

Kings Norton Baptist Church

Sunday 4th December 2022 10 am

100% Paul gave his all - Philippians 2:16-18

Welcome to all.

Opening Scripture

Hymn MP 1086 Light of the world

Scripture 2 Chronicles 6:12-21 (page 440)

Prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Advent candle

Children's talk Being poured out.

Chorus MP 466 Mighty in Victory and other choices

Notices Zaynab, Hannah, Chris W, Leaflets, Fellowship lunch.

Prayer time

Communion CH 411, Thanksgiving for sins forgiven Micah 7:18-20)

Reading Philippians 2:12-18 (page 1179)

Hymn MP 632 Thank you for the cross

Sermon love is 100%

Hymn MP 990 I will offer up my life in spirit and truth

Closing Prayer

Close

Wharf road closure today - Western Power Craig Butler 07812 963 250

Exordium and Prayer

- You often hear the phrase, Whatever you do, always give it 100%. Are you a 100% person?. Athletes are, Top level musicians are, Actors, Businessmen and women. Footballers? One hopes so!
- Why not husbands and wives, parents and children? Surely if anything is worth doing, it is worth giving 100% to? If our heart is in it, if we love it, then it's 100%. Not to do so is to give way ground that could be yours. As is said "You are always going to miss what you don't aim for!"

Jesus gave 100% **I always do my fathers will** he said. That is 100% for He loved his father. So to follow Jesus, to love Jesus, means to also give 100%? This what we see in the Apostle Paul. And who doesn't feel exhausted just reading about him? Paul as he worked to help Christians grow strong said: **To this end I labour, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me.** Col 1:29

Paul's Jesus is my Jesus, there's no hierarchy, every Christian has the same access to the Lord and his power, so I can say **which so powerfully works in me.**

So here we are towards the end of another year, as it draws to a close, how has it been for you? Have you lived up to the motto text we have this year? Have you **run with perseverance the race marked out for you?** Heb 12:1

Some of us could hardly run around the church car park, small as it is, but what about your life with the Lord?, it is described as a race, like a marathon we all may be running at different speeds but we must keep going, keep on to the end, not flag, nor give up, but press on, persevere. – and help each other along the way.

That is my job, but it is for all of us to do that. We do so knowing that Jesus runs with you, there is help all along the way, and that there's a great prize to be had at the end, an indescribably wonderful prize.

Paul ran well, and we see that in these three verses here 16,17 and 18. They are three verses easy overlooked. We like the imagery of **shinning like stars** but these verses are less clear.

Let's think about them. - What is Paul's response to the Holy and therefore bright lives of God's people? He will **boast** or **rejoice**, or have **glory in** depending on the translation. **on the day of Christ.**

In other words when Christ returns and calls us all to give an account of how we have run, how we have built, what we have to show for our labours

Paul will say “look at the church in Philippi, look at them, see how they grew in their faith, see how they shunned the world, see how they held onto the word of God, see how they held out the word of God to others. See see. This is what he will say and he will say it gladly for he saw it happen, and he knew the Lord was in it and did it. *Praise you Lord.*”

No-one is to boast in themselves, - but we can and should boast in the Lord.

- In London last Monday I had a couple of hours to look around the National Gallery, probably Britain’s foremost collection of art (and still free, to be recommended) Paul is like the carpenter who is looking at these master pieces and saying that is mine I did that, He did not paint it but set it in the frame.
- Or he is like the museum worker looking up at these master pieces and saying that is mine I did that, He did not paint it but set it up on the wall for everyone to see and appreciate.

How many pastors, missionaries, church workers will say on that Day “look at Kings Norton Baptist Church, look at the folk there, see how well they ran, how they shunned evil and the world, see how dedicated they were to the cause of Christ and the gospel, see how they persevered under difficulty see how they ran well and did not give in”. I wonder.

Because of what he saw in the church in Philippi Paul was spurred to rejoice that his effort was not in vain **that I did not run or labour for nothing.**

So much effort is wasted and leads nowhere.

- At the bottom of the sea off the coast of northern Ireland are dozens of Sherman Army tanks. It is a strange surreal sight, there they all are sitting on the seabed. What happened? A cargo ship had almost made it to Liverpool from the USA when it was torpedoed off the coast of Donegal and tipped its deck full of tanks out as it descended to the depths. What a waste, all that labouring in the East coast factories of Philadelphia all those components carefully cast, machined, assembled and completed only to end up at the bottom of the sea. How wasteful war is generally. How wasteful so much is in life, how much effort in erecting buildings, how much effort in creating lives, careers, projects, collections, hopes ... only to be dashed.

Paul had run well, he had built well, and it had lasted x2. His joy is in their Christians steadfastness, maturity and usefulness which had produced lasting fruit.

