



**SERIES: Philippians (May / June) “Finding Joy in the Journey”**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Saturday, June 12, 2021**

**Scripture: Philippians 2:28-30**

**TITLE: Are You Willing To Live For Christ?**

I bet you’ve never heard of Dr. Nathan Barlow and that’s the way he wanted it. But I’m going to talk about him anyway. Dr. Barlow was a medical doctor who dedicated his life to serving the Mossy Foot people in Ethiopia. Mossy foot is a debilitating condition that causes swelling and ulcers in the feet and lower legs. The subsequent deformity and secondary infections make people with mossy foot social outcasts, equivalent to lepers. Dr. Barlow loved these people - so much so, that when he needed a tooth extraction, he flew back to the US and asked the dentist to pull all of his teeth, so he wouldn’t have to leave his people again. He died serving these outcasts.

Many people today think Christianity is “all about me”. It’s all about what you can get. But that’s not at all what it’s about. Listen to how Paul describes the life of a fellow Christian in Philippians 2:28-30 (NLT):

So I am all the more anxious to send him back to you, for I know you will be glad to see him, and then I will not be so worried about you. 29 Welcome him in the Lord’s love and with great joy, and give him the honor that people like him deserve. 30 For he risked his life for the work of Christ, and he was at the point of death while doing for me what you couldn’t do from far away.

Paul is getting ready to send his friend and fellow Christian soldier, Epaphroditus, to see the Philippian church. In verse 25, Paul describes him as a brother, fellow worker, soldier, messenger, and minister. That’s why Paul says this man is worthy of honor. So when he comes, show him how special and faithful he is.

And then he says, this man “risked his life for the sake of Christ”. He was able to fill in the gap where you, Philippian brothers and sisters, could not. I want to camp out here for a moment. We don’t think much about risking our lives for Christ. It’s just not a reality here in America. Maybe it is where you are listening today. For many of us, our risk is maybe being blocked on social media, avoided at family gatherings, or maybe being sued. But Paul, Epaphroditus, Peter, James, and many others felt and experienced true suffering for Christ. This faithful servant of Christ – Epaphroditus - was willing to do what other Christians could not do for Paul, all for the love of Christ.

So here’s my challenge for you today: I want you to think about how far you are willing to go for the love of Christ. I think many of us are willing to die for Christ. I really do. My question is, are you willing to live for Christ? Are you willing to go where He leads? Are you willing to spend time with the people who need it most? Are you willing to sacrifice your time, treasure, and

talents for Christ? Are you willing to live for Christ? When we are willing to give freely what God has given us, God is glorified. That is the sure way to win the day.