

Note

Philippians – Part 1 of 1

Summary

Chronicles - Part 1 of 12

Philippians is a record of Paul's letters to express his appreciation and affection for the Philippian believers during his Roman imprisonment. While in prison, Paul brought to faith people who would form the core of the Philippian church – Lydia, a businesswoman, and the Philippian jailer who was converted under Paul's ministry after an earthquake miraculously broke open the prison.

Beyond thanking the Philippian church for their material support for his ministry, Paul encouraged them to live out their faith in joy and unity. We learn that a community of believers living in harmony with one another comes only through mutual humility modelled after Jesus Christ. At the same time, we see how great joy and contentment can be found by centring our lives on Christ in His service.

Transcript

Philippians – Part 1 of 1

Philippians is one of the four epistles which Paul wrote while he was in prison. This is one of the nicer epistles to read, in a sense that it was not addressing problems amongst Christians in the church. It was not attacking false doctrines that had come into the church. And also it's not so difficult to understand this epistle because it's not deep doctrine. It is teaching us about our relationship with one another, and our walk with the Lord, rather than hard-to-understand doctrine. The hardest to fully grasp is justification by faith alone. And then union with Christ, we are in Christ, in heavenly places. That was in Ephesians.

Now this epistle is written to the Christians in Philippi. Philippi was a very large city, on a very major trade route into Europe, and it was on European soil. So it was a strategic foothold: the first church, as far as we know, on European soil. Paul was sent by God to this strategic city because it would then be his foothold to enter into Europe.

It was named after the father of Alexander the Great, Philip.

So, Philippi being such a major city, was made a Roman colony. In simple words, anything that happened in Philippi, which is far away from Rome, this is Greece, was considered as if it was in Rome. And because it was so Roman in character, many retired Roman soldiers decided to live there; and because they were loyal to the Empire, they were, of course, always anti-Christian, because for them, Caesar is god to the Romans. But comes this simple faith, which says, "No, Christ is God". So in this place, the church had to undergo a lot of persecution, and it became, instead of a weak church, a very strong church, with very few problems, and also very much a part of the mission endeavour by supporting Paul in his mission effort.

How did this church start? If you have time, re-read the book of Acts chapter 16 and you will see that Paul was moving across Turkey, what which was called Asia Minor in the old days, and he was going further and further west, sort of headed towards Europe. He had no plans to go into Europe. He planned to go to another place called Bithynia. But the Holy Spirit stopped him from going to Bithynia, and then led him further and further west, and then he gets a vision of someone from Macedonia say,

“Come over and help us”. So Paul goes over into Macedonia, Greece, and then comes to the city of Philippi. Now, Paul’s typical tactic is always to go to the synagogue to start, that’s where you can find a potential man of peace. But there was no synagogue in the city of Philippi, a very Roman city. And so he decided to go to a certain place where he expected to see a prayer meeting on the Sabbath day. Jews would go on the Sabbath, when there is no synagogue, to some place to celebrate the Sabbath. And he found some ladies, I think, having a Jewish Sabbath service or prayer meeting, and he shared the gospel with them. And a lady called Lydia, a business woman from Turkey, Asia Minor, had gone over to sell cloth. She sold a special type of cloth called purple cloth. It’s got a unique kind of dye. Lydia and her household got saved.

And then, as Paul was sharing the faith in Philippi, a demon-possessed girl comes along and starts disturbing Paul in his evangelism efforts. She keeps saying, “Listen to this man, he’s a servant of the high God, he’s a servant of high God”. She’s saying something good but because she is demon-possessed, she is disturbing his meeting and so Paul cast out the demon from this girl. The problem was that this girl was employed by somebody like a fortune-teller because she had this evil spirit in her. And when Paul cast out the demon, this girl was now of no commercial value to her old boss and so her boss complained to the city and Paul was arrested. They accused Paul of bringing something that was against Rome, which is true because Christ is God rather than Caesar is god. And so they arrested him, beat him, and put him in jail. And the Bible goes on to tell us, at midnight, they were singing, and there was an earthquake. The walls were crumbling, the doors dislodged and the jailer screams and was terrified because, in Roman law, if any prisoner escapes, the jailer is crucified, not killed, crucified. So, he screams, “what must I do to be saved?” He probably heard Paul preaching the whole night day there, listening to the gospel. And Paul says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household”, and he trusted the Lord. So Paul spent a night probably sharing the gospel with him, his family and his household. And they were baptized the next day. So now Lydia’s family, and the jailer’s family were probably the core for this new church. But the problem was Paul was in jail.