“I am so glad” he says “**that I did not run or labour for nothing.** All that pains and suffering was ‘not for nothing’

The work of the Christian is put full in 100%, or *the whole man* as they used to say. Running requires vitality and vigour, and continual pressing forward; labour means hard and diligent work. Most won’t do that today.

But we should, and are called to do so. There’s no greater joy for every Christian, and particularly for ministers, when we perceive that we have not **run in vain, nor laboured in vain.** It will be their rejoicing in the day of Christ when their converts will be their crown. **For what is our hope, our joy, or the crown in which we will glory in the presence of our Lord Jesus when he comes? Is it not you?** x2 **Indeed, you are our glory and joy.**” 1 Thess 2:19-20

Suffering – being poured out

The apostle not only ran and laboured for them – but he was ready to suffer for their good **But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering** Phil 2:17

What does he mean by this?

He said the same to Timothy “**I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure.**” 2 Timothy 4:6

The drink offering was offered with the morning and evening sacrifice, which was a burnt offering, accompanied by a meat offering. It consisted of wine and oil mixed together, the quantity varying with the animal offered. The priest would **pour out the drink offering to the LORD at the sanctuary.**” Nu 28:7

Paul is saying his life was ‘**poured out**’ as an offering to the Lord.

Like the woman who poured out the fragrance in the children’s talk earlier.

A life poured out is time given, energy spent, suffering taken, offense absorbed for the Lord’s sake. For him. Not self-preservation, not self-protection.

Every follower of Christ - is to promote the honour of Christ, and that means the building up of the Lord people, His church. Investing time for others, in many cases much time, serving together, why?, because your concern is the welfare of their souls, their progress with the lord, it is a long slog, plenty of discouragements along the way. It costs, many of those in the past suffered with ill health because of their labours, My mind goes to George Whitefield, who spent himself for the Lord and died exhausted. So have many others given their all for the Lord. That is a life poured out.

✚ *Why hang on to what we cannot keep - when Christ offers us something we cannot lose! What a true saying.*

There is a lot of change of thinking required here. That is what we are told to do **in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship.**" Rom 12:1

A sacrifice is a death. The death of me, me and my ways and my desires and even a literal death, if that is what the Lord who bought me wills and desires for his glory.

Paul had weighed it up – self-preservation? or self-sacrifice? – He thought it worthwhile to be a sacrifice to serve the faith of God's elect people, to shed his blood in their service. If Paul thought that, as Jesus did, shall I now think it too much to take even a little pain?

How would you describe a Christian? Morally different? Religious? On a mission, or maybe just 'nice' may we never be considered and just 'nice'!

Paul speaks about the faith of the Christians in Philippi had produced: **on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith,** Php 2:17

Paul knew the Lord had called him **to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles** (that's you and I) **with the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God,** And why? **so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.**" Rom 15:16

In other words Christ saves people - that our lives will be offered up to God.

■ **Missionary account, all the money there is to be given away, not kept**

✚ *To see a life dedicated to the Lord is the cause of rejoicing*

I am glad and rejoice with all of you. says Paul who was willing to spend and be spent for their welfare. He had sealed his doctrine, his profession with his blood and so had they – and so have many down through the centuries, so he says: **So you too should be glad and rejoice with me.**" Phil 2:18

Jesus said: **"I tell you the truth, no-one who has left home or wife or brothers or parents or children for the sake of the kingdom of God will fail to receive many times as much in this age and, in the age to come, eternal life."** Lu 18:29-30

Gospel

There my friends is the stark choice. To live for now – or to live for then. To live for self or to live for the Lord God. You cannot serve both. No 50/50 !

Christ the Lord of Glory the creator God was willing to leave His Glory, to become a slave and serve and suffer. If Christ gave his all for me giving up a perfect life to torture and pain so I can be made alive can I now not live that life for Him?

Do you want part of that? *Do you want in* as they say? Then here's the deal: **"Any of you who does not give up everything he has cannot be my disciple."** Lu 14:33 Period. Give over all to Him, right now. That is for all of us here.

There's the paradox, the paradox of faith – as we saw with Abraham – Trusting His trustworthiness means you can be released from worry, release from concern about provision, be free from uncertainties of who you are, why you are here and where you are going. In short you can be at peace and in favour with God, and as my father I can thrive. Children within a loving and secure family thrive, they do well, they love well, they have fruitful lives.

