



PHILIPPIANS

12-15


03 A SERVANT'S ATTITUDE

The following document is a rough copy of Pastor Drost's sermon notes

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“I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. I do not consider myself to have apprehended it yet; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, let us who are mature think this way and if in anyway you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you.” Philippians 3:12-15

 This is a passage we have just read from a letter that the Apostle Paul wrote to a church he established in Philippi, a very important city in the Roman province of Macedonia.

- This is the first Christian community established in Europe.
- What is remarkable is how this church started: When Paul and Silas felt a call to go preach in Macedonia, they came first to Philippi and ended up getting arrested, beaten with rods, and put in prison locking their feet in the stocks. (You can read the story in Acts 16)
- It says that...

“At midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God and the prisoners were listening to them.” Acts 16:25 (NKJV)

- This gives us a picture of Paul’s attitude in the face of challenges and opposition... He praises God and does not surrender to the hate, the fear and the opposition he encounters.

HE DOES NOT LET IT DEFINE HIS DESTINY!

- You can see that in this paragraph we are looking at in Philippians III:12...

I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore, let us who are mature think this way!

Let us who want to be mature have this “press on” way of thinking; this attitude!

- **So the question is:** What do I do when faced with opposition? When things are tough? What do you do when things get difficult?
- As they are praying/singing, an earthquake happens and the prison chains fall apart and the prison doors are opened.
- The jailer thinking they have escaped, plans to commit suicide.
- But Paul rescues him and points him to Jesus Christ.
- That night the jailor and his family are baptised...

“The jailor took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.” Acts 16:33

- and the Philippians church is born (Out of a prison!)
- and what is also fascinating, Paul writes this letter to them also from a prison, another prison! Paul goes from obstacle to obstacle, challenge to challenge, persecution to persecution, and still **undeterred** from his mission: **I press on toward the goal!**

Listen to the struggles Paul faced:

I have been put in prison often, been whipped times without number, and faced death again and again. Five different times the Jewish leaders gave me thirty-nine lashes. Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I was stoned. Three times I was shipwrecked. Once I spent a whole night and a day adrift at sea. I have traveled on many long journeys.

I have faced danger from robbers. I have faced danger from my own people, the Jews, as well as from the non-Jews. I have faced danger from rivers, danger in the cities, danger in the deserts, and danger on the seas. And I have faced danger from men who claim to be believers but are not. I have worked hard and long, enduring many sleepless nights. I have been hungry and thirsty and have often gone without food. I have shivered in the cold, without enough clothing to keep me warm.” 2 Cor. 11:22–27

Wow! When Paul writes “I press on toward the goal!” he’s not sipping Piña Coladas on a cruise ship in the Caribbean!

What drives him to such dedication? (such commitment, undeterred by any obstacle)

I believe that answer can be found in his opening statement to this book (First verse, first line!)

“Paul and Timothy, servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi...”
Philippians 1:1a

“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle...” Romans 1:1

Servant first, Apostle second!

Servant first, Pastor second!

Servant first, Senior Pastor second!

Servant first, Elder second!

Servant first, Trustee second!

Servant first, leader second!



Paul’s core attitude (His mindset) was that of a servant!

Jesus took a towel and a basin and washed his disciples' feet. 12 dirty feet (including Judas' feet)!

The job of the lowest servant.

The one who spoke and the wind and the sea obeyed! The one who healed the sick and raised the dead! The one who turned the water into wine and fed 5000 with 5 loaves and two fish! **Washing their feet!**

When he was done, he sat down and said to them...

"The greatest among you shall be your servant." Matthew 23:11

There is no call greater than the call to serve!

He is calling us to take up the towel of a servant... it's having a servant attitude (a servant's mindset).

That's Paul's attitude in his opening verse in Philippians: "SERVANTS!" (a servant's mindset – a servant's way of thinking).

And then, as he leads up to our key passage in **Philippians III**, he invites us in **chapter II Philippians** to follow this same servant's mindset (this same servant's way of thinking). Here's what he says...

Have the same mindset (the same attitude) as Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to even death on a cross! Philippians II:5-8 (NIV)

He calls us to reach for the towel!

This is the kind of attitude that we are called to have in every aspect of our life...

