothing is right

**Churches** have a tendency to get out of balance

Some focus only on Worship and end up with Fatted sheep

While others focus only on Work and end up with Famished sheep

Balance is the key to an Effective ministry

## *A Charming Christian Life – Philippians 2:25-30*

He knew full well that to make such a visit could put him into the same circumstances as Paul

He could have ended up in jail (as well)

But he was willing to take that risk

Paul again used the phrase – “*nigh unto death*” to describe what Epaphroditus had done

He had walked up to death's door when he walked into that prison cell

He was a courageous witness and servant of God

What an indictment on many of us that are afraid to talk to our neighbor next door

I don't know about you, but this is my prayer –

*“Lord, make me like Epaphroditus”*

He may not be a famous man but her certainly was a faithful man!

Epaphroditus certainly lead a Charming Christian Life!

**THE “BALANCE” OF HIS LIFE!**

**THE “BLESSING” OF HIS LIFE!**

**THE “BURDEN” OF HIS LIFE!**

**THE “BOLDNESS” OF HIS LIFE!**

## *A Charming Christian Life – Philippians 2:25-30*

**III.** Charles Ryrie in his book *Balancing the Christian Life* wrote: “*There is nothing more devastating to the practice of Christian living than an imbalance*”

Someone has said – “*Blessed are the balanced*”

Notice how Paul described Epaphroditus in **v.25** –

***“Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants”***

### **A. He was a ‘Son’ in God’s ‘Family’**

Paul called him “*my brother*”

The word for “*brother*” means –

*“being from the same source, to have a common origin”*

Paul was saying that he and Epaphroditus were members of the same heavenly family (and)

Brothers with the same heavenly Father

We have our earthly families

But we also have our spiritual family

I enjoy being around my spiritual family

I want to spend as much time as I can with them

One of the things that is necessary to a stable Christian life is spending time with our spiritual family

Every Sunday is a family reunion

The first day of the week is truly *"Family Time"*

It's quality time that is spent with God's family

**He was a 'Son' in God's 'Family'**

**B. He was a 'Servant' in God's 'Field'**

Paul also spoke of Epaphroditus as a *"companion in labour"*

He was a Spiritual Family Member and a Spiritual Field Hand

He was a member of God's family

He was a worker in God's Field

We are to be working at getting others into the family of God

If you are a Brother, then you should also be a Laborer

It is estimated that only 5% of born again Christians participate in an earnest effort to win souls or talk to others about Christ

**III.** We hear all the time about Hollywood actors and actresses who live like the devil are honored with Emmy and various awards. Even in the Christian arena you have the Hollywood twin where quartets and Gospel singers who won't come to your church for less than \$2,500 are awarded

If there is anyone that should be honored and praised

It's those dead saints (oftentimes unknown) like Epaphroditus that live to serve God and to be a blessing to others

Those who have served God and been a blessing to our life

We ought to tell them, show them, and do all we can to honor them

**The 'Commendation' he Deserved**

**B. The 'Courage' he Demonstrated**

Paul said there was a reason why Epaphroditus should be honored and welcomed

We read in **v.30** – *"Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me"*

Notice the phrase – *"not regarding his life"*

It meant to risk everything for a cause

When Epaphroditus came to visit Paul ...

## *A Charming Christian Life – Philippians 2:25-30*

They had sent him to be a blessing to Paul and now Paul sends him back to be a blessing to them

We read in v.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”*

V.29 – Now Paul wanted them to *“receive him therefore in the Lord”*

He wanted them to give him a special welcome

A welcome that would make his return a joyous occasion

### **A. The ‘Commendation’ he Deserved**

Paul said at the end of v.29 – *“hold such in reputation”*

The word *“reputation”* means to honor someone, value highly, to praise, deem precious

Paul was telling them to honor him with the honor he Deserved

Paul was firm believer in honoring people that deserved to be honored

We read in I Timothy 5:17 – *“Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they who labor in the Word and Doctrine”*

## *A Charming Christian Life – Philippians 2:25-30*

Our greatest legacy will be those who live eternally because of our efforts

III. As one has said, *“The Christian should keep the faith but not to themselves”*

Like Epaphroditus, we should live a balance life

We should enjoy the Family

And at the same time seek to enlarge the family

**He was a ‘Son’ in God’s ‘Family’**

**He was a ‘Servant’ in God’s ‘Field’**

### **C. He was a ‘Soldier’ in God’s Fight**

Paul also called Epaphroditus a *“fellovsoldier”*

He was involved in spiritual warfare and fighting as a good soldier

The Christian life is not a playground

It is a battleground

To be a Christian is a call to arms

One must fight the good fight of faith

The spiritual battle we fight is daily fight

## *A Charming Christian Life – Philippians 2:25-30*

As a soldier of Jesus Christ we must Stand for what is right and Against what is wrong