The next day, the magistrate said, “Just let them go, they are just a nuisance, just ask them to get out of the city.” And Paul said, “What do you mean? You asked me to get out of the city? Do you know I’m a Roman citizen? You arrested me illegally as a Roman citizen, you beat me, you

put me in jail without trial. That's not acceptable in Roman law. The magistrates came to apologize to Paul and asked him to leave the city.

That means that Paul had a very short time in the city, probably spent some time with Lydia's family, and a little time with the jailer's family, and then he had to leave. In spite of this, this church prospered. He had made disciples of Lydia and the jailer that they had learned how to share the gospel just by watching Paul in that short period of time. And so a church grew up in Philippi. And Paul never saw this church again, until this letter was written.

And this church, though it was persecuted, (How do you know it is persecuted? The Romans were against the Christians because Who is God? Caesar or Christ?) continued to grow. And then when this Philippian church heard years later that Paul was imprisoned, they sent money to Paul. And not only money, because they've actually done that before at other times when they heard about Paul being here and there, they also sent a man called Epaphroditus to carry this money, and to minister to Paul in prison.

Now Epaphroditus got so sick when he was taking care of Paul, he nearly died. And then rumours went back to the Philippian church that Epaphroditus was near death. Epaphroditus got well in jail, by God's grace, not because of Paul's healing. Paul healed a lot of people while evangelizing the lost, but Paul couldn't help Epaphroditus, or Timothy. He told Timothy, "You help your stomach by drinking wine, I don't know how to fix it." There's another guy called Trophimus, another associate, he couldn't heal. Why? God uses healing usually as a mark for unbelievers, to help them see who God is. When Epaphroditus got well, Paul wrote this letter, the one you're going to read now, to the Philippian church, thanking them for Epaphroditus and for the support. So, this letter was not written in response to problems in the church, but it was basically a thanksgiving letter, and a letter with some useful words of encouragement. This is the background of this letter. It's a very different kind of letter.

Philippians 1:5 ESV

Because of your partnership in the Gospel from the first day, until now.

I would need you to underline the word "partnership". Now the King James' version uses the word "fellowship". The word "fellowship" is used more than the word "partnership", but the word "fellowship" has much less correct meaning than "partnership". Because in the church, we always say, "ladies

fellowship”, “men's fellowship”, “this fellowship”, “let's have fellowship”, we use the word very loosely. Basically we mean let's spend a bit of time together. Now the word “fellowship” or “partnership” in the Greek is “koinonia”. Now “koinonia” basically means partnership and what it also means is, “very close partnership” - that if one partner suffers, the other suffers. That's basically what it means, while our fellowship in church is, it's just chit- chat time and after that, you go your way, I go my way. If you have a problem, basically it's your problem. You can tell me about it, but basically, it's your problem. In “koinonia”, your problem is my problem, basically it's like the body. That's why the church is often called the body. Ecclesia is called the body. One part suffers or one part is hurt, the other part suffers. You cannot have it dislodged, it's not separated. Your little toe suffers, your whole body suffers with it. Your one little tooth suffers, your whole body suffers with it. So, partnership! When we say, “fellowship”, “let's have fellowship”, no, no, God don't want us just to have a fellowship. Unsaved people have a lot of fellowship. In fact, they have more fellowship than us, they can have a bottle of beer and talk the whole night. But what we want in the church should be partnership, we are a body caring for one another. One goes down, the other helps. Support one another. Suffers along; rejoices along.

