

Looking Beyond Ourselves

Phil. 2:4

Introduction:

- A. Paul knew that to follow Christ one must look beyond himself (vv. 3,4).
 - 1. Christ looked beyond himself for us (vv. 5-11).
 - 2. We need the mind of Christ (v. 5).
 - a. Without it we will never reach our potential as Christians.
 - b. Without it we will never reach our potential as a church.
 - c. Without it we will never be as happy as we could be as Christians.
- B. Paul is good example of one who looked beyond himself.

Discussion:

I. He Looked Beyond His Own Hardship (1:12-14).

- A. He could have focused on “the things which happened to” him (v. 12).
 - 1. From his arrest in Jerusalem through his imprisonment in Rome.
 - 2. His own list of hardships (2 Cor. 11:23-28).
- B. He chose to focus good that came from his hardships (vv. 13, 14).

II. He Looked Beyond His Own Mistreatment (1:15-18).

- A. He could have focused on the harm that insincere preachers had done to him.
 - 1. Could have wallowed in bitterness and resentment.
 - 2. Could have resorted to hatred and retaliation.
- B. He chose to focus on the good message they preached (v. 18).
 - 1. Truth insincerely preached is still truth — will still save.
 - 2. Error sincerely preached is still error — will not save.
 - 3. The power lies in the gospel not the character of the preacher.

III. He Looked Beyond His Own Welfare (1:23-26).

- A. He could have focused on what “far better” for him personally (v. 23).
 - 1. To go on would be a personal gain for him (v. 21).
 - 2. To go on would have satisfied his personal desire (v. 23).
- B. He chose to focus on what was best for needful for the church (v. 24-26).
 - 1. He was willing to put personal needs and desires on hold for good of brethren.
 - 2. Church would prosper greatly if more were like Paul.
 - a. Preachers sometimes put personal desires and gain above needs of church.
 - b. Brethren sometimes choose congregations for personal pleasure rather than need.

Conclusion:

- A. We must not buy philosophy of the “me generation.”
- B. We must look beyond ourselves for the good of others.
- C. We can put ourselves in position to help others by obeying the Lord ourselves.