

Considering the Cost

Right now, there seems to be a shortage of workers at many different establishments around. (Slow service, lesser quality, apologies) (Sign at local pharmacy that stated this, and so don't expect service!)

If you go to an establishment that has things working, it is really a great thing.

In the work of the church, many churches are having the same issue. (But it is not as sudden as we might think.)

Having like-minded co-laborers in church is a huge blessing. (More than one ordained, etc.) (The more in a music team, youth, pastoral, teaching, outreach and evangelism, discipleship, etc.)

Two workers will be in focus in this sermon. (Timothy and Epaphroditus)

As we approach Christmas, we will explore the gift of laborers for the ministry. (As we pray for laborers)

Ph 2:19-20

I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.

No one like him- This is a very confident trusting in Timothy's reliability! (blessing)
Ministry needs reliable co-laborers.

So many "want to" but there are just too many distractions in life.

Verse 21

For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

Other interests? Paul's? No! (Other interests than God's concerns)

- **Ph 1:21-** live is Christ, die is gain but **in 2:21** no interest in Christ.
- Therefore, we try and focus in on our **vision plan to our Mission Statement.** (Disciples reaching our world through evangelism, discipleship, fellowship, worship, and prayer.)
- It cuts to the chase in what our mission is to be accomplished.

1. Timothy- we could talk a lot more about Timothy, but we will focus in on this situation.

Verse 22

But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.

- a.) Proven worth- reliable testimony.
- b.) Served as a son to Paul like a father. (Paul shows the discipleship process with Timothy.)

- c.) Timothy had trained under Paul, and in the ministry of a local church. (The 5 pillars were a part of his upbringing.) **This is why we do discipleship/ true co-laborers.**

1 Timothy 3:6–7 (ESV)

⁶ He must not be a recent convert, or he may become puffed up with conceit and fall into the condemnation of the devil. ⁷ Moreover, he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil.

- Faithful over a little and more is given in God's kingdom effort.

Matthew 25:21 (ESV)

²¹ His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

- Timothy understood this, and we should too. (Growth is a commitment that is powered by abiding in Christ)
- d.) There is sacrifice involved in the growth and service process. (We develop a love for God enough to give Him our life.)

Luke 14:25–35 (ESV)

The Cost of Discipleship

²⁵ Now great crowds accompanied him, and he turned and said to them, ²⁶ "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷ Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸ For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it? ²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰ saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹ Or what king, going out to encounter another king in war, will not sit down first and deliberate whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes against him with twenty thousand? ³² And if not, while the other is yet a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks for terms of peace. ³³ So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple.

Salt Without Taste Is Worthless

³⁴ "Salt is good, but if salt has lost its taste, how shall its saltiness be restored? ³⁵ It is of no use either for the soil or for the manure pile. It is thrown away. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."

- Hard to understand/ "**he who has ears to hear. Let him hear.**"
- e.) Jesus wants to save everyone, and discipleship is a huge step in our relationship with Him. (Growth has a cost. The 5 pillars require a cost!)
- f.) Ministry is not a half-hearted call from our Savior.
2. Epaphroditus- (brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, messenger (pastor)

Ph 2:25

I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need,

Ironside story- “Church liked fellowship/refused to reach the lost/sign outside read “Jesus Only”/ wind blew off J, E, S/ sign then read “us only (That will not work!)”

Ph 2:26-27

for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

- a.) Where others would not join in, Epaphroditus did. (We need more missionaries, not just money!)
 - b.) We have been discussing humility and Tim. And Epaphroditus exhibit it.
 - c.) He was serving and longing to get with his home church.
 - d.) The people at Philippi were concerned for him, and he for them! (Healthy church)
 - e.) Paul wanted to send him back healthy!
- Health and wealth? Not in this scenario!
 - Recent death of a good college football coach. Lots of tributes, etc. (If he had stayed healthy, and had two bad seasons, would not be extolled however!) We have got to be better than the world in ministry.

Ph. 2:28-30

I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

- We need to be submitted to each other as we submit to Christ.
- We need so many laborers to get the job done!
- Will we count the cost and give what Jesus asks?
- There is something special about a church loves and serves together!

1 Thessalonians 5:12–14 (ESV)

¹²We ask you, brothers, to respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, ¹³and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work. Be at peace among yourselves. ¹⁴And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.

The Word of God is what the world needs, and it is proven to be true by a church serving together to accomplish the mission given by Jesus.

Christians in the time of these verses were standing against the tide of the Roman government.

The task is great, the rewards are too, it is worth our surrender.