Then in Philippians 1:8

For God is my witness how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.

In the King James' version, it uses 'bowels', like inside, like I long to see you, I'm dying to see you. That's the words we use in English. Paul has that kind of affection for the Philippian believers because they were one body. Again, this is very strange in our Christian life, or church life. Fellowship is to chit-chat, love means I don't hate you, we don't have quarrels and we're okay. It's all quite different.

And then Paul goes on to talk about his imprisonment because they are concerned about Paul in prison. And Paul tell us in Chapter 1, “Don't worry about my imprisonment. It turned out well. I have a captive audience. The guards are stuck with me”. Every eight hours, I think, they changed shift and the guards were literally there with Paul eight hours a day and so he says the whole imperial guard knows about Christ. In other words, Paul now had a captive audience in the Roman Palace.

Then he goes on to say, “You are all worried about me dying. I mean, because I could be executed. That's a fact. But for me to live is Christ and to die is gain”. Now this is something quite amazing and this should be a Christian truth. When we live, what's our purpose? Glorify Christ. To live is Christ. As long as I am alive, I have one goal, to lift up Christ. But for me, to die is gain. Labour is gone, with my Lord forever. So, for Paul, he was actually eager to die, but willing to stay back and serve. Now some very good Christians will say, “I'm willing to die”. It's very different from Paul's “willing to die”. Paul said, “I'm willing to die. I'm eager to die because I'll be with the Lord but I'm willing to stay”. For most Christians it's “I'm willing to die, but actually I'm eager to stay”. So, for them, death is a sacrifice for the Lord. For Paul, it's the other way around. “To be alive” is a sacrifice because that keeps me away from the Lord. Can you see the orientation of Paul? And that should be our orientation. After all, Heaven is so much better; being with the Lord is so much better than being with sinful men. So anyway, for Paul, that was his dream, but he said, “I think I'm not going to get what I want. I think God is going to let me live on so that I can serve you and visit you and encourage you and write letters to you, etc.” So, when people say, “Oh that man sacrificed for the Lord, he gave his life for the Lord”, I'm not so sure it's correct. Some of these people think that being with the Lord is better. Many people say to me, “You sacrificed by giving up your medical profession” but I say, “I don't think I can call it a sacrifice, I call it an upgrade”. Serving God is definitely better than serving a corporation or serving your business. It's an upside down world.

Philippians 1:27.

Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving side by side for the faith of the gospel.

So, Paul's dream for the Philippians is that “You guys unite and strive together for the faith of the gospel”. They were under persecution in the Philippian church. They needed each other like a body to encourage one another, to continue promoting and proclaiming the gospel. So that was his goal. You must do it together, strive together.

Philippians 2:2-4,

complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit,

but in humility, count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

Paul knew that as they were having to serve together, there is always this tendency for people to get irritated with others. It's very natural. In any team, some will get stronger, look on others as weaker; some are smarter, look on others as less smart; some who are very decisive, look on others as less decisive, and we tend to look down on others and that's where this unity comes up. So, Paul says, You serve together with one mind, in humility, count others more significant than yourself. How can we do that? We always think we are right. If I'm a decisive guy, I think the indecisive people are useless. If I think that I'm a good speaker, then I think people who can't speak are useless. But they have other talents. You always think your gift is the most significant.

How can we do that? Look at Philippians 2:5-8.

Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though He was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross.

