

Philippians 2:19-30  
Receive with Joy

Introduction: The Gospel's victory in Cuba terms  
Key Question: How should we respond to the good news of Christ's victory?

## I. Love beyond Borders

A. Celebrate the Unity Christ Provides (v. 19a)

B. Celebrate the People Christ Unites

1. Timothy (vs. 19-20)

2. Philippians (vs. 19)

3. Epaphroditus (vv. 25-29)

## II. Give beyond Obligation

The Philippians ..

A. Give beyond Duty (v. 30b)

B. Give despite Risk (vv. 26-27 + 30a)

## III. Serve beyond Strength

A. Recognize Everyone's Weakness

B. Plug into Christ's strength

Conclusion: Raising the Cross to celebrate that evil shall not have the final victory.

Phil. 2:19-30

Receive w/ Joy

Script. Intro: In abstract physics mass times velocity equals momentum. But when David Ross becomes the oldest player to hit a 5 oz. baseball thrown at 95 mph by the usually untouchable Andrew Miller over the <sup>405</sup> center field wall of Progressive Field in Cleveland, that is applied physics and a change in momentum of a very different sort. So far, the Apostle Paul has talked about the sacrifice of Christ changing the mind/attitude with which we approach him and each other but now he begins to apply that thought to his own life & relationships

Read

Sermon Intro: So, after long years of darkness, and the passing of multiple generations with hope unfulfilled, the seemingly endless journey of repeated disappointments ends, as the historic curse is broken, an epic victory is won, our champion is exalted and the people rejoice. I am talking, of course, about the good news of the Gospel, even if you are thinking about the Cubs,

And I am not opposed to you thinking about the Cubs because in the reaction of the people thrilled by their victory, we get a pretty good analogy for how the apostle Paul is encouraging us to respond to the Gospel victory he has already described. Gospel = "Good News"

What is that Gospel? 2:6-11

- Divine God became Humble Man suffered Cruel Cross exalted as Risen Lord claimed by
  - Jesus Christ form of God, not equality grasped, made nothing.
  - Took the form of servant, born in human likeness, humbled himself, became obedient to death
  - God exalted him, name above all names
  - Death on Cross

Confession: Every knee bow & tongue confess Jesus Christ is Lord

Summary = "Hope in the Lord Jesus" = Union w/ Christ (Nostalgia Doll) by Faith = Future Confession

How should we respond to that abstract news of Christ's Victory? No mystery here!

How did Cubs fans respond to a victory anticipated for over a century, when the curse was broken, the battle done and the victor crowned?

- They cheered, they hugged & high fived.
- They gathered together around Wrigley
- They went to stores at midnight to spend money on T-shirts & caps that declare the news.
- They got up the next day despite tiredness & weariness to tease Cardinal fans & tell the world.

It all makes sense, as does the response Paul describes in the details of this passage. How should we respond to Christ's victory?

## I. Love Beyond Borders

The barriers between people that creep up during the course of ordinary life got broken down in the wake of a great victory. As the fireworks were booming in our neighborhood, we watched on TV as young & old, rich & poor, black & white, City dwellers & ~~Small Towners~~ united

Union of Christ

- Designed from Eternity
- Sealed at Calvary
- Provided for Identity
- Deepened thru life
- Maintained to Glory

First, A. Paul Celebrates the Unity Christ Provides (v. 19a)

His own hope is united to Christ's person & purposes  
His own past is obscured in Christ's...  
but not his alone...

→ "one of the most basic expressions of Good news of Gospel = Union w/ Christ as indicated by 'N' = Nazarene in Christian Thomas in Gospel."

Then, B. Paul Celebrates the People Christ Unites

+ Timothy (vv. 19-20)

His Background = Mother/Jew & Father/Greek (Not acceptable to either)  
Paul's Embrace = (v. 20 - "No one like him = no equal soul = my soul-mate")

△ Adaption Expression of Gospel of Unity of Christ (v. 22 - "As son w/ Father served" - son of slave ... with me in the Gospel = united in good news)

+ Philippran = (v. 19 - Paul sending Timothy to receive news of Phils i.e., He's interested in them (v. 20 His "soulmate" Timothy also concerned for welfare)

Is this concern real?

