

## Prayer List

Gene  
Veda  
Wallace  
Sheila  
Judy  
Rose

## Services:

### **Sunday**

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.  
Assembly 10:00 a.m.  
Assembly 11:00 a.m.

### **Wednesday**

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

## Elders:

Brad Behrens - [bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com](mailto:bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com)  
Michael Odom - [MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com](mailto:MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com)

## This Week's Question:

Who used a sheep's horn as a container for oil?

## Answer To Last Week's Question:

The Ethiopian eunuch - Acts 8:27-35

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# *Pinole Tidings*

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## **Epaphroditus: With No Thought For Himself**

Paul Blake

I like Epaphroditus; I can't help it. He's one of those seldom noticed, infrequently mentioned, self-effacing heroes who, working together single-mindedly with others like himself, spread the gospel throughout the whole world in 31 years. Paul liked him, too.

The imprisoned apostle calls Epaphroditus "my brother," describing him with such intense terms of praise as to leave no doubt about Paul's deep respect and affection for him. "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellowsoldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants" (Philippians 2:25). Paul's characterizations of Epaphroditus as worker and warrior, messenger and minister give us insight into his self-less, considerate nature. This devout man who took no thought for himself and focused only on serving others becomes our model of quiet toil for Christ. He is worthy of our admiration and imitation.

**Worker.** There are few accolades for the worker. Managers and foremen get production bonuses and

honors at the company dinner, while the laborers stand day after day sweating in the assembly line, unknown and unsung. However, it's the united efforts of these persistent, loyal workers that comprise the foundation of the business. In the kingdom, the apostles' names are usually remembered by everyone, but how much more difficult would their task have been without the quiet, unselfish services of thousands of un-noticed people like Epaphroditus.

**Warrior.** The soldier's life is not an easy one. He gives up a peaceful home life in a quiet neighborhood in exchange for unpleasant quarters near the battle front. He trades good food and leisure time for uncertain fare and guard duty. He puts himself in harm's way enduring hardship because a soldier fights on behalf of another. He dies so that others might live. Epaphroditus risked his life to wait on Paul, leaving the comfort of his home in Philippi to hazard his life and health seeing to Paul's needs in prison.

**Messenger.** A messenger typifies the true servant of the Savior. He is not the author of the message; another gets the credit for the information it contains. He is not the recipient of the message; someone else benefits from the contents of the missive. The messenger just carries it from one to the other braving the trials along the path, fearing the displeasure of the sender should he fail, and risking the anger of the receiver who may despise the message. Epaphroditus cared so much for those who would receive Paul's message that it troubled him to hear they were worried for his health. In his estimation, his own physical state was too unimportant to worry the people he served. "For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness,

because that ye had heard that he had been sick" (Phil 2:26).

**Minister.** As Epaphroditus ministered to Paul's needs on behalf of the Philippians, he did so at his own expense (indicated by the connotation of "ministered" in the original). This service became quite expensive in terms of his health. "Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life, to supply your lack of service toward me" (Philippians 2:30). Epaphroditus understood that ministering to others required sacrifice; it meant that the minister must place greater value on the needs of his charge than on his own interests. This attitude reflects the character of Jesus who ministered to our spiritual needs. Our need for salvation was more important to Him than His own desire to remain in heaven with the Father. Our liberty was a greater matter to Him than His own freedom from suffering and humiliation. To Him, our new life outweighed His loss of life. Epaphroditus walked in the steps of the Savior.

Whether we minister by waiting at another's bedside or exhorting from a pulpit, we can profit by thinking more on what we can do and less on what we are due.

Epaphroditus took no thought for himself. In so doing, he became a textbook example of the words of the Lord: "But whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: for even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:43, 45). We have been reborn, not to be waited on, but to wait upon, not to be honored, but to give honor. To incorporate this principle, make Epaphroditus your hero. "Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness; and hold such in reputation" (Philippians 2:29).