The only way we can have this mind that doesn't exalt ourselves and want to maintain our superiority over others is to have the mind of Christ. What is the mind of Christ? It tells us here, in these little, few words, how beautifully Christ humbled Himself. It says here in verse 5, "though He is God, He did not count equality with God, a thing to be grasped". So though He had the highest possible status as God, He didn't want to hang on to the privileges of that status. But He emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. He never stopped being God, but He didn't hang on to the privileges of God. And being born in the likeness of man. Now in the "likeness of man", what does that mean? He was like man, though 100%, every time He was on Earth, He was God. He never was less than that. But He put aside the privileges. What are the privileges? Number one, the glory in heaven. In heaven, the angels were all around Him, praising Him day and night. He came to earth, put away all those privileges. As God, He's omnipresent. He could be everywhere, anytime. As man, He could only be at one place at a time. So, God became man. As God, He's omnipotent. He made the heaven and earth, Jesus created heaven and earth by His word. As man, He walked from place to place. Any miracle He did, He did it as helped by the Holy Spirit. That's why He never did any miracle until

He started His ministry at the age of 30 when He turned water to wine. That was His first miracle. Before that, as a child, He could have done it but He put all those privileges aside.

So, please understand that He never became less than God. But He put aside the privileges. It was a choice. It's an attitude of willingness to put away what we have, so that we can be with those around us. There are people who go on a mission trip and they still want the privileges. They want everybody to look up to them, make sure the cars are waiting for them and make sure the hotel is the right type of hotel. And the poor guys helping on these mission trips spend more time helping this guy than this guy helps the missions. Why? Because they don't know how, they still want those privileges. Jesus, when He came to this Earth, He became 100% man. This is amazing and up to today, for all eternity, from 2000 years ago, Jesus put away those privileges so that He can be with us. That is the mind of Christ. So, we see here, how can we have this mind of Christ? I think I'm so much smarter, I know more of the Bible than those guys. Then the moment you think that way, you just think of Christ, how He could just be with the rest, blend in with the rest, almost totally blend in, to the extent that they had to pay 30 pieces of silver to identify him.

Philippians 2:12, an often misunderstood verse,
Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

Many people read it as “work for your salvation”. “Work out your salvation” is different from “work for your salvation”. Salvation was “worked for” by Christ. He did it for us. But when we got it, now we have to work out our salvation. Let me give you an example. Sometimes I'm very privileged to have a good mentor. And let's just say, a medical mentor. Out of sheer generosity he comes to help me. When I started my business, there was a business consultant, an American man who, out of sheer generosity, helped me to start my medical practice. He never expected a thing from me. He just helped me to get my basic business principles right. Now, did I work for these skills? No, I didn't, he worked it into me. He kept talking to me, teaching me, but it was my responsibility now that he blessed me with so much business acumen that I had to work it out. I hope you understand what it is. So we are not working for salvation, we work out what we got freely. Now, in some Bibles, it is poorly translated. In the Bahasa Indonesia

Bible, it almost seems you have to work for your salvation, which is really the opposite.

Now, how do you work out your salvation?

Philippians 2:13,

for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.

So, God not only works His salvation in us, He gives us the Holy Spirit so that the Holy Spirit can give us the means to work it out. He works to justify us by faith, and then the Holy Spirit comes and helps to sanctify us by faith. As we trust the Holy Spirit in us, then the life of the Holy Spirit can be seen through us and one of the effects of it is that we will stop grumbling,

Philippians 2:14

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world.

One of the ways that people know we are believers is, God works in us a new kind of lifestyle that doesn't have much grumblings and disputings. What are grumblings and disputings? Always grumbling about others and petty quarrelling with others. That's a mark of our old nature. Why do we grumble? Because we think we deserve better, "Ah, the service is no good, why are they so slow?" In other words, "You got to serve me, guys". Disputing is like, "Why are they so stupid? My way is right!" But, after we have Christ in us, the Holy Spirit will work it out. We work out the life of Christ that we don't expect privileges, we are willing to put it aside, and we want to humble ourselves and don't think we're the smartest guys in the room.

And then at the end of Chapter 2, it gives two examples of such wonderful people, who just served and served. One was Timothy and the other was Epaphroditus. Both of them are beautiful examples of people who just gave their lives, humbly serving quietly.

