



EPAPHRODITUS: A BALANCED CHRISTIAN
PHIL. 2: 25-30

IF WE WERE MAKING A LIST OF THE GREATEST MEN AND WOMEN OF THE BIBLE, EPAPHRODITUS WOULD NOT BE ON THE LIST. HE IS CERTAINLY NOT AS WELL KNOWN AS MANY OTHERS, BUT IN OUR TEXT THIS MORNING, WE SEE SOME VERY STRONG WORDS OF COMMENDATION GIVEN TO THIS FIRST CENTURY DISCIPLE.

PAUL DESCRIBED EPAPHRODITUS WITH THREE TERMS IN VERSE 25. HE WAS A BROTHER, A FELLOW WORKER, AND A FELLOW SOLDIER. IF WE LOOK CLOSELY AT THESE THREE PHRASES WE WILL SEE A BALANCED CHRISTIAN. PROBLEMS ARISE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE WHEN WE LOSE THE BALANCE, WHEN WE EMPHASIZE ONE OR THE OTHER OF THESE THREE ELEMENTS. TODAY THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH NEEDS MORE BALANCED DISCIPLES LIKE EPAPHRODITUS.

HE SERVED

EPAPHRODITUS TOOK CARE OF PAUL'S NEEDS. HE WAS A GREAT SERVANT FOR HIM. EVERYONE HAS NEEDS. PART OF OUR RESPONSIBILITY TODAY AS CHRISTIAN MEN AND WOMEN IS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OTHERS. MEETING THEIR NEEDS IS NOT JUST SOMETHING WE DO FOR THEM; IT IS ALSO SOMETHING WE DO FOR GOD. WHEN WE ARE MEETING THE NEEDS OF OTHERS WE ARE ACTUALLY WORSHIPPING THE LORD. SERVICE IS A FORM OF WORSHIP.

HE CARED

PAUL TELLS US THAT EPAPHRODITUS BECAME VERY SERIOUSLY ILL WHILE HE WAS DILIGENTLY SERVING PAUL ON THE MISSION FIELD. THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI FOUND OUT ABOUT HIS ILLNESS AND WERE GREATLY CONCERNED. HE THEN BECAME GREATLY DISTRESSED BECAUSE OF THE CONCERN HE WAS CAUSING THE CHRISTIANS AT PHILIPPI. TO ALLEVIATE ALL OF THIS, EPAPHRODITUS WENT BACK THERE TO SHOW THEM THAT HE WAS ALL RIGHT. THIS WAS DONE BECAUSE HE CARED.

SOMETIMES WE BECOME SO SOPHISTICATED AND SO BUSY THAT WE REALLY DO NOT CARE ABOUT EACH OTHER THE WAY WE SHOULD. DO WE CARE ENOUGH ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE TO REALLY LISTEN TO THEM? HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN SINCE WE WERE DEEPLY TOUCHED BY THE CARE AND CONCERN OF OTHERS?

HE VENTURED

IN THE LAST TWO VERSES, WE SEE THE THIRD QUALITY OF THIS FIRST CENTURY DISCIPLE. HE VENTURED OUT WITH HIS FAITH, WHICH MEANS HE TOOK A RISK, BUT IT WAS A RISK FOR CHRIST. WHEN WAS THE LAST TIME WE RISKED SOMETHING FOR CHRIST? DO WE ALWAYS PLAY IT SAFE? EPAPHRODITUS WAS NOT A FOLLOWER; HE WAS A PIONEER. HE DIDN'T FOLLOW A TRAIL; HE LEFT A TRAIL. HE WAS WILLING TO TAKE RISKS FOR THE LORD JESUS.