

Timothy and Epaphraditus

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[0 : 00] Sunday mornings are great. We get to, a lot of times we haven't seen each other throughout the week. And we got to catch up. And there will be more time to do that after the service, by the way. Don't feel like you have to run out and continue to hang out with one another.

I know a lot of people, they head out, but then they go to lunch with their friends to continue on the Christian fellowship. Well, we are in the book of Philippians, the letter to the Philippians that Paul is writing from jail, from house arrest really.

He is in chains as he calls it and is writing to the Philippians to encourage them. And today what we're going to look at here in chapter 2, starting with verse 17, is we're going to look at some of Paul's plans that he has to go visit the Philippians.

And what he wants to do to minister, to continue to minister to them and serve them. And this will be a two-part message because we're going to look at three different people who are involved in service to the Philippians.

One is Paul himself. Another is a young man named Timothy. And then the third is another young man. Well, I actually don't know if he was young.

[1 : 28] A man named Epaphroditus. Well, today we're going to be just looking at big picture things regarding their service to the church. And then looking at Paul's ministry and what he has to say about his service to them.

And the next week we'll be taking a closer look at Timothy and Epaphroditus. I'm going to read this passage. It's a longer one, so it'll take a little bit.

But we're just going to read this passage from verse 17 to verse 30. And then we're going to get in and dig into some of the details. Starting in verse 17.

Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.

For the same reason, you also be glad and rejoice with me. But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state.

[2 : 30] For I have no one like-minded who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus. But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father, he served with me in the gospel.

Therefore, I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me. But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier.

But your messenger and the one who ministered to my need, since he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick, almost unto death.

But God had mercy on him, and not only on him, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again, you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful.

Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem. Because for the work of Christ, he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.

[3 : 45] So Paul is talking to these Philippians about his plans for coming to see them again. He's saying, listen, I, Paul, I'm trying to make my way out there.

Now, as we've read towards the beginning of this letter, he's saying, hey, there's some risk here. I'm in jail. I'm going to go on trial. It's possible that I might not make it.

This is a trial that could conclude in my death, in my execution, for offending the Roman government. But he has a pretty good attitude about it and thinks, I think I'm probably going to make it through this, and I'm going to be able to come and visit you.

I'm going to be able to come and see you. Now, we know, and we talked about this a few weeks ago, if we look at the rest of Scripture, we see that it looks like that's what happened.

He was released at some point and was able to continue to minister to other churches, but then was ultimately arrested again in the future, and that final time was ultimately executed and gave his life for the work of the gospel.

[5 : 00] But as he describes in here, he's got two other people that he can send before he gets the chance to actually go himself. And the first one that he brings up is Timothy.

We'll be talking about him more next week. But he's saying, hey, I'm going to basically see how things are going with my trial, and then if things look right, I'm going to go ahead and send Timothy to you so that he can see how you're coming along.

But he says, in the meantime, right now, I'm sending to you Epaphroditus. And Epaphroditus is evidently somebody who was actually from Philippi.

In chapter 4 of Philippians, in the letter that we're reading, or that we're going through here, Philippians 4.18, Paul says this, Indeed, I have all and abound.

I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well-pleasing to God. He's thanking them for the financial gift that they sent to him while he was in Rome, imprisoned, not able to move freely.

[6 : 18] And evidently, based on the context here, the Philippians sent Epaphroditus with a financial gift to Paul, and he received that gift.

And Epaphroditus stayed for some amount of time in order to continue to help Paul out in different ways. And so that's the big picture here. We've got three men who are serving the Lord, serving the Philippians, and we're going to look at each one of these in detail.

But before we do that, I wanted to take a step back and kind of look at the big picture of what is going on here with what Paul is describing. And it's really about the need to build up the church, the body of Christ.

Paul had been called by God to serve the Gentile people. Gentile is a word that just means somebody who's not a Jew. For much of the Bible, God had this special relationship with the Jewish people.

And after the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ for the sins of the world, God put together this plan to use a guy named Paul to take the gospel message, the good news about Jesus dying for the sins of the world, to the Gentile people, to the pagan world, the idol worshipers, along with the people of Israel.

[7 : 48] And Paul's duty here is to evangelize the world, to bring the gospel to these people, but not just that, not just to evangelize them and move on and leave them to fend for themselves, but to also take care, continuing care of this new group of people that we call today, that the Bible itself calls the church, or another term is the body of Christ.

