

NEXT STEP DISCIPLESHIP

"STEP #3: BEYOND"

PHILIPPIANS 2:19-30

This Week's Core Competency

Giving Away My Life – I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes. Romans 12:1 *Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.*

The apt choice of "give away" links this creed nicely to Romans 12:1 where Paul urges us to "offer" our bodies as living sacrifices—something the apostle calls our "spiritual act of worship." In everyday, non-Pauline terms he's urging us to spend our lives doing things that please God. He says as much in 6:19 where he tells us, "Once you spent your lives slavishly doing what displeases God for selfish purposes, but now you must spend your lives slavishly doing what pleases God for holy purposes" (paraphrased).

Adherence to the creed can have many faces. Take our Global Partners for instance. Here's what our website has to say about them. "PBC Global Partners are individuals and couples who have been sent out from our church to make God known in the world. They serve in a variety of capacities from Bible translation to church planting to theological education. Their work can be found on five continents among a multitude of peoples." Eighteen families serving around the world are named on the list. What's more, David Daniels, our pastor, and Tiffany, his wife, give away their lives to

It is not our careers but our vocation that should guide our lives.

– Henri Nouwen

fulfill God's purposes as does the rest of our church staff.

Naturally, we usually think of missionaries and pastors, ministry professionals, when we recite this creed, but adherence to the creed isn't limited to them. It can't be reduced to a job or a career choice. Our home group leaders, our community group shepherds, and teachers, too, give away their lives to fulfill God's purposes, and so do those who volunteer in any of our eight local compassion partners—Mission Metroplex, Traffic 911, Metroplex Women's Clinic, Oakcrest Family Church, 6 Stones, World Relief Fort Worth, Carson Cares, and Safe Haven—or in our children's ministry, or in our student ministry.

But the creed isn't limited to them either. It can't be reduced to filling a volunteer position. Do parents who work to preserve their marriage, to support their children, and start them off on the right track (Pr 22:6) not give away their lives doing what pleases God? Do employees who work with integrity and their employers who create jobs for them not give away their lives doing what pleases God? Of course they do. We all have the same vocation or calling, to live "for the praise of his glory" (Eph 1:12), which we express in our diverse careers and life settings. In fact, broadly speaking, any Christ-follower who at any time chooses the way of obedience over disobedience, or the way of selfless love over selfish love gives away his life to fulfill God's purposes. In other words, giving away one's life is missional living.

Is *not* giving away my life even an option? Hardly. I cannot *not* give it away anymore than I cannot *not* spend it. It ekes away in drips and drabs 24-7. *How I spend it is really the question.*

Do I give it away to fulfill God's purposes or spend it on things that at best don't particularly matter to God? Too often the things that matter to God don't matter to us, and the things that matter to us don't matter to God. The issue is one of stewardship. To cite another creed, "Everything I am or own belongs to God." My life is not my own; it belongs to God. But I get to decide how I'm going to spend it. On this the Teacher writes, "Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment" (Ecc 11:9). Stewards are accountable for their stewardship.

day **1** ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

Philippians 2:19-30

19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. 20 I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. 21 For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. 23 I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. 24 And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. 26 For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. 29 Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him, 30 because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me.

Cf., another translation

19 I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. 20 I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. 21 For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. 22 But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. 23 I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. 24 And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.

25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. 26 For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. 29 So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, 30 because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me. (NIV 2011)

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Box words that indicate *relationship* within sentences, between sentences, and between paragraphs:
 - "that" indicating *purpose* in v. 19.
 - "for" indicating *reason* in vv. 21, 26.
 - "as" indicating *comparison* in v. 22.
 - "but" indicating *contrast* in vv. 22, 25, 27.
 - "because" indicating *reason* in vv. 22, 26, 30.
 - "therefore" indicating *result* in vv. 23, 28.

