



## Fruit From The Shadows

*"But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly. Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful. Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem; because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me." ~ Philippians 2:24-30*

Some Christians serve, influence, and lead others to Jesus from the shadows.. but I don't mean while they are in the darkness. They are pointing people to the Way out of darkness.

Some have received leadership, administrative, or maybe evangelistic gifting. And all others are also called to witness for Christ with the talents and abilities that God has ordained for them. It's His work and He does what He will for the good of His body, the Church.

With every blessing and gifting also comes personal responsibility.

Do you remember that dear man, Epaphroditus?

Well, he never became a person of the limelight, though he loved the Light! We can't see that he really became a "point man" or famous like some of the other Bible figures became famous.

He was simply a straightforward servant and probably wasn't tall dark and handsome like King Saul, or as influential as King David was. He never led a great army into battle, he never held a political office or even had the notoriety that the Apostle Paul had. But he did what he could with what he had where he was, and God logged his name in the Bible for all of us to see. It seems like God enjoys giving more to people like that ..who are faithful in the small things.

Why did God mention his name?

'Cause we can all learn from Epaphroditus and others like him!

*"Do what you can, with what you have, where you are." ~Theodore Roosevelt*

*"For right now, I'm dispatching Epaphroditus, my good friend and companion in my work."  
~ Paul (v. 25, msg)*

*Fruitful missionary service will grow and flourish from the soil of faithful worship, no matter where you are.*

Think about it, he remained in obscurity to a large degree, even though he played an uber-vital role in the Kingdom of God!

He was basically a "nobody" but in spite of that, he was fully committed to a "Somebody" (the Bible Jesus). And he wisely linked up with effective witnesses to promote the Cause above all causes—Spirit-led world evangelization! **That's why he became a real somebody to Paul ..and to us.**

Check it out.. how Paul describes Epaphroditus...

*He was a people lover—a "minister"—which means humble servant who cared.*

*He was family—a "brother"—one who could be relied upon when it was crunch-time.*

*He was a wise risk taker—a "fellow soldier"—ready to get it done and fight the good fight of faith.*

*He was a tireless laborer—a "fellow worker"—who chose not to get weary in well doing.*

*He was a Good News deliverer—a "messenger"—who loved Christ more than the mission, yet obeyed the Spirit in spite of personal discomfort.*

Are you all too familiar with the shadows and really despise em 'bout now? Listen, be content with how God has made you and live 100 percent for Him from this day forward. **Expect great things in the Lord and give it your all in faith.** Paul says we are to **"hold such men [as Epaphroditus] in esteem."**

Do you feel you've been banished to the back side of the desert for forty years or somethin'? Go read about Moses and all he learned in the desert. Check out the results of his obedience. He was reluctant at first, but he had a little chat with the Lord about that kinda stuff. John the Baptizer lived in the desert too and city folk just flocked to go hear him tell the truth some thirty miles away. Many were radically changed there.

Did you know that Jesus Himself had emerged from obscurity to be baptized by John the Baptist? Yep, when Jesus came up out of those waters, He and others heard His Father say, **"You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased"** (Lk. 3:22). Divine endorsement and introduction time!

Well, what exactly had Jesus Christ been up to ..that merited such unqualified acceptance and endorsement? Jesus, at that point, had not yet performed even one miracle; Christ had not preached a single message; He had not even cleansed one leper or healed anyone.

Our Lord had not yet done anything that ..well, I mean that people of the world back then or even in our day.. would normally associate with "greatness." So what had Jesus been doing back in Nazareth during those thirty years of silence? I'll tell ya! He was growing **"in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men"** (2:52). Are you doing that while living in obscurity? You can start ..in Him!

*You'll go forth a bit stronger a bit bolder ..with a fresh supply of His grace,  
You'll make progress and even grow, if you fix your gaze upon His lovely face!  
Yes indeed, if each day you meet with Him to listen in a secret and obscure kinda place.*

Are you like.. totally sick of carnal Christianity, compromise, unbelief and not letting Christ be your boss ..yet? Tell Him about it. Do you have an addiction to [drugs](#) or to [alcohol](#) or to something else that you'd really like to break free from? What is impeding your progress? You can get real with Him. he knows it all anyways.

Maybe you feel like you constantly live under gray clouds and never see the Sonshine? Would you like to be done with depression, oppression, fools pulling ya down spiritually, or with an anemic or defeated Christian experience? Ask God for victory and holy passion today!

Perhaps you would like to [be freshly empowered by the Holy Spirit](#) for tactful [world changing](#)? You can start where you are.

Would you really like to [play a part in God's Great Commission](#)?

Do you ever feel worthless like your life will never even amount to a hill of beans? Have you blown it so bad in the past, repented, and yet still feel sore from kicking yourself? Are you sick of the accuser of the brethren also kicking you around ..after he did all the tempting in the first place? What a dweeb he is!

The Bible says, **"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit"** ([Rom. 8:1](#)). What does that mean in the original Greek text? It means "no condemnation."

**A palm tree can flourish and bear fruit under it's shade bearing fronds out in the desert. You can bear fruit in a desert as well (See [Psalm 92:12](#))!** Do you need a second chance.. or maybe an 89<sup>th</sup> chance? Are you a few-talent-person with very little influence ..or perhaps a one-talent-person surrounded by several ten-talent kinda people? Do you want the Lord to [use you to make an impact with people](#) one-on-one ..or perhaps even one-on-more-than-one at times?

God can do a lot with a lot, but as you read through His love letter (the Bible) you will see that He delights to do a whole lot with a little. Are you willing to be made willing? Hey lives are at stake around you.

What matters is that "the little" is put [into the Master's hands](#).. even if it's now in the shadows.

Have a prayer request or some questions about knowing God ..and how to properly walk in Jesus Christ? At [fish4souls.org](#) click "[Contact](#)" and let us know! Perhaps we can help. Follow.. [Facebook.com/ShareJesus](#) or [Google Buzz](#) or at [Twitter.com/kurtwvs](#)

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