Philippians 3:2,

Look out for the dogs, (that's a very strong word to the Jews, it's a curse) look out for the evil doers, look out for those who mutilate the flesh. For we are the circumcision, who worship by the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh ----

What's Paul telling them? Paul is telling them, Be careful of those guys who come and tell you that you need to be circumcised. Remember the Galatians? They are still around. Every time the Jews come, they try to convince the new believers that faith in Christ alone is not enough. You need other conditions if you want to be truly a believer, you need the full gospel. And in the full gospel, they add new rules. Start with circumcision, then food rules and then 613 rules in the Torah. And then one million other man-made rules. In the end, Christ is lost somewhere. And then, it is me obeying the Law. So be very careful, works always creeps in. Legalism creeps in as a condition of salvation. It is two ends. One says, no need to fulfil the law, one says you must fulfil every word of the Law. The correct way is, trust Christ. And then Christ will give you the strength to fulfil the most important law, the Law of Christ: Love God and love your neighbour as yourself. Those are the two important laws you need. And when you've got those laws, you don't need to learn 613. Every time you see a neighbor, you say, "How would Christ serve him?" and then you go and do the same. The Law of Christ is the best: Love God and love your neighbor.

Now, Philippians 3:8-9 reminds them of their salvation by faith because works keeps creeping in.

Indeed, I account everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For His sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own, that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith.

Paul is preaching again, justification by faith, not by works of the law.

And that Paul goes on to say in Philippians 3:12

Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Jesus has made me His own.

What does it mean? Let's go to Philippians 3:17.

Brothers, join in imitating me and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.

So, what's Christianity about again? The walk, the walk. "Walk like me", Paul's says, "I try to walk like Christ". Not just know Him intellectually, know

Him experientially every day in your life, as you walk like Him. What do you mean walk like Him?

Empty yourself of all your arrogance, pride and self. You want people to look up to you? See you as clever, smart, different and exceptional? Stop that! Just humble yourself, like Christ. Make yourself humble like Christ - God, who became man, quietly serving men, as an ordinary man. One reason why Paul was always persecuted was because they looked down on him. He didn't look like a scholar, he didn't look like a leader, he was so ordinary. That's exactly what they said of Jesus, "Can He be the Messiah?" In all this, we're looking at the character of God. He is everywhere and yet we don't know. He's serving us every day and we don't know. He's serving us humbly. We always think God serves us when there's a miracle. No, day in, day out, God, serves us humbly. So, try to walk like Jesus walked among men, not on top of men.

How do you know the fakes? Philippians 3:18-19

For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their end is destruction, their god is their belly, and they glory in their shame, with minds set on earthly things.

How do you know these fakes, these enemies of the cross? Very strong word. Very simple. Their god is their belly. They do all things to satisfy their appetites. And their mind is on earthly things. What are earthly things? Status, reputation, possessions, privileges, comforts, all these things. How do you know a man is serving God? People asked me, "Do you think this guy's serving God?" I said, "No. I don't think so." They said, "How do you know? Why you read people, how do you know his heart, maybe he serves God?" I say, "Well, if his mind is on earthly things, he wants a fancy car, fancy clothes, fancy hairstyle, fancy penthouse, and fancy whatever." That's what earthly people want-they mind those things. His mind is always on those things. Every time you see him, he's got a new style, a new (this) and a new (that), then you know he's concerned about those things. He's an enemy of the cross. "Wow, you are so harsh." Please read the Bible. It's not me judging, it's what God said.

Philippians 4:2,

I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord.

He begs them to agree. There were two ladies who had some differences, and they both made a lot of difficulty for the church. Now, this is very common, it is not a major problem, but it can lead to major problems. If you get a false teacher coming in, you can kick out the false teacher, but what do you do with two very faithful women who serve but they're always quibbling with one another. That's exactly why Paul wrote this letter. Be humble, like Christ. You don't need to have the limelight all the time. You don't need people to say you're right all the time.

And then, in Philippians 4:4

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I say, rejoice.

Philippians 4:5

Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.