- * Bracket "in the Lord Jesus" and "in the Lord" in vv. 19, 24, 29.
- * Underline "no one else like him" in v. 20.
- * In the margin next to v. 20 write, "Cf. vv. 3, 4."
- * Circle "served" in v. 22.
- * Double underline "brother," "fellow worker," and "fellow soldier" in v. 25.
- * Circle "messenger" and "take care of" in v. 25.
- * Circle "risking" in v. 30.

day **2**

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. What do the phrases "in the Lord Jesus" and "in the Lord" add to the meaning of verses 19 and 24 respectively?
2. Identify the *purpose* behind Paul's intention to send Timothy to Philippi.
3. Timothy was one of a kind. How so?
4. Explain the *contrast* in verse 22.
5. Why didn't Paul send Timothy to Philippi immediately?
6. Paul commended Epaphroditus and then returned him to Philippi. Why?
7. God had mercy on both Epaphroditus and Paul. How so?
8. Why honor men like Epaphroditus?
9. **Discussion:** What do you find exemplary in Timothy and Epaphroditus?

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of the message to better understand the meaning of the passage.

Paul routinely included his travel plans in the letters he wrote to churches. Academics sometimes call this part of his letters "the travelogue." "In these passages Paul reminds readers of his apostolic authority by making his presence felt through the letter itself, by reference to the visit of an emissary or to Paul's coming visit. The letter and the envoy are anticipatory substitutes for Paul's own personal presence when he cannot travel, but both function as a means of conveying his apostolic presence" (P. Trebilco, "Itineraries, Travel Plans, Journeys, Apostolic Parousia," in *Dictionary of Paul and His Letters*). Although Paul was not physically in Philippi, he conveyed his presence in his epistle and through his representatives. What's interesting is not that Paul's travel plans show up in his letter to the Philippians but *where* they show up, closer to the beginning than the end, and *why* they show up there. One author writes, "After the theologically rich language of 2:5-18, we are surprised suddenly to encounter two paragraphs whose primary concern seems to be the travel plans of Paul and his coworkers. Why would Paul include such mundane information *at this point* in the letter? Why this *sudden introduction* of a passage which, as Karl Barth says, contains no 'direct teaching'" (Frank Thielman, *The NIV Application Commentary: Philippians*, 150 italics added). The question may seem academic to some, but if the passage contains no direct teaching, how can it have any direct relevance?

As with so many interpretive problems, this one can be resolved by a close examination of the context. Paul told his readers "conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ" in 1:27. He had already given them his example to follow in this regard (vv. 12-14, 30), so he continued by giving them the example of Christ to follow (2:5-11). To those two examples he then added the example of Timothy in verses 19-24 and Epaphroditus in verses 25-30, men who did nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit but in humility considered others better than themselves, men who looked not only to their own interests, but also to the interests of others (vv. 3, 4). "It is likely, then, that although Paul wanted to inform the Philippians of his travel plans in this passage and may have wanted to remind them of

his authority, he nevertheless placed the passage here because he wanted it to contribute to his list of examples. Both Timothy and Epaphroditus exhibit the qualities of those who 'conduct' themselves 'in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ' (1:27), especially by looking 'not only to [their] own interests, but also to the interests of others' (2:4)" (151).

Timothy and Epaphroditus were a priceless pair. Both were men who considered others better than themselves; both were men who shared the attitude of Christ Jesus (vv. 5-8). Timothy's interest in the welfare of the Philippians was unsurpassed, as was his devotion to Paul and the work of the gospel. Epaphroditus, whom Paul with affection called my brother, colleague, and comrade in arms, faithfully ministered to the apostle and in so doing risked his life to carry out his assignment. Both men were faithful to their assigned tasks despite having to fulfill them in the face of hardship. "It is not likely that Christians will receive much encouragement from the broader culture to be faithful, in spite of hardship, to their commitment to the gospel. The notion that someone might become a 'slave' in the service of anything or risk one's health to fulfill a higher calling appears extraordinary, even abnormal. Yet it is precisely such people that Paul in this passage asks his Philippian readers, and us, to hold in high esteem (2:28). Indeed, the exemplary function of Timothy and Epaphroditus in this passage shows that Paul hopes that all of his readers will, because they are believers, view the commitment of Timothy and Epaphroditus as the norm and not follow the path of those who look out for their 'own interests, not those of Jesus Christ' (2:21)" (162).

