

JOY RIDE -3

Philippians 2:19-4:1

ICE BREAKER: Who in your life is the greatest example of service to others and why?

1. What insight, principles or observations did you take away from this Sunday's message?

"When we decide to follow Christ, we adopt the mindset of Jesus and learn to think, act and relate to others the way Jesus thinks and acts and relates"- Pastor Brian.

Pastor Brian gave three examples of Christ like service to others.

Example #1: Timothy

Philippians 2:19-24 *I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. **20** I have no one else like him, who will show genuine concern for your welfare. **21** For everyone looks out for their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. **22** But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. **23** I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. **24** And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.*

2. Why was Paul hoping to send Timothy to the Philippians? (v19). What does this indicate about the character of Paul and his feelings about the people at Philippi?

3. How is Timothy described to the Philippians? (v20). What would having a genuine concern for the welfare of others look like in our lives?

4. Paul says: “Everyone looks out for his own interests, not the interests of Jesus Christ”- Why is it that people tend to look out for their own interests? How should we look out for the interests of Jesus and others?

5. What made the difference in Timothy? (v22). How do you think service changes us to care more about others?

Example #2: Epaphroditus

25 But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. 26 For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. 27 Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. 29 So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, 30 because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.

6. Who was Epaphroditus, to the Philippians? (v25) Why were they concerned about him? (v26)

7. How did Paul say that people like Epaphroditus should be treated? (v29). Do you know people like Epaphroditus? What can we do for them now?

“I think Paul wants us to see in Epaphroditus’ example, take risks for the mission. However, there are people around the globe who risk their lives for the work of Christ every day. There are brothers and sisters who could potentially lose their lives, be put in prison for following Jesus.” – Pastor Brian.

8. What risks are you taking for the mission? (Pastor Brian suggests: risking comfort and engaging neighbors more, risk our security and be more generous, surrendering control and praying dangerous prayers.)

Example #3: Paul

No Confidence in the Flesh

Philippians 3:1-9 *Further, my brothers and sisters, rejoice in the Lord! It is no trouble for me to write the same things to you again, and it is a safeguard for you. 2 Watch out for those dogs, those evildoers, those mutilators of the flesh. 3 For it is we who are the circumcision, we who serve God by his Spirit, who boast in Christ Jesus, and who put no confidence in the flesh— 4 though I myself have reasons for such confidence. If someone else thinks they have reasons to put confidence in the flesh, I have more: 5 circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; 6 as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless. 7 But whatever were gains to me I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. 8 What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ 9 and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which is through faith in[a] Christ—the righteousness that comes from God on the basis of faith.*

9. Who is Paul calling “dogs, evil workers, etc..”? What is the difference between Paul and the group he calls “dogs, those evil doers, those mutilators of the flesh”? (v2-3)

10. Have someone in your group summarize Paul’s testimony. (Acts 8:1-3, 9:1-30) What does Paul say about his righteousness? (v7-9). Where are we to find our righteousness? (v9).

11. How do we sometimes use righteousness as a measure of our spirituality and the spirituality of others? What is wrong with that picture?

12. What would be the result in a Christian's life when their faith in Jesus is the only focus? (Philippians 2:7-9; Matthew 22:37-39; John 13:34-35)

Matthew 22:37-39 *Jesus replied: " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' 38 This is the first and greatest commandment. 39 And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'*

John 13:34-35 *"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."*

Philippians 3:10-14 *I want to know Christ—yes, to know the power of his resurrection and participation in his sufferings, becoming like him in his death, 11 and so, somehow, attaining to the resurrection from the dead. 12 Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. 13 Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, 14 I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus.*

13. What do you think it means for Paul to say that he wants to "Know Christ, and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings becoming like Him in death? (v 10). How could we apply this kind of thinking in our lives? (Romans 12:1-2)

Romans 12:1-2 (NIV) *Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. 2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

Example #4: Jesus

“Ultimately, the examples of Timothy, Epaphroditus, and Paul are so powerful because they are anchored in the story of Jesus”- Pastor Brian

14. How do the examples of Timothy, Epaphroditus, and Paul follow the example of Jesus expressed in Philippians 2:3-8 (Last week)?

- Timothy (Philippians 2:3-4)

Philippians 2:3-4 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, 4 not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.*

- Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:8)

Philippians 2:8 *And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death— even death on a cross!*

- Paul (Philippians 2:6-7)

Philippians 2:6-7 *Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.*

15. How does the example of Jesus show its power in your life? What can all of us do to improve the way we love and serve others?