And by the way, that is us, that is this church. We are a small, local church that is part of a larger body of believers called the Universal Church.

Christians, people who trust in Jesus Christ, not just in this nation, but in nations all over the world. And so, Paul, to Paul, it is vitally important, and this is why he wants to go visit them.

And until he can go visit them, he wants to send others to go visit them. The reason is, is because he cares about the church. The church in Philippi and the other churches that he helped start all over that part of the world.

And the reason is, the reason it's important for him to go is because churches need leadership. They need encouragement.

[9 : 14] They need people, churches need people to serve, to build up the body of Christ, to bring them to maturity, to help them grow in the faith, to see Christians grow in the Lord.

You know, when it comes to anybody here like science, anybody like a science geek, there is a, how do I call this?

There's a principle called thermodynamics. Anybody ever heard of thermodynamics? And there is the second law. There are three laws, maybe four, of thermodynamics.

And the second one is called entropy. And entropy is this principle that has been observed for a long, long time that things tend to break down.

When you start a fire and you don't keep feeding it, what happens? It burns out, right? It turns to ashes and then all the energy is gone.

[10:21] It burns out. And so when it comes to matter, when it comes to energy, unless there is something behind it to keep it going, everything kind of dissipates towards disorder, towards chaos.

You know, you let your car just sit in your driveway. You don't keep it maintained. It starts to rust out. And it stops working. Things, so in life, in the material world, things tend towards chaos, towards decay.

All fires eventually burn out unless, unless what? Something or someone comes in along, comes in to keep the fire burning, to keep the things ordered.

And by the way, this is one of the reasons why the somewhat popular, in a sense, theory of evolution falls completely on its face, especially in the light of this basically universally accepted law called entropy.

The theory of evolution says that you have basically random molecules in the universe that over time did what?

[11:41] Became more ordered, right? Became more advanced. Molecules became flowers and became trees and then became horses and giraffes and then ultimately human beings.

And in what we observe is that what happens through randomness, without some kind of person or intelligence bringing the order. That's not what happens at all, by any of our observations.

And so, we can see, and many people doubt, even those who are not Christians, right? Who don't have the Bible as their authority, who don't look to Genesis as their authority.

Even those people doubt this idea of evolution because it's unscientific and it is illogical. But this concept of entropy does not just apply to the material world, to the natural world.

It also applies to people, to groups. There is no group of people, no organization of any kind that can grow and thrive unless there is someone who steps in to lead and to organize it, to shape it into what that group ought to be and ought to look like.

[13:04] A few examples of groups that we recognize. One is a family. A family is a group. And you know what? When families exist, but they don't have a leader, that family tends towards chaos.

God designed, this is God's design, is that men as husbands and fathers should lead their families. And what happens when they fail to do so?

Whether it's because of just pure abandonment, leaving and going to do something more important with their time, or maybe present but just not really engaged.

They neglect their leadership responsibilities. Families struggle. Especially children. We've all seen the statistics, right, of families and children that grow up without a father in the home.

The statistics regarding crime and drug abuse and promiscuity and poverty. And that's why it is so important for men as leaders of families to take up their God-given responsibility.

[14:21] What God intended for them to do to lead their families, to take ownership of what happens in their family. What does, what does God design, what is His design for a family to be?

And to take that vision of what God designed a family to be and for a father and a husband to take that vision and lead, guide, take ownership of that family and cause it to grow.

The same is also true, I think, about for nations. Do you know what is worse than having Democrats rule your country?

A few chuckles. It's having nobody rule. Having nobody rule. Nobody in charge. Having no one at the helm.

And we've all seen, whether it's in the history books, I think about the French Revolution and the powers that be. And they were horrible. They executed the, I don't know who the leaders were at the time.

[15:32] And it was just power to the people with nobody in charge. And did things get better? No. They got worse and worse and worse.

And then, of course, they have, you can find the post-apocalyptic movies where nobody's in charge and everything is run by gangs in the street. Chaos, rains.

So we see this as true for families. We see this as true for nations. But this is also true for the church. You know, God has designed that there would be men who would take on roles of responsibility to see that the church grows and thrives according to God's intended plan.

Paul described this to some degree in Ephesians, his letter to the Ephesians. This is what he wrote in Ephesians 4.11. And he himself, talking about the Lord, gave some to be apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers.

For the purpose of the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying or building up of the body of Christ till we all come to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God to a perfect man to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

[16:46] God has this vision that he wants for his church. He wants people to grow up. He wants them to be unified. He wants the church to serve one another. But he needs leaders, those who will bring those things to pass.