+ Epaphroditus (v. 25)

His Background = (4:18 - sent to Rome w/ gift from Phils (Epaphroditus = Aphrodite), goddess of love, pleasure, immorality) pagan roots of Epaphroditus

Paul's Embrace = (v. 25 My brother = "same womb")  
{ " Fellow worker  
{ " Fellow soldier  
{ " Your Messenger  
{ " My Minister

Paul's Concern = (v. 26 & 27 for Epaphroditus's health (v. 28 & 29 for Philippran's needs more important than Paul's interests in keeping Epaphroditus)

### Nant Prostitute

In a little while celebrate Lord's Supper, also called Communion, i.e., celebrating together what we are and hold in common. We are united to each other in common need (sin), common hope (Christ), common identity (in Christ).

How else do we respond to Christ's Victory for us? <sup>12</sup>

## II. Give Beyond Obligation

When Cubs won World Series after 108 years, the longest Championship drought in professional sports, fans did not just join each other on streets but in stores to purchase caps, t-shirts, jackets. People got in their cars at midnight and headed to the stores, or got up early to order on-line. No one was forcing them to do it. There was no law, no penalty if you didn't, but people so much rejoiced in the long-awaited victory that they spent money needlessly, needlessly to get a trophy of the victory.

That's what the Philippans did. The Philippans...

- A. Give beyond Duty (v. 30b - "Risky life to give what lacks...")
- Epaphroditus "completed what was lacking in Phil's service" i.e., he did what they could not at a distance. Thus, (4:18) Sent a gift, (4:15) when no one else...
- B. Give despite Risk (vv. 26 & 27 & 30a) "nearly died"
- Risking Church Prosperity - sending a key leader away
  - Risking Personal Health

This is extreme giving. Why risk so much?

In my closet & on my bookshelves I have T-shirts and hats from Cardinal series wins of the past. I like them but don't wear them much. They are out-of-date, the colors have faded with the cheers, fireworks & memories of days that now seem long gone.

But what will never fade, tear or rust away is Christ's eternal victory that wins souls for eternity. And when we rejoice that we can keep the victory won in our hearts going on & on through victories in other lives that secure hearts for eternity, then generosity is not mere obligation but privilege and joy.

Soon we will have Xmas programs with children of different backgrounds, ethnicities and families standing in rows before us - and we will rejoice at families that have give beyond obligation. We are giving to God's family in ministry and mission. We are by lifestyles of generosity celebrating eternal victories of Christ in our & others' hearts as he breaks the curse of sin and ministers the power of Christ's love. In communion we celebrate Christ's gift to remember the victory that <sup>does not fade</sup>

# How Else Do We Respond to Christ's Victory

## III, Serve Beyond Strength

*Two of the Cubs management after the world series win gave fans an excused absence from work the next day since so tired. We might want to think an excuse the same.*

Each person in the passage is incapacitated in some way:

### A, Recognize Everyone's Weakness

- 1) Paul is in prison and burdened by reputation for past cruelty
- 2) Timothy faces ethnic & religious prejudice that keeps him barred from some churches.
- 3) Epaphroditus has pagan roots and physical illness
- 3) Philippian church is distant and lacking key leaders

*Cubs manager at 1st base operations in the game: "I died six times."*

So why do they serve with so little?

### B, Plug into Christ's Strength

- v. 19 "I hope in the Lord Jesus"
- v. 24 "I trust in the Lord..."
- v. 29 "Receive (Epaphroditus) in the Lord"
- v. 30 "...for he nearly died for the work of Christ."

Each believed that because they were doing work for Christ, Christ was in the work. Ultimately the victory not in their strength but his. What he required was not their capability but their engagement with faith that he would have the victory. They received Christ's provision of joy.

We do not look across aisle or at the platform and say, "Why don't they do more. We each love beyond boundaries, give beyond obligation, serve beyond strength — because we believe Christ works through and beyond weak and wounded people.

Because we are united to Christ he works in us as we offer prayer, teach, in S.S., serve in church leadership, volunteer w/ children, serve @ Rescue mission, tell our children a bedtime story from a Children's story Bible. — we believe not in our perfecting, but Christ's power.

I listened this week to an interview with a Christian leader whose church has been rescued from the clutches of ISIS in Mosul, Iraq. The interviewer asked, "What moment was most meaningful to you in re-occupying your church." Said the leader, "We we raised the cross, we were celebrating that evil shall not have the final victory."

Inside I thought for just a moment, "Wait the cross is the symbol of Christ's death. How does that signal victory over evil?" The cross is empty. He rose from the dead, and now interjects us to give strength, encouragement & victory beyond our capabilities. When we celebrate the h. S. he taught us the meaning. In this L.S., we do show forth the Lord's death, till he comes. "Our is sober rejoicing results in love, giving a series because

*He has won the victory for us.*