Paul says, "Rejoice" and people say, "How to rejoice? I have these worries: my son, my marriage, my job." And Paul gives the formula - Be anxious about nothing but in everything by prayer and supplication, everything your worries, pray and supplicate, with thanksgiving. So, the formula to clear out worries is to replace the worry. Every time, worry comes in, you pray and thank God for what you have. You lost your job, you're worried. So, what do you do? Pray, "God, please help me to get another job. But thank you, (add the thanksgiving) I still got food in the fridge and clothes on my back. I still got a roof over my head. I still got health. Thank you, God." The moment you have a worry, pray your prayer request and then thank God. That's your cure for worry. And then the worry comes back one minute later, repeat, comes back three minutes later, repeat, that's the only way to cure worry. Then you will be rejoicing because you now have a thanksgiving attached.

Philippians 4:8-9

Finally, brethren, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

You replace every worry with a prayer and then you learn to focus on things to praise. Look at the sky, "Wow, beautiful sky", praise God for it. Hear birds singing, "Wow, nice song, free song", praise God for it." What are all these beautiful things around us? Think on those things. There's a lot of beautiful things around us for us to think on. Though there may be one worry in your life, there are 1000 nice things to focus your mind on. That's the formula. Simple but not our habit. Our habit is focusing on the problem. When you focus on a problem, you don't pray, you don't thank God for what you already have. You don't praise God for the million wonderful things around you that you can focus on..

Philippians 4:11

Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content.

Paul is thanking them for the gift they gave. And he says, "Actually, I'm so thankful to you guys for giving it, but actually, I don't need it because I've learned to live very simply. When I have a lot, I'm thankful for what I have. When I have little, I'm also content with the little I have. In First Timothy 6:8, it says having food and coverings, that means clothing and house, let us be content. The greatest attitude you can have probably, is contentment. A contented person is always happy. Always. You can't take it away from him, he's contented. The greedy person is always unhappy because you can never satisfy greed, it's a bottomless pit. 3000 shoes, I still want the other one shoe I don't have. I conquer the whole world but there's the underwater (world) - the corals and the fish - I haven't conquered. It's endless. Greed is a greatest cause of dissatisfaction. Contentment is the greatest cause of satisfaction.

And in Philippians 4:13, it says,
I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Now this verse is used very frequently by people, totally out of context. Paul wrote this to say "Whether I have a lot or little, I'm happy. I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". In other words, in a state of having plenty or little, I can do all that God wants me to do. I can be as happy as I want to be. I can serve God as effectively as I want to be, whether I have a lot of money or little money. But this verse is used by people who like to be dramatic. Some people say, "I can remove Covid because "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me". My goodness, are you taking

this out of context? “I can do all things”, whatever they want? No. Just be careful of the text taken out of context. The context of “I can do all things” is whatever condition God gives us, we can do all the things God wants us to do, whether we have a lot of money, or little money, a lot of comfort, or little comfort. It's not, “I can demand anything I want from God”. But there's a lot of these hustlers going around and making a fortune out of it. How do I know they are hustlers? Their mind is on earthly things. Look at their houses they live in, the clothes they wear, the aeroplanes they fly in, and you know. No need to ask more questions.

And then finally, Paul says to them something about giving, he says in Philippians 4:17

Not that I seek the gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit.

When they gave to Paul, he was thankful, but he was already contented. The jail sentence did not affect him in anyway, there was enough food in the jail, got a shelter, he had security in the jail, he had an audience to preach to. He was contented there. He didn't need more. Then he said, “Actually your gift to me blessed me but actually, it blesses you more.” It's kind of unique. When you give to the poor, the one who is blessed, is not the poor. In God's economy, the one that is blessed is you. The poor satisfies his belly for a few minutes but you have an eternal reward.

So, what did we learn in Philippians?

The mind of Christ - lowly, quietly serving; that's the God I have. He serves me every day, and I don't even know He's serving me. What an amazing God! Not just the agape love of God, but the humble, silent, ever-serving God, whom I often don't recognize. Prayerfully I can be a little more like this God, this Jesus Christ, whom I serve.

God bless you!