Perhaps the following overview of the passage, redundancy aside, will serve as a suitable summary of its contents. The arrival of Epaphroditus with gifts sent by the Philippians (see 4:18) precipitated the writing of Paul's letter—a portion of which (2:19-30) falls into two clear parts. In the first part (vv. 19-24) Paul told his readers that he intended to send Timothy to them shortly, just as soon as the outcome of his imprisonment had been resolved, and presuming it would go well, he assured them that he expected to visit them before long. In the second part (vv. 25-30), he told them

that he sent Epaphroditus on ahead of Timothy with this letter because he knew they remained concerned for their messenger, given the fact of his recent illness and given the fact he longed to return to them.

All of this is rather straightforward. But there's more. "Both paragraphs seem to be written so as to present these two brothers as further models:

Timothy as one whom they know to live for the sake of Christ, and thus for the concerns of others; Epaphroditus, as one who in his suffering for Christ that brought him near death did not flag in doing the 'word of Christ'" (Gordon D. Fee, *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*, NICNT, 261).

The Message of the Passage

Follow the example of Timothy and Epaphroditus, who conducted themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel by looking out for the interests of Jesus Christ and others, and be careful to honor other disciples just like them.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you in his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 "living questions" to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

v. 19-30 Now you might think after reading this passage that it has little if anything to say to us today. After all, the subject matter is extremely personal since it relates to specific individuals and their first-century plans. How could it apply to us? However, contrary to our initial assumption, its contemporary relevance is suggested by two verses and the broader context of the entire chapter. Verse 21 contains a general statement contrasting Timothy, who took a genuine interest in other people, with those who are preoccupied by their own interests. This suggests that Paul expected his readers, contemporary and future, to follow Timothy's example. In the same way, verse 29 contains instructions regarding how the church should welcome Epaphroditus when he arrived, but the honor due him was not reserved for him alone. It was also to be extended to other "men like him," making Epaphroditus an example for Paul's readers, contemporary and future, to follow.

v. 19 **in the Lord** Paul's hope is grounded in his relationship to and the will of the Lord Jesus. "This means that his hopes are governed by the Lord's will for his situation, and equally that his plans do not rest on a human calculation of release and freedom. They are based on God's undertaking for him" (Ralph. P. Martin, *The Epistle of Paul to the Philippians*, TNTC, 126). "Every believer is 'in Christ,' and this vital union should influence every thought and activity. Thus Paul loves in the Lord (1:8); grounds his confidence in the Lord (2:24); rejoices in the Lord (3:3; 4:10); and desires that others rejoice in Christ (1:26; 3:1), welcome Christian leaders in the Lord (2:29), and always stand firm in the Lord (4:1)" (Homer A. Kent, Jr., "Philippians" in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, 132, 33).

v. 19 **Timothy** Timothy's name appears 29 times in the NT. "Timothy was Paul's most highly valued coworker. Paul frequently referred to him as his son (1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Tim 1:2, 18; 2 Tim 1:2), entrusted him with several important missions to his churches besides the one mentioned here and included him in the sponsorship of six letters (1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 2 Corinthians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon)" (Thielman, 153, footnote 5)

v. 20 **like him** Lit., "of like soul," but to Paul or to Timothy? "The sense of the passage seems to be that of all his Christian friends in the place of his confinement, i.e. the brethren who are with him (4:21) and 'the saints' and members of Caesar's household (4:22), there is no-one who shares so intimately Timothy's deep concern for the Philippians" (Martin, 127, 28; see also Kent, 132). Timothy's one-of-a-kindness made him Paul's right-hand man for the Philippian situation.