Perdition – this life is short, time is short

When will it be that Christ returns, do you know? So how should we be? Peter gives us the answer **what kind of people ought you to be? You ought to live holy and godly lives as you look forward to the day of God and speed its coming.** 2 Peter 3:11,12

✚ *For many this will mean a change of your life's priorities!*

Let me paraphrase what the great revivalist Jonathan Edwards says on this: Sacrifice everything to your soul's eternal interest. Let your seeking and resolve be such that you will make everything give place to it. Let nothing stand before your resolution of seeking the kingdom of God. Whatever you once looked upon as a convenience, or comfort, or ease, if it stands in the way of this great concern, dismiss it without hesitation. If you have formerly, for the sake of worldly gain, involved yourself in care and business to the extent that it interferes with the Lord's call on your life then order your priorities aright even though your worldly interests suffer.

Or if the company you keep gives you reason to think they have been and will be a snare to you, and a hindrance to this great purpose, break off from them, whatever the cost. Whatever it be that stands in the way, whether it be some dear sinful pleasure, or strong carnal appetite, or credit and honour, or the good-will of some people whose friendship you desire – even though they will look on you with contempt. Or if it be your ease and laziness and aversion to continual labour; let all of these things go. Offer up all such

things together, as it were, in one sacrifice, to the interest of your soul. Let nothing stand in competition with this, but make everything to fall before it. If the flesh must be crossed, then cross it, spare it not, crucify it, and do not be afraid of being too cruel to it.: **They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.** Gal 5:24

✚ I say again for many, and for you? It will mean a change of your priorities!

We will have a new memory verse on the 1st Jan as we turn the page into 2023 -- but it doesn't replace this one so **we must run with perseverance the race marked out for us** Heb 12:1 until he returns.

As Christians entrusted with the Gospel of salvation we must get on with it. We do not 'wait for his return' No there is a race to run, run well and you can look forward to the prize.

■ How many millions are expending time, money and effort to see their national team win a piece of Gold and the praise of men.

Our prize bring with it eternal Joy and the praise of God

■ In the year 1747 a young man of 29 died of TB. That young man had an immense influence on missionary work, because he kept a journal, and that journal, with details of his life was published by Jonathan Edwards, and influenced, among others, William Carey, the founder of modern missions. The name of the young man was David Brainerd, his amazing ministry was for a few years among American Indians, and the last entry in his journal, before he died was for Friday, October 2nd. "My soul was this day, at turns, sweetly set on God: I longed to be "with him" that I might "behold his glory;" I felt sweetly disposed to commit all to him, even my dearest friends, my dearest flock, and my absent brother, and all my concerns for time and eternity. Oh that his kingdom might come in this world; that they might all love and glorify him for what he is in himself; and that the blessed Redeemer might "see of the travail of his soul, and be satisfied." Oh, "come Lord Jesus, come quickly! Amen."

David Brainerd **shone like stars in the universe** he led that Holy separated life that stood out like a bright star, it was noticed, noticed by Christ. He will have his reward.

When you look at others in the room desire above all else that they, each one be those whose lives more and more bring Glory to God. And if you have helped your brother and sister, if you had a part in helping it be that way, you will surely not lose your reward.

To do this is battle and a struggle. The difficulty of giving to others, of loving others, it's the hardest thing, to genuinely be concerned for others over myself, their best interest, their welfare, their progress, were there is none of me left to be offended, is a real battle!

It is hard work, it requires the training and training, the constant unrelenting killing off - of self.

This is, however, our duty as Christians. To love His church and to hold forth the word of life; not only to hold it fast for our own benefit, but to hold it forth for the benefit of others, to hold it forth as the candlestick holds forth the candle, which makes it shine before all around, or as the stars in the heavens which shed their influence far and wide and shine across the whole world.

1. Taking the leaflets our around the neighbourhood is a way of doing this.
2. Inviting people to come on Sunday or the for the Carol service is a way of doing this.
3. To explain what Christmas means to you is a way of doing this.
 - Let us as Christ's followers keep ourselves in the delightful atmosphere of His love. It is our fault and our shame if we spend so many days in the chilling fogs or under the heavy clouds of unbelief, or in the contaminating atmosphere of conformity to the world.
 - "Is it always foggy here on the banks of Newfoundland?" inquired a passenger of an old sea captain. "How should I know, madam? I don't live here." — *Gospel Herald*.

In the middle of these three verses we have 'suffering, the pouring out' of a life, a life of sacrifice, a life sacrificed to the Lord. Before and after, however, like a sandwich is rejoicing, rejoicing. What a helpful way of facing the cost of sacrifice, yes rejoicing in what all this suffering is leading to and for.

Let's show our love for the Lord we profess and give him 100% Let us show our love for him by loving his people to **encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.** 1 Thess 5:11 Heaven is the eternal home, the road there is full of bumps and potholes and dead ends turning of it but those who persevere to the end will receive the crown of life.