You know, he lists here specific roles, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. And we won't get into the details of those. Some people debate whether all of those roles are valid today.

Are there apostles today? Are there prophets today? But I just want to focus on, hey, the church needs leaders. You know, and just as Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus are concerned about seeing the Philippian church grow, God also needs church or needs leaders in our day to be concerned with the growth of the church that's in their sphere of influence, that's in their community.

To ensure that new believers are being disciplined in the faith, learning the scriptures and having their minds renewed with God's word to keep dangerous false doctrines from taking root in the local church, examples that we see even in Paul's day, and to make sure that believers are living good lives, clean lives, holy lives, lives that honor the Lord, not living as hypocrites, not living as the world does.

But you know what, when you don't have good, diligent, and godly leaders attending to those things, what do you end up with? Well, you end up with churches where these things are not paid attention to.

[18:34] And sometimes, those churches grow in numbers, but they decline in spiritual fervor, spiritual growth.

growth, they might have big numbers, but the people in those churches are just babes in Christ. Sometimes, they're filled with unbelievers. Or, maybe the church just dissipates even in numbers and becomes irrelevant in the community.

People will not grow. people will adopt false doctrines. A lot of times, there are ideas that appeal to our flesh, or another term the Bible uses, to our itching ears, things that we like to hear.

And we'd love for them to be true. God wants me to be rich. All I have to do is give to the church and sow those seeds, and I will become rich and wealthy.

And, hey, that sounds pretty good. But there needs to be leaders who will address those things.

Keep those kinds of false doctrines out of the church.

[19:51] And so, this is somewhat of a call to action, especially to the men. You know, women can lead as well, but this is a sphere in which God especially looks towards men to lead.

look around at your sphere of influence, the influence that you have, whether it just be among, you know, maybe it's just your family, maybe it is a friend group that you have, or maybe you're part of a local church like this one.

Are you going to be the kind of person who just sits back and says, well, let's see if the preacher can impress me with his sermon?

or are you going to be the kind of person that looks for needs all around you to spur on one another to faith and good deeds, to look for things that need to be done and make them happen, for people that need encouragement and encourage them, for people that need instruction, and hey, I'm going to start a Bible study and try to teach those who maybe are not familiar with the Bible.

Many times we think, oh, you know what, somebody else is taking care of that. Maybe, but probably not, and hey, why can't it be you?

[21:19] So with that in mind, let's look at one of the examples, and this morning we're going to look at Paul, Paul himself. Among these three men, we're just going to look at two verses that Paul really refers to himself.

He's not necessarily bragging about himself. He's just talking about the attitude that he has, and I think it can be an encouragement to all of us. Going back to our passage this morning, we'll just read the first two verses, Philippians 2, 17 and 18.

He says this, Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. For the same reason, you also be glad and rejoice with me.

You know, like I said earlier, Paul had been called to specifically, like the Lord had appeared to him in a vision and gave him a ministry, a mission, to be the apostle to the Gentiles.

Apostles, kind of like a missionary, to go out and bring people to faith, but not just bring them to faith, but also to see that these new Christians grow up in the Lord.

[22 : 34] And in the previous verses that we've studied here in Philippians, Paul is encouraging the Philippians to grow up in their faith. He said, Listen, the Lord did a work in you.

When you trusted in Christ, he saved you. He gave you eternal life just based on your faith alone. All you had to do was receive the gift. But he said, But I want you to grow.

I want you to work out that salvation. The salvation that God worked in you, I want you to work it out. To do what is right and good.

And not just do what is right and good, but to do it with the right heart, with the right motivation, with sincerity. He wanted them to shine as lights in a dark and corrupt world, holding fast to God's word that his service to them would bear fruit.

He put in a lot of effort to go to them initially and then to continue to serve them. He wants to see fruit in their lives. And so that is where this verse starts.

[23 : 39] When he says, Yes, and if I'm being poured out, he said, I've put so much effort into the ministry in Philippi in serving you all, and I want to see fruit.

And then he speaks really to his service. Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith.

He's describing his life as a drink offering. Well, what in the world is a drink offering anyway? This is actually something that was part of the Old Covenant Law of Moses.

And so, as many of you know, as part of the ministry, or how do I put it, as part of what was required of the Jewish people, they had various sacrifices of animals that they were to offer.