v. 21 **everyone** "The sentence is really an aside. It is Paul's general comment, in parenthesis, on the state of the world around him. The sentence is crisp and pointed as such a comment, an *obiter dictum*, should be. It says nothing about his fellow-Christians; but it is rather his solemn reflection when he remembers that, in a world of selfishness and self seeking (cf. Rom. 5:7 for a parallel reflection), it is such a rare thing to find a man like Timothy who is really anxious to promote the welfare of other people, and to give himself to a fatiguing journey and to the resolving of personal quarrels in the Philippian church . . . His readiness to help, then, supremely exemplifies a selfless, altruistic spirit unlike that described in 2:1-4" (Martin, 130).

v. 22 **proven** Timothy had demonstrated skills and character. "Timothy's mettle had been tested in the difficulty of apostolic service, and both Paul and the Philippians had found him as faithful as a son to his father, as willing to slave (douleuo; NIV 'serve') in the work of the gospel as Paul himself" (Thielman, 153).

v. 24 **soon** "Paul awaits the judges' verdict. When that is known he will commission Timothy to make the journey to Philippi. If the verdict goes against him, Timothy as Paul's envoy will act in the apostle's name as one sent 'in the Lord Jesus' (v. 19). If, however, it is a favourable decision and brings release from his chains Paul will follow 'shortly' (RSV), i.e. soon after Timothy or maybe 'certainly' (i.e. he will keep his promise: this sense of *tacheos* is seen in Rev. 22:20)" (Martin, 132).

v. 25 **Epaphroditus** Epaphroditus' name appears two times in the NT: Php 2:25; 4:18. "How surprised the Philippians must have been to see Epaphroditus again! They had sent him to Paul not only to deliver a monetary gift from the church (4:18) but also to stay with Paul and minister to his other needs (2:25), something they could not do themselves from such a distance (2:30)" (Thielman, 153).

v. 25 **brother . . .** Or "my brother, colleague, and comrade in arms" all terms of endearment.

v. 25 **your messenger** "Paul shows how highly he regards Epaphroditus by describing him with two titles of honor, 'messenger' and 'minister'— titles that rightfully belonged to Paul himself . . . In verse 25, then, Paul introduces Epaphroditus with a fanfare of complimentary language, leaving little doubt in the minds of the Philippians that their messenger is returning with the apostle's blessing" (154).

v. 30 **risking** "It is a gambling term. Epaphroditus staked his life for the service of Christ, in the interest of the apostle and on behalf of the Philippian community" (Martin, 138).

Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

When most of us hear the core competency "Giving away my life" we imagine things like moving to a remote village, having to walk miles for clean water and learning a new language so we can tell others about Jesus. While it is true that many believers are called to do just that, for most of us, it is much more simple. "Giving away my life" is something we can do everyday no matter where we are. It happens in little ways and as our kids watch us do it, they learn to do it. Here are some ideas to try this week. Make sure your kids are with you when you go beyond to serve others. Like most things, missional living is better caught than taught. (1) Ask the waiter at the restaurant how you can pray for him before your family prays for your meal - then do it! (2) Pick up a couple of five dollar Starbucks or Sonic cards and give them to the clerk at the grocery store or the school receptionist. Thank them for what they do and tell them you will pray for them. (3) Make time to share cookies and have coffee with a neighbor. Building a relationship with them may be the first step in them coming to know Christ. Living beyond is a mindset that thinks of Jesus and others first. What are some other ways your family can be "Timothys" to others this week?

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Php 2:19-30

1. Which two men does Paul talk about in this passage?
2. What did he say about Timothy?
3. What did he say about Epaphroditus?

What Do You Think

Paul said that Timothy took a genuine interest in other people. Would people say that about you? Why or why not?

What R U Going To Do

This is "go beyond" week. Go out of your way this week to serve someone else. If you know someone who needs help with something - help them! Record what you did at the bottom of your scrolls and bring it to church for 3 extra tokens.

Core Comp

Giving Away my Life - I give away my life to help with God's work.

Memory Verse

Philippians 2:13 - *For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose.*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized my verse _____, completed *Scrolls* _____, brought Bible _____, brought a friend _____.

Series Discipleship Challenge located in KidPix Store.

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.

Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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