A LIFE POURED OUT

TEXT: Philippians 2:17–30 (Read)

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Obedience vs. Sacrifice
e.g. king Saul sacrificed, but he didn't obey

“The counterfeit of obedience is a state of mind in which you create your own opportunities to sacrifice yourself... ‘Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice...’”

NOTE: obedience is much better than sacrifice, because it's easier... with sacrifice, you never know how you're doing; with obedience, it's one day at a time — and His yoke is easy and His burden light!

B. The title of this message is “A Life Poured Out”

— three examples of lives that were poured out for Christ... Paul, Timothy, and Epaphroditus

II. BODY

A. Paul's life poured out (vs. 17–18)

spendo — apparently a primary verb; to pour out as a libation, i.e. (fig.) to devote (one's life or blood, as a sacrifice)

NOTE: Paul used this word one other time, in his very last letter...

2 Timothy 4:6
For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.

— meaning, my life is being spent, and it's just about over with!

NOTE: in some of the Jewish offerings wine was poured upon the sacrifice. Paul presented the Philippians' faith as the sacrifice and his blood (his very life) as the wine poured upon it.
(New Bible Commentary)

— the Philippians' faith was the sacrifice and Paul's life was the wine...

— people say, “I'm going to spend my life _____.”

— we have 70+ years to make our mark, to live for eternal things

e.g. We should regret the years during which we lived for myself... basically from the time ----- before being christian

— I do not regret ANY of the years in which I've lived for Christ... there's not one thing I've ever sacrificed that I regret giving up...

B. Timothy's life poured out (vs. 19–24)

— Timothy — "honoring God"

— he joined Paul in the 2nd missionary journey, in Lystra and Derbe... the brothers in that region had spoken well of him

NOTE: Paul was good for Timothy (strong, courageous, resolute) and Timothy was good for Paul (tender, caring, loyal, faithful)

a. Timothy's selfless love

NOTE: Timothy genuinely, sincerely, naturally cared for other's interests above his own... he had this kind of care for people

Preoccupation with the self produces a lack of self esteem, the opposite of what is intended.

— for me, it's a daily battle and grind... the flesh is strong with the young yet, if I'll walk in the Spirit...

— so I'm not discouraged that I'm not like Timothy or Paul... the Lord is able to make me, daily!

b. Timothy's proven character
(his love, sincerity, and character had been put to the test many times)

Romans 5:3–4
And not only that, but we also glory in tribulations, knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope.

— we want to be in shape without exercise, lose weight without a healthy diet, excel in athletics without practice, be spiritual without spiritual discipline... but that's just not how things work!

e.g. Be more concerned with your character than with your reputation, because your character is what you really are, while your reputation is merely what others think you are.

C. Epaphroditus's life poured out (vs. 25–30)

a. Epaphroditos — common Greek name... he had delivered to Paul a gift from the church at Philippi while the apostle was in prison. As he was with Paul, Epaphroditus became seriously ill ("for the work of Christ," v. 30). After his recovery, Paul sent him back to Philippi, urging the church there to receive him "with all gladness" (Phil. 2:29).
— Holman's Bible Dictionary

Paul calls him "my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier."

"The three words are arranged in an ascending scale: common sympathy, common work, common danger and toil and suffering"
(Lightfoot, l.c.).

b. His empathy for the Philippians

— grieved because he'd learned that they'd learned that he'd been sick

NOTE: there is no indication that Paul had the ability to heal him or that he tried to do so. Neither is there any hint that Epaphroditus was sick because of being out of God's will.

c. His self sacrificial life

— serving the church at Philippi, serving Paul in Rome

III. CONCLUSION

"Beware of paying attention or going back to what you once were, when God wants you to be something that you have never been. 'If anyone wills to do His will, he shall know...'"
John 7:17

— I'm not talking about going, necessarily, but getting yourself into the center of God's will for your life. What needs to be done that you can do for the Lord?