Well, when they offered animal sacrifices, one of the things that sometimes they were required to do, sometimes it was optional, was to have something called a drink offering.

[24 : 43] Usually went along with a grain offering in which grain and usually wine were poured onto the sacrifice as it was burning, to be burnt up.

And in this case, he's making a reference to that drink offering. wine being poured out. Now, the first time we see a drink offering is actually with Jacob in the book of Genesis.

And the Lord had spoken to him about how he was going to make a great nation out of him, just like he promised to his father Abraham, or father Isaac and his father Abraham.

And after that encounter with the Lord, he built an altar and it says that he poured out this drink offering on that altar. It's not necessarily the first time that that happened, but it's the first time we see it recorded in Scripture.

And then Moses, when he recorded the law that God gave him, Moses gave instruction. You can, if you're interested in reading this, we won't look at the passage this morning, but Numbers chapter 15, verse 1 through 5, you can read about that drink or offering of wine.

[26 : 01] But just like you have a bottle or some kind of vessel of wine and you pour it out, you know, our lives are a vessel. Right? And as we live our lives, we are pouring ourselves out.

It's a picture. And that's how a life must be lived. We pour our lives out from our vessels.

And eventually, what's in us, the life that's in us, will come to an end. And that last drop will be poured from our vessel at the end of our lives.

But for many people, their life is poured out for themselves. for their own pursuits of comfort and pleasure.

And yet, Paul gives us an example of pouring out his life in service to others. And you know what? This is what a real meaningful life is like.

[27 : 05] This is really, I think, how God designed our lives to be lived. Even before the fall of Adam and Eve in the garden. that our lives would not be lived just for ourselves, but that our lives would be lived for other people.

And to be honest, I don't think that we can really have any true happiness or joy until and unless we are doing just that. We can never find true fulfillment and joy in our lives until we're pouring out our lives to some degree for those around us.

Paul is talking to the Corinthian believers in his second letter to them and he says something similar. He uses a little bit of a different illustration.

2 Corinthians 12, 15, he says this, and I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls. So instead of that vessel being poured out, he said, in this case, I'm like a treasury, a money bag, and my life is just constantly spending those coins.

And eventually, it will all be spent, it will all be gone. But I'm spending my life not on myself, I'm spending my life for you all, for your souls.

[28 : 28] He actually finishes up that verse saying this, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved. If you're familiar with his letter to the Corinthians, they were a little bit different from the Philippians.

You know, in his letter to the Philippians, he talks about them in glowing terms. But when he writes his letter to the Corinthians, it's less so.

There's lots of things that he's disappointed in them about. And one of the things that he brings up is, he said, apparently I'm not very impressive to you guys. You guys don't think very much of me, even though I'm your father in the faith.

But he says here in 2 Corinthians 12, 15, and I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls, though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

The sacrifice that he is giving for them is not appreciated. But even so, what does he say? I will gladly spend my life on your behalf.

[29 : 37] And should we think that Paul's experience, his lack of appreciation in his ministry to others, would be unique only to him? Or is it actually fairly common for Christians when they reach out and minister to others for there to be a lack of gratitude or appreciation?

When we go out, maybe we share the gospel with someone who is lost, who needs the Lord. Sometimes they're just offended. They don't appreciate that.

Or maybe we give biblical counsel to a friend and eh, I'm not all that interested in your counsel. Or maybe you spend hours preparing a Bible study for your Bible study group and only one person shows up.

or you invest time and resources into planning a church event and then cleaning up after it's all over. And you get zero thank yous, but you get at least three complaints about how it went.

And then I think about the parents out there, right? I'm sure you've noticed the same thing in family life. Of all the sacrifices that you make for your children, crying babies in the middle of the night, little boo-boos that you have to pay attention to.

[31 : 06] Many times those things are taken for granted. And sometimes, maybe the appreciation comes, but maybe 10 years, 15 years later, when your kids become parents.

I know that was the case for me when I became a parent. I had so much more appreciation for the things that my parents dealt with when they were raising me. But notice what Paul's attitude here is in Philippians chapter 2, verse 17.

He said, My life is being poured out for you in the service of your faith, and I am glad and I rejoice with you all.

My life is being poured out through suffering. I'm in jail right now. And I'm so happy. I'm so glad. You know, it was Paul's good pleasure to do all of these things.

Why? Because it was God's good pleasure that Paul do these things. And remember what we read a couple weeks ago? That God is working in us.

