

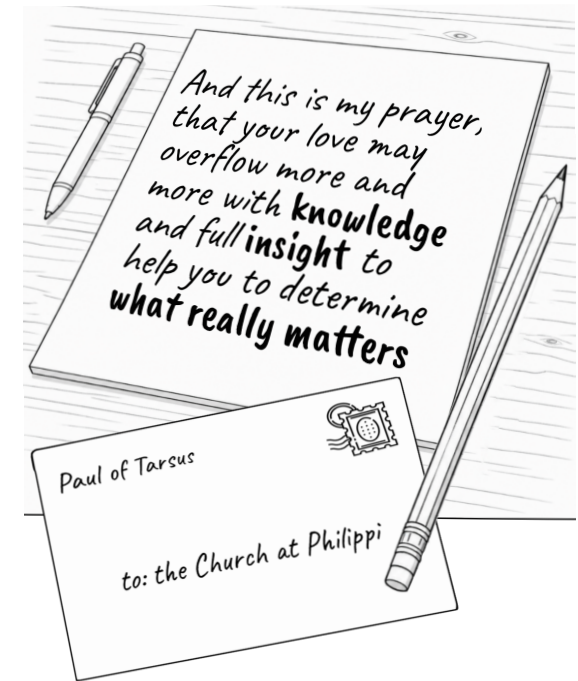
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7. How do you interpret "holding forth the word of life" (v. 16)?
8. How might you interpret verse 17 in light of the fact that Paul is not pouring himself out as a libation, but he is "being poured out"?

Read Philippians 2:19-30

1. What words or phrases catch your attention?
2. What words or phrases would you use to describe the passage?
3. What problems might Paul be addressing in this passage?
4. What do you think "really matters" in this chapter?

PAUL'S LETTER to the PHILIPPIANS



Philippians 2, Lesson 3

"The Mind of Christ"

1 Susan Eastman, Working Preacher, September 25, 2011
Assistant Professor of the practice of the Bible and Christian
Formation Duke Divinity School Durham, NC

2 Tom's Substack, "God Didn't Choose Your Nation; Jesus Doesn't
Need Your Nation" Divine Reverberations, Substack, May 13,
2026

REVIEW: "What really matters?" (Phil. 1:10, 18)

Recall last week's discussions and share your insights as to what really matters to Paul.

THEOLOGICAL MUSINGS: PHILIPPIANS 2ND CHAPTER

"One thing is needful. This is the drama of Christ's redemptive incursion into the depths of our bondage and despair. This is the story of God with us, told from the standpoint of his incarnation as a slave. Last week's lesson gave us a glorious picture of free citizenship in the kingdom of heaven, and of the boldness and freedom of Paul's and the Philippians' witness to the gospel.

Today we hear of Christ himself taking the form of a slave, humbling himself even to the point of death by crucifixion — reserved for slaves and traitors in the Roman Empire. Paradoxically, our liberation comes from Christ's voluntary bondage, which is his entry into our bondage. This movement by Christ is the heartbeat of the exhortation that begins and ends today's passage. If we want to become like Christ, we begin by hearing how Christ became like us, and continues to come among us. Then, and only then, are we ready to hear about 'the imitation of Christ.'"¹



"Jesus does not secure his kingdom through force, legislation, or national identity. He is crucified. He is abandoned. He is executed by the state. And yet, in that very act, the church confesses that he reigns. If the crucified and resurrected Christ is Lord, then Christianity does not depend on national protection to survive.

It never has.

Which raises a harder, more personal question for those of us insistent on forming Christian nations: If Jesus does not need a Christian nation to defend him, why do we feel the need to defend him in that way?

Could it be that we are protecting Christ, but a version of Christianity that has grown accustomed to power, privilege, and and proximity?

Following Jesus, however, moves the other way. Philippians 2 is clear about this: Jesus calls us away from the instinct to secure ourselves and our ideologies through domination, and toward the far riskier path of cruciformity. It invites us to embody a form of life that witnesses to another kingdom - one not built on borders or enforced by bombs, but made visible in communities shaped by love, reconciliation, and self-giving."²



VOCABULARY:

Philippians 2:1 consolation, comfort, tender compassion

Paraklésis (παράκλησις): (para-coming alongside) to comfort, encourage, exhort, console

Paramythía (παραμύθιον) "primarily 'a speaking closely to anyone' (para, 'near,' mythos, 'speech'); hence it denotes 'consolation, comfort,' with a greater degree of tenderness than paraklésis

Splagchnon (σπλάγγχνον): Bowels, compassion, affection, heart

Oiktirmos (οἰκτιρμός): the viscera, which were thought to be the seat of compassion, pity, mercy; bowels in which compassion resides, a heart of compassion

Philippians 2:17-18 rejoice, libation

Sugchairó (συγχαίρω): to rejoice with, take part in another's joy. The term is never used for solitary gladness; it always depicts joy that is consciously shared

Libation or drink offering: means to voluntarily sacrifice something precious—symbolized by pouring wine or oil onto an altar—as a final act of dedication, surrender. Symbolically, the liquid was not consumed, metaphorically it was "wasted" for personal use but "spent" for a divine purpose. The act represents surrendering one's life, time, and energy to serve God and others, as seen in Philippians 2:17, where Paul describes himself as being "poured out" for the faith of others.

Read Philippians 1:27 - 2:18

1. What words or phrases catch your attention?
2. What words or phrases would you use to describe the passage?
3. What problems might Paul be addressing in this passage?
4. Note the phrases: *one spirit, one mind, in full accord, the same mind as Jesus, no murmuring and arguing.* Note also: *regard others as better than yourselves, looking to the interests of others, and not your own.* Discuss how to reconcile these two concepts: Conformity and Diversity.
5. How might you make a connection between verse 5: "Let the same mind be in you that was in Jesus" and verse 12: "work on your own salvation..."
6. How do you envision gaining the mind of Christ?

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