

# **A Drink Offering, The Sacrifice Of Faith, Being Like-Soul & Soul Risking**

**Scripture Reading: Phil. 2:17-30; 2 Tim. 4:6; Rom. 15:16**

## **PAUL CONSTITUTED A DRINK OFFERING**

In 2:16 Paul expresses his concern about laboring in vain, but in verse 17, he realized that his labor among the Philippians had not been in vain. He knew that their faith was the basic offering upon which he could pour out himself as a drink offering. Paul thought of himself as one who was continually being sacrificed for his ministry, that he was sacrificed to the uttermost. He considered martyrdom as a pouring out of himself upon the sacrifice of the believers' faith. Throughout the years, he had continually been sacrificing himself for his ministry. However, it was not until the time of martyrdom that he was poured out to the uttermost as a drink offering. Now if even he was poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and priestly service of the believers' faith, he could rejoice together with them all.

When we experience Christ to an exceedingly high degree, we shall become a drink offering. In the Old Testament, the drink offering was additional to the basic offerings revealed in Leviticus (**Num. 15:1-10; 28:7-10**). The basic offerings were types of various aspects of Christ. If one of the basic offerings was offered without the drink offering, this was an indication that there was something lacking with the presentation of the basic offering. The one who offered the basic offering must have been rather poor. The drink offering was a type of Christ as enjoyed by the offerer, an offering that fills him with Christ as the heavenly wine and even causes him to become wine to God. While the drink offering signifies that the offerer himself becomes the drink offering, this does not mean that the offerer can be such a drink offering according to his own natural constitution. Rather, he must enjoy Christ to such an extent that Christ fills him, saturates him, and permeates him. When we enjoy Him by taking Him into us, we shall become filled with Him and thoroughly saturated with Him. In this way we shall become the wine to be poured out as a drink offering upon the offerings we present to God. The apostle Paul became such a drink offering by so enjoying Christ that he could be poured out by the shedding of his blood upon the believers' faith as a sacrifice to God.

## **FAITH OF THE SAINTS (AS THE BASIC OFFERING) CONSTITUTED OF THE ENJOYMENT OF CHRIST**

In 2:17 Paul speaks of "the sacrifice and priestly service of your faith." The sacrifice of the believers' faith means that the faith of the Philippian believers was considered by Paul a sacrifice offered to God by him as a priest (**Rom. 15:16**), and his offering ministry was considered a priestly service. The issue, the result, of Paul's ministry was the faith of the believers. Faith in 2:17 includes all that the believers have received and enjoyed. Ultimately it includes what the believers themselves are. This faith was the result of Paul's ministry. Paul's ministry resulted in the all-inclusive faith of the believers, the faith which Paul offered to God as a sacrifice. The amount of faith constituted in us is in proportion to our enjoyment of Christ. The more we enjoy Him, the more we have the faith which is constituted of the enjoyment of Christ. Based upon the principle in the Old Testament that the drink offering required a basic offering, Paul regarded the faith constituted of the believers' experience of Christ as the basic offering upon which he could pour out himself as a drink offering.

Paul rejoiced to have his blood shed as a drink offering upon the sacrifice of the believers' faith. He not only rejoiced, but he rejoiced together with all the saints. To rejoice together with others is to share joy with them. The apostle shared his joy with the Philippians in his martyrdom over their faith. It is significant that Paul says, "I rejoice and rejoice together with you." The reason he speaks of rejoicing and then of rejoicing together with the saints is that two constitutions are involved: the faith of the believers as one constitution, and the apostle as a drink offering as the other. It is not possible for there to be rejoicing on one side, but not on the other side. The apostle rejoices, and the believers respond by rejoicing with him. This was the reason Paul could say, "And in like manner you also rejoice and rejoice together with me."

