

“Empty”

Phillipians 2:5-7 NRSV- Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not regard equality with God as something to be exploited, but emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, being born in human likeness.

You have heard the saying to always have an “ace up your sleeve”. As we go through life we are almost conditioned to have something left over. Always make sure you have a little left over. We work hard and put money aside for retirement, and hopefully a little something to leave to our children. Make sure you have a rainy day fund. We are also taught to do the same with other resources. We use pantries, freezers, canning, anything we can to preserve our rations for the next day. Never let the tank get empty.

The problem is.... What happens at the end of the day, if things aren’t used up?... They can go to waste.

When I was in college, one of our workouts was a pool workout. It was something you only hear about and once you experience it, you realize that you will never be the same. The closest thing I can relate it to is something you would see in a documentary about Navy SEALs. Basically, we were told we had to tread water for a period of 7 minutes. Once the time was over some individuals were given floatation devices, some left the same, and some were strapped down with additional weight depending on your ability. Then it was tread for another 7 minutes. During this time you could see guys around you start to “bob” up and down. Once a person went under for too long the life guards would pull them out. As we continued everyone got to experience what it was like to have nothing left. Up until this training, I knew what it was like to be tired. I could even remember those moments when my workouts made me shut down toward the end. But as you look around and take a big gulp of water and the thought of drowning comes to mind, you realize what it means to exhaust everything you have to survive. You find out about being “Empty”.

As I read this passage that Paul writes to the Phillipians, I realize that we are to empty ourselves in the same way that Christ was empty. We are called to exhaust all resources for His sake. And Just like you, when the Israelites were lost in the wilderness, each day God will provide the resources for the next day.

So how do we know that we are exhausted for the Gospel? The first thing to remember is to know when you are empty. You have to truly find out when you have nothing left to give. Until you can come to grips with what it means to be completely used up, you will never understand what Christ did in your life. When you understand that Christ was fully God and did not think that being God is something to be exploited. He emptied himself so that you may have eternal life. The second thing is to realize is that each day God will provide the resources to continue. You will not be left abandoned. Christ sustains those who call upon his name. And the last thing you must do is make a commitment to empty yourself each moment you can so that others may feel the love that Christ has given to you. It is a daily work in progress. Each day we must become stronger than we were the day before.

So are you saving something up for tomorrow? Is there something more you have to give? Have you re-evaluated your relationship with God today? Is there something more that you can do?

Don’t wait. Empty yourself.

Prayer: Gracious God, you have so wonderfully given us all the resources we need to fulfill your purposes. Selfishly we have kept them to ourselves. Today allow us to become empty. Allow us to use everything for your great glory. In Jesus name, Amen.