



Sermon #7: Mutual Care: Shared Partnership

June 4, 2023

Text: **Philippians 4:10-20**

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Sermon Open

As we have learned, the church is to look to Christ for spiritual life, while also looking to one another for spiritual help. We need to be together, so we should make it our culture that the gathering of the believers is a priority. When we gather we should be intentional to consider how we can build up the church by strengthening its people - specifically by the giving and receiving of the resources God has granted to us. In this sermon we look at God's call for the church to express mutual care for one another through shared partnership. Each member of the Body should invest to help one another live out their personal calling and to help ease suffering that comes on account of Gospel work.

Shared Partnership

From our text today, we are going to pull this principle for the church: **We are to share with one another what we have been given by God, becoming partners in the trials that result from living out our mission.** Paul tells the Philippians in **v14**, that **it was kind of you to share my trouble**. The type of trouble Paul was experiencing was imprisonment for the sake of the Gospel. The church in Philippi had sent him gifts by way of one of their members – Epaphroditus. Paul referred to this as a “sharing” of His trouble – literally becoming a participant with him. This is a verse that should describe our local church as we strive to be people who share in one another's troubles, especially those troubles that come as we each seek to advance the Gospel. Each believer has a unique way they are called to advance the Gospel in their sphere of influence and specific life circumstances. We each have gifts (time, talent, and treasures) that we are given to apply to this mission. And we will each experience unique difficulties as we go. Because we are part of one body, we must also see that our gifts are not only for our own Gospel-mission but also to help others work through the trials that come with their own.

Mutual Care

Reading **Philippians 1**, we see a clear affection between the Apostle Paul and the Philippians. This mutual care was built out of a shared partnership in the Gospel. Paul obeyed a messenger of God to go to Macedonia. There he sacrificed himself to share the Gospel and the church in Philippi was born. The Philippians loved Paul and looked for every opportunity they could to support Him in his continued mission in other cities (**4:15-16**); once he was imprisoned in Rome – the church was ready to do what they could to provide for his needs (**4:10**). This narrative gives us a blue print for our own church. The Fellowship we have been joined to by God, establishes a mutual care for one another that expresses itself in many ways – including looking for opportunities to join together in supporting each person's individual mission. This is a beautiful way for the church to advance the Gospel – not to just have a small group of leaders setting direction, but to support one other – spiritually and practically - as God lays on each individual's heart how they should labor to make Christ known.

Application

Paul preaches to the Philippians the necessity to be content in all they have (**v11-13**) and to trust God that He will supply their needs (**v19**). Shared partnership requires of us to give ourselves away in order to help one another advance the Kingdom and work through the trials that come with that goal. Contentment and trust are necessary for us, otherwise we will hold on to what we have and fail to be generous. By abiding with Christ always (**v13**) we will have the strength, the boldness, and the faith to live sacrificially - sharing with one another both the joy and the trials of Gospel work.