## **EXPERIENCING CHRIST AND CARING FOR THE SAINTS**

In 2:19-30 we see Paul's concern for the believers. Immediately after referring to himself as a drink offering poured out upon the sacrifice and priestly service of the believers' faith, Paul speaks of

sending Timothy and Epaphroditus, two intimate co-workers, to the saints in Philippi. In 2:20 and 21 Paul says, "For I have no one like-souled who will genuinely care for what concerns you; for all seek their own things, not the things of Christ Jesus." What are the things of Christ? The things of Christ are the churches with all the saints. Here we see the important point that if our seeking after Christ does not result in a concern for the church, our seeking is at least somewhat abnormal or biased. Many Christians today are seeking spirituality, but they have no concern for the churches with the saints. Such a spiritual seeking is not normal. We must check our seeking after Christ in relation to the concern for the churches with the saints. Many desire to be "spiritual," "holy," or "victorious." Those who pursue spirituality without a concern for the churches are misled in their seeking. The normal seeking after Christ includes a concern for the churches and the saints. The experience of Christ must be for His Body. I believe that, deep within, as Paul was testifying that he was willing to be poured out as a drink offering upon the believers' faith, he was concerned for them. The genuine experience of Christ will always cause us to care for the churches and the saints

## THE NEED TO BE ONE IN SOUL

Experiencing Christ in our spirit is primarily for our individual, personal experience. But our personal experience of Christ must issue in a concern for the churches. If our experience of Christ results in a concern for the churches and the saints, it will be impossible for us to be individualistic. Instead, we shall realize the need to be corporate. In order to care for the church, we must be one with others. Otherwise, the more concern we have for the church, the more problems we shall cause. One brother will enjoy Christ in the spirit, and this experience will give him a concern for the church. Another brother will also enjoy Christ in the spirit, but have a different kind of concern for the church. These different kinds of concern will cause problems. The only way for us to be one in our concern for the church is to be like-souled, to be joined in soul. In order to accomplish something for Christ, we must use our soul. To simply have fellowship with the Lord it is sufficient to exercise our spirit, but to do something for Him we need to exercise our soul with its faculties. This was the reason God created the soul with the faculties of mind, emotion, and will. Whenever we seek to accomplish something for the Lord, we must use these faculties.

However, the serious problem is that when Christians endeavor to do something for the Lord Jesus out of their love for Him, they are not like-souled. Instead, they are very different in the soul. These differences in the soul are the primary cause of division. It is very important to realize that if we hold such an attitude because of differences in the soul, this will cause our experience of Christ to be limited. We shall not be able to experience Him to the full extent. Rather, our experience of Christ will be limited to what we experience in our fellowship with Him in the spirit. We shall be hindered from going further to experience Christ in the Body. Only by experiencing Christ in the Body do we experience Him to the fullest extent. In order to experience Christ in the Body, our experience needs to be corporate. Furthermore, to have a corporate experience of Christ we need to be like-souled with others. It is vitally important that we learn to be like-souled.

## EXPERIENCING CHRIST BY RISKING OUR SOUL

Paul also tells the Philippian believers that Epaphroditus was their apostle, one sent with a commission, and a priestly minister to his need. **(2:25)** In 2:30 Paul tells us that for the work of Christ Epaphroditus "drew near even unto death, risking his life, that he might fill up your lack of service toward me." The Greek word rendered *risking* means "venturing, recklessly exposing one's life, like a gambler throwing down a stake." The Greek word for *life* in verse 30 is *psuche*, the word for *soul*. Hence, to say that Epaphroditus risked his life means that he risked his soul. Epaphroditus was one who, like the Good Shepherd **(John 10:11)**, was willing to sacrifice his soul for the churches and the saints. If we desire to be one with the Lord for His recovery, we must be willing to sacrifice our mind, feeling, and intention. This is to risk our soul. In order to experience Christ to the uttermost, we need to be not only like-souled, but also to risk our soul by risking our mind, emotion, and will. If we do not risk our soul, we shall not be able to fill up any lack there may be in the Body of Christ. (Phil.2:30) Filling a lack in the Body affords us a splendid opportunity to experience Christ. We need to experience Christ to such an extent that we are able to fill up what is lacking in the Body. If we would experience Christ to this degree, we must risk our soul life by sacrificing our emotion with its desires, our will with its intentions, and our mind with its opinions. Whenever we sacrifice our soul for the sake of the Body, we have an opportunity to experience Christ in the Body. This is to experience Christ to the full extent.