[32 : 23] He's willing to work in us. And he's working in Paul to both will and to do of his good pleasure. And you know what? Despite all of the headaches and the heartaches that Paul had to deal with over the years of service to the Lord and to the church, he is still glad and he still rejoices.

Because it's all worthwhile. And you know why? He sees the eternal value of it all. It's easy, right, to be focused on just the here and now and not see the eternal perspective.

And so he's encouraging the Philippians here. He says, I'm rejoicing and you know what? I want you to rejoice with me. He's suffering.

He's in prison. He's in jail. But he says, I want you to be glad as well. You know, it's common when we suffer, right, that what do we want? We want sympathy.

We want people to look to us and offer sympathy. And that's actually good. The Bible speaks to that. We ought to do that. The Bible says that we ought to mourn with those who mourn and weep with those who weep.

[33 : 36] Offer your sympathy and condolences. Sometimes that's the only thing that we can do. when people are going through a hard time. But Paul gives us this example of not asking for sympathy in his suffering, but asking instead for rejoicing.

To join him in seeing with the eyes of faith, looking past his circumstances, his immediate circumstances anyway, to see the eternal value of it all. And I think that when we, like the Philippians, can rejoice with Paul in what he's going through because of the value of it all, that gives us also a different perspective regarding the sufferings that we endure and that we go through. Whether we might be sitting in chains like Paul, like many believers over the last 2,000 years have because of their faith, or maybe it's something smaller, just being, and I don't want to belittle these things, but being rejected by your family because of your faith in Christ. Many people have to endure those things. Or maybe there's some tension in a friendship because you are compelled by the Lord to offer some kind of correction from the scriptures. believers. Or maybe you invest them in some kind of ministry, whether it's in the church or outside of the church, and instead of getting the thank yous that you probably should get, you instead get complaints.

[35 : 14] But we have this example from Paul to motivate us and inspire us. But here's my question, well, what about Paul? Where does he get the motivation to be like this, to have this kind of attitude?

Well, what we read in the beginning of Philippians chapter 2 is where Paul gets his motivation. Because he looks to the Lord and what the Lord did for us.

Remember, let this mind be in you, which was in Christ Jesus. Going back to verse 5, who being in the form of God did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and he took the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men, and being formed in the appearance of a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

And that's Paul's motivation, and that's, he says, you should also look to Christ for your motivation to have the same kind of heart, to have the same kind of attitude towards serving others.

And this is actually a good kind of transition for us today, because this morning, we're going to remember the Lord, and remember what he did on our behalf.

[36 : 37] And when the Lord died for the sins of the world, did he do it begrudgingly, resistant?

Ah, Father, do I really have to do this? Now, it was difficult. He actually went and prayed to the Father. Do you remember? Remember, he prayed to the Father in sweat, even blood came from his sweat because of it, because of the intensity of the anguish.

He says, Father, if there's any other way, let me know, but not my will, but yours be done. He went with a willing heart. In Hebrews chapter 12, verse 2, it says this of Jesus.

It says, hey, look unto Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith. And it says this, who for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross.

For Jesus, it was a joy, it was his glad duty, glad privilege, to die for the sins of the world, to die for you and me.

[37 : 55] Tell you what, let's use that as our transition point. I'll have the elders come up. And we're going to take the Lord's Supper this morning. I'm going to give a little bit of instruction here before we pass out these elements.

We've got some little pieces of bread and little pieces of juice. It's not wine, by the way, it's just juice, so if that's a concern, just so that you know that. We're going to pass this out, and we're going to actually pass them both out.

We'll do them one at a time, but then we'll just hold on to them, and then we're going to take them together. We're going to read the passage in which Paul tells us in his letter to the Corinthians what this is all about.

Who is this for? This is for anyone who has put their faith and trust in Christ. You don't have to be a member of our church. You don't have to have been baptized in our church or anywhere else.

You just need to have your faith in Jesus Christ and your hope in him, and if that's you, we welcome you to join us in this. Sometimes there's a question about children.

[39 : 05] We leave that up to the parents. We're happy if you'd like your children to join you in taking this Lord's Supper with us, by all means. You know, they can remember the Lord and his death as well, right?

And then why do we do this? Because there are different ideas among different churches about what the purpose of this is. Some see taking the Lord's Supper or communion as what's called sometimes a sacrament or a means of grace that when we eat the bread or drink the juice or wine, that it's actually providing some kind of benefit to us right then and there.

And that's not the case at all. The Bible actually teaches that when you trust in Christ, put your faith alone in him before you do any good works in your life.