**III.** Someone has said that if a Christian will not stand for anything they will fall for everything

The balanced Christian life means that on one hand –

We must love the sinner, but on the other, hate the sin

A balanced Christian life is living as

→ A ‘Son’ in the ‘Family’

→ A ‘Worker’ in the ‘Field’ and

→ A ‘Soldier’ in the ‘Fight’

### **THE “BALANCE” OF HIS LIFE!**

## **II. THE “BLESSING” OF HIS LIFE!**

In v.25b, Paul says that Epaphroditus was "*your* (their) *messenger*" and that he ministered to "*my* (Paul's) *wants*"

Paul was speaking of how he had been a Blessing to him

**III.** I think of George Schuler's hymn:

*Make me a blessing, Make me a blessing! Out of my life may Jesus shine; Make me a blessings, O Saviour I pray Make me a blessing to someone today.*

The life of Epaphroditus was a Blessing to others

## *A Charming Christian Life – Philippians 2:25-30*

It was selflessness that Paul saw in Epaphroditus

Most people get upset when you don't meet their expectations

People like Epaphroditus are just the opposite

They don't want to be a burden to anyone

**III.** Years ago the Salvation Army was holding an international convention in which their founder, William Booth, was too weak to attend. But he cabled his convention message to them. It was but one word. That word was "others."

May we as believers live for others and think of others

**THE “BALANCE” OF HIS LIFE!  
THE “BLESSING” OF HIS LIFE!  
THE “BURDEN” OF HIS LIFE!**

## **IV. THE “BOLDNESS” OF HIS LIFE!**

We read in vs. 29, 30 –

*“Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation:”*

*“Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me”*

The Church at Philippi had sent him to Paul and now Paul is sending him back

Twice Paul said he was sick

Once Paul said he was "*sick nigh unto death*" – v.27

His sickness was more than a sinus infection or head cold

The words literally mean – "*just next door*"

We would say that he was "*at deaths door*"

We don't know what his sickness was

But while visiting Paul he had become seriously ill and almost died

God had mercy on him and touched him

But none the less, part of his burden was his sickness

**We see his 'Sickness'**

**B. We see his 'Sorrow'**

Notice carefully v.26 – "*For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick*"

The heaviest part of his burden was not his own sickness

But that others were worrying about him

He was always thinking about other people

It is one thing to be Blessed and another thing to be a Blessing

Notice how his life was a Blessing

**A. He was a 'Messenger' from Philippi**

Paul spoke of Epaphroditus as a messenger from Philippi in the middle of v.25 "*...but your messenger, ...*"

The word speaks of an ambassador sent on a mission

Apparently Epaphroditus had been sent by the Philippians Church to Rome to be a Blessing to Paul

Paul was in prison when he wrote the book of Philippians

One can only imagine what it meant to him when Epaphroditus came to his cell and said –

*"I have been sent by the Church at Philippi to be a help to you"*

Each believer is to be a heavenly ambassador

Each believer has been given the commission to be a Blessing and Help to others

There are people in the hospitals, rest home and others that are home bound that we can be a Blessing to

A card, call, letter, or visit can be a great encouragement to someone

**He was a ‘Messenger’ from Philippi**

**B. He was a ‘Minister’ to Paul**

He had been sent as a messenger and he acted as a minister

The word “*minister*” was a word that spoke of priestly service

The time Epaphroditus spent with Paul was a sacred and special time of blessing to him

Paul said that he ministered to his “*wants*”

The word does not mean that he was an errand boy for Paul

The word speaks of Paul's needs

Epaphroditus gave himself to seeing that Paul's needs were met

We read in **Galatians 6:2** – “*Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*”

Epaphroditus was bearing the burdens of Paul

Ill. Someone may ask – “*How many ministers does your church have?*” The reply, “*70 or so, but only one gets paid*”

Believers are both Messengers and Ministers

We are to bear one another burdens and minister to one another's needs

We should want to be a blessing as much as we want to be blessed

I have found that if we are a blessing we will be blessed

**THE “BALANCE” OF HIS LIFE!  
THE “BLESSING” OF HIS LIFE!**

**III. THE “BURDEN” OF HIS LIFE!**

We read in vs. 26-28 –

*“For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick”  
“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”  
“I sent him therefore the more carefully, that, when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be less sorrowful”*

Paul said that he “*was full of heaviness*”

The only other time that this phrase is found in the Bible was in reference to the Lord Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane

Paul is indicating that Epaphroditus was a man deeply burdened

The reason is very interesting

**A. We see his ‘Sickness’**