- This is the **attitude** "Christ Jesus used when He laid hold of us"
- This is the **attitude** we use when "we press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus"
- Only servants are willing to "press on" in the face of obstacles
- This is the **attitude** we use if we want to be "mature" in our Christian walk. **Mature Christians think this way!**

Will someone please grab a towel! SERVANTS

Last Sunday afternoon we had a special gathering with between 80-90 of our church leaders at the Hazen Park Centre, Oromocto NB. We gave them all one of these t-shirts...

The front says



and the back says

I AM HIS
SERVANT
COLOSSIANS 3:23-24

Hear is what Colossians 3:23-24 say

“Whatever you do, do it with **ALL YOUR HEART**, as **for the Lord and not for men**, knowing that from the Lord, you will receive the **reward** of the inheritance; for you **SERVE** the Lord Christ.” Colossians 3:23–24

- “whatever you do” you do it with all your heart (nothing half-hearted!)
- “whatever you do” you do it **ALL** for the Lord (never to please man)
- “whatever you do” you will be paid (“you will receive the reward”)
- “whatever you do” you do it as serving the Lord (you are a servant)

There is a BIG difference between a volunteer and a servant

VOLUNTEER	SERVANT
I’m doing it for free	I am getting compensated

“you will receive the reward of the inheritance”

You are being paid!

Has a lower value “I’m just a...” I give of my spare time	Has a higher value “I’m serving Christ” I give my best unto the Lord
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It’s a whole different heart attitude

It was Paul’s highest calling **“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ”**

I’m doing a favour I’m giving something that is mine away <u>MY</u> time, <u>MY</u> money, <u>MY</u> day off All is mine!	It’s my responsibility I’m doing what Christ has asked of me All I am is His! It’s obedience!
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"I tick off on the volunteering schedule depending on how busy I am. When it's convenient for me. I volunteer when I want, for what I want, and however long I want. (Even for who I want)".

It's my charity	It's my calling
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Volunteers often walk away feeling good about themselves for the volunteer work that they did.

Servants walk away happy that they got to serve their Lord with what was in their hands to do.

Less reliable Volunteers tend to quit at the first sign of difficulty or discouragement	Tenacious Servants are dedicated and persevere in the face of adversity (example: Paul... "I press on")
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I'm fully aware that for some, the word volunteer is the same as the word servant (Interchangeable) but words matter and words paint pictures and frame attitudes!

YOU CAN'T FIND THE WORD "VOLUNTEER" IN THE BIBLE!

A secular word	A Biblical word
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Jesus in the parable of the talents doesn't say: "Well done thou good and faithful volunteer!"

"Well done, good and faithful servant... Enter into the joy of your Lord." Matthew 25:21a

There are people who "volunteer" but are servants at heart, and there are those who get paid to serve but they function as a volunteer (It's a heart attitude) – EXAMPLE: Teacher who has a job and the teacher who's called.

So let's stop using the word "volunteer" at Smythe Street Church!

Last Sunday afternoon I told our leaders to

Quit volunteering!

Stop it! Do it because you are serving the Lord!

Do it knowing that from the Lord, you will receive the reward!

Do it with **ALL YOUR HEART!** As unto the Lord!

I also asked them to

Quit asking people to volunteer!

Quit asking people to give of their spare time

Quit asking them as if they are doing you a favour!

Instead, give them an opportunity to serve the Lord.

Offer them a towel! Are you willing to serve Jesus? - He offers us a towel!

Song: Build My Life

Worthy of every song we could ever sing

Worthy of all the praise we could ever bring

Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe

We live for You - We live for You

Jesus, the name above every other name

Jesus, the only one who could ever save

Worthy of every breath we could ever breathe

We live for You

Holy, there is no one like You - There is none beside You

Open up my eyes in wonder

Show me who You are - And fill me with Your heart

And lead me in Your love to those around me



As I was preparing this message, I wrote in my notes “WE ARE CALLED TO BE SERVANTS!”

But that is incorrect, Paul did not say,

“Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ, called to be a servant”

“Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle...” Romans 1:1

It starts with a **decision of the heart**; will you be a Christ servant in whatever He calls you to do? **Then He calls you to your mission!**

SERVANT FIRST – MISSION SECOND