Regardless of any rituals you've done, religious rituals, just by putting your faith and trust in him, you can immediately be part of the family of God and have eternal life right then and there.

In Colossians, it says you are complete in him because you are in Christ because of your faith in him. And so what this is, what we're doing today, it's a memorial. We're just remembering what Jesus did for us.

[40 : 25] You know, sometimes when we do this, I've seen this in churches, it's a very somber attitude and I think that's, I don't necessarily think that there's anything wrong with that.

But in light especially of what we're reading this morning, Jesus himself, when he went to the cross, it was an opportunity for him to rejoice.

And so even though we're remembering a death, don't forget that he raised to life three days later for us that we might live forever with him. And so as we take this, let's do it with an attitude of joy and rejoicing.

Rejoicing with Jesus himself. So let's go ahead and do the logistics here. I forget which one do we start with.

We'll start with the bread, okay. So we'll pass these guys out. And so just as these are passed out, just take one and then just hold on to it and then we'll do the juice here in a second.

[41 : 46] While they're passing this out, I'm going to look up that passage in Colossians to read it. This is in Colossians 2.8.

Paul's warning about being cheated of your faith. He says this, Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit according to traditions of men, according to the basic principles of the world and not according to Christ.

For in Christ, when you put your faith in Christ, you take up a new position. You are now in Christ, the Bible says. And in him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

Here's what he says. And you are complete in him. God didn't just start the work. He completed the work. You are fully a son or a daughter of God.

Your eternal life is complete. You have eternal life right here and now, even though we won't experience the immortality of it until later.

[42 : 57] But we have eternal life now. You are complete in him, it says. We'll pass out the juice.

You know, I think one of the important aspects of living the Christian life is thinking a lot, meditating a lot on what Jesus did for us.

And as we do that, it can be kind of somber, thinking about the trial that he went through. Not just his death, but all that came before it.

But you know what I think that God wants from us? He wants us, as we think and meditate about what he accomplished for us, that we would do it with a smile on our face. Because it is a happy thing.

You know, God didn't have to die for the sins of the world. He could have just said, you know, these guys, they don't want anything to do with me. And so that's fine.

[44 : 26] We'll just leave them to their own devices. And the whole world can, I'll just send them off into eternal darkness. It seems like that's what they want anyway.

But that's not what he did. He said, I want to make a way, create a path for all those who are willing. And not everyone is, but for all those who are willing. And by the way, if that's not something that you've done, the Bible says that today is the day.

You shouldn't put off for tomorrow what is needful for today. That if you have not put your faith and trust in Jesus Christ, that now is the day of salvation.

So in Paul's letter to the Corinthian church, he wrote to them about this memorial that the church should take.

And he gave some instruction and he remembered in that instruction what Jesus did with what we call the last supper. And Jesus broke the bread and he took the wine and he says, I want you guys to remember what I'm about to do when this is all over.

[46 : 09] And it's something that became a memorial after that last supper. But here's what he said. For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you. That the Lord Jesus in the same night in which he was betrayed, he took bread.

And when he had given thanks, he broke it and he said, take, eat. This is my body broken for you. So let's do this to remember him.

Amen. And in the same manner, he also took the cup after supper saying, this cup is a new covenant in my blood.

This do as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. You know, we don't have to wait for the church doing the Lord's Supper to remember what Jesus did for us.

We can and really should remember each and every day with a smile on our face rejoicing with him because he's rejoicing.

[47 : 31] We also rejoice. We're going to finish off with our offering for the Elder's Benevolence Fund. And as we do that, you can remain seated, but we'll sing a song together.

You all know the song, Oh, How He Loves You and Me? We'll sing this together. Oh, how he loves you and me.

Oh, how he loves you and me. He gave his life. What more could he give?

Oh, how he loves you. Oh, how he loves me. Oh, how he loves you and me.

Are you glad that he loves you this morning? Amen. Let's pray. Father, thank you for loving us.

Even when we were unlovely. Even today when we might do unlovely things, you continue to love us.

[48 : 43] And because of your love for us, we love you back. And we're so grateful for what you've done, the things that you put up with in our lives. Father, we want to honor you in our lives.

And as we remember you and what you did for us, we want to do likewise, to use your example, that our lives might reflect you to other people, that we might be good as you are good, that we might serve others as you served us.

We ask you to continue to work in our lives in that way. In Jesus' name. Amen. Amen.