

DATE: October 9, 2011  
TITLE: "OTHERS"  
TEXT: Philippians 2:3-8  
SERIES: "MADE FOR MORE" No. 3  
Transition from ME TO YOU

## INTRODUCTION:

The Salvation Army gathered for a conference. When the people arrived they were saddened to learn that their founder, William Booth, was too sick to come. Booth was expected to deliver the keynote address to the conference but was unable to travel. Instead, he asked if he could write his speech and have it read for him at the conference. The night came and the crowd gathered to hear their revered founder's speech read to them. They expected his words to explain many things, to inspire them with a rationale for their service. Instead, Booth was able to fit his entire speech into one telegram message. It represented the focus of the movement's work. When the telegram was read to the crowd, it contained but one word: "Others."

### I. (v.3) A CALL TO CONSIDER OTHERS

**"Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves." (Philippians 2:3)**

- 1 Others
- 2 The word "others" is used both in verse 3 and verse 4.
- 3 The Apostle Paul had made the transition in his own life from self to others.
- 4 He had made the shift from "it's about me" to "it's about you" through the transforming power of Christ.
- 5 Paul's priorities for his life were clear.
- 6 He dedicated his life first to God and then to the call of others.
- 7 Some have used the acrostic for Joy to describe the life of a Christian.

**EXAMPLE: \*\* (On screen) J.O.Y. = Jesus, Others, Yourself**

- 8 Joy comes from us laying out our priorities: Jesus first, Others next, and finally, Yourself.

- 9 Paul wants us to regard others.

**ILLUSTRATION: \* \*Poet and critic, John Andrew Holmes insightfully quipped, "The entire population of the universe, with one little exception, is composed of others."**

- 10 Others are too significant to be ignored.
- 11 Others were on the heart and mind of the Apostle Paul.
- 12 Paul wrote to the church of Corinth, **"So I will very gladly spend for you everything I have and expend myself as well."** (II Corinthians 12:15)
- 13 That was written from the pen of someone who was considering others more than self.
- 14 He could not ignore others or get them off his heart, for he wanted others to know Christ.

15 On Labor Day Sunday, we looked at the passage of scripture where Paul wrote, **“...even as I try to please everybody in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.” (I Corinthians 10:33)**

16 Paul’s heart for God and for others drove his ministry.

17 The Apostle Paul expresses his heart that Christians are to consider others often.

**EXAMPLE: Willie Nelson wrote a love song that says, “You’re Always On My Mind.”**

18 Paul wants us to have others on our heart and on our mind.

**“Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.”**

**(I Corinthians 10:24)**

19 In his letter to the Romans expressing what the transformed life looks like, he writes, **“Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves.” (Romans 12:10)**

20 We are hard wired for self preservation, advancement and comfort.

21 The spirit of the day is often to secure success even at the destruction or ruin of another.

22 This is a long way from what Jesus taught when He said, **“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ And... “Love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.” (Mark 12:31)**

23 The transition from self to others requires a surrender of selfishness.

24 The spirit of unity Paul is writing about does not have room for selfish ambition or vain conceit.

25 Unity is impossible if each of us is out for ourselves, promoting our own preferences, passions, and cause.

26 In the church, considering others causes us to let go of some of our preferences for the sake of others.

27 In the home, considering others calls for adjustments and surrender of preferences for the sake of others.

28 To consider others mean that we are no longer at the center of our attention.

29 Paul is writing about a transition from me to you, from self to others that is only possible by His power through a relationship with Jesus.

**“If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship with the Spirit...” (Philippians 2:1)**

30 By His love and Spirit, we are to consider others.

31 Self is not to be in the way or to be the motivation for what we do.

**“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.” (Philippians 2:3)**

32 Selfish ambition is insisting on my way and wanting to be prominent.

33 Vain conceit is doing so because you believe yourself to be more important than everyone else and that your desires matter more than others’.

34 Paul is writing against the self-seeking spirit.

35 In one of his letters, John writes of someone in the church that had this spirit when he said, **“I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who loves to be first, will have nothing to do with us.” (3 John 1:9)**

36 Paul writes that this spirit is not what we are to have but, instead, we are to consider others.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*(Appropriate picture- perhaps of web site and, if possible, picture of the climbing wall if it can be found) The Make-A-Wish Foundation has been granting the wishes of children with life-threatening illnesses since 1980. Most commonly, children wish to meet a celebrity, shake the hand of the president, or go to Disney World. Mak Shulist, a critically ill nine-year-old, wished to enrich the lives of others. Before a brain tumor took Mak's life on April 9th, 2004, he got the Make-A-Wish Foundation to build something for his friends: a rock-climbing wall on the playground of Ellisville Elementary School. Dave Knes, principal at the 600-student school in suburban Ellisville, Missouri said, "We learned a lesson from a nine-year-old—that even when we're going through tough times, we should be thinking of other people and not ourselves." (Selfless Dying Boy, 9, Gets Climbing Wall Built, Courier Journal (4-12-04); submitted by Van Morris, Mt. Washington, Kentucky.)**

37 A transition from self to others requires humility.

38 Selfish ambition or vain conceit spring from the root sin of pride, which should have no place in the transformed life of a Christian.

39 Humility is a uniquely Christian virtue that stands in utter contradiction to the values of the Greco Roman world where humility was not a virtue but a shortcoming.

40 The humble fear the Lord.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*“Humility is the driving desire to give God the glory in all things and to obey him regardless” (Joseph Stowell – Educator and Author)**

41 Humility is at the heart of a relationship with God.

**“He has showed you, O man, what is good and what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:8)**

42 Humble people are open to the Lord and to others.

43 Humble people are primarily other-directed.

44 Christ's self-emptying is the supreme example of humility.

**“...he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!” (Philippians 2:8)**

45 Humility requires the surrender of self.

**“I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” (Galatians 2:20)**

46 True humility is resting our case with God rather than resting our own strength.

47 Considering others better than yourselves means thinking more highly of others than self.

48 It means valuing the needs of others.

49 It is not just looking at ministry from a selfish perspective but from the perspective of others.

50 It is considering others better in the sense that their needs and concerns surpass my own.

**ILLUSTRATION: This year, in an article in the *Wall Street Journal*, Eric Greatens, a former Navy SEAL, divulged the one quality that makes for a successful SEAL—the ability to think about other people and a higher purpose. He said, “In SEAL training, almost all the men who survived possessed one common quality. Even in great pain, faced with the test of their lives, they had the ability to step outside of their own pain, put aside their own fear and ask: How can I help the guy next to me? They had more than the “fist” of courage and physical strength. They also had a heart large enough to think about others, to dedicate themselves to a higher purpose.”**

51 As Christians, we have a higher purpose which calls us to consider others.

## II. (v.4) A CALL TO CARE FOR OTHERS

**“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.” (Philippians 2:4)**

1 Each person has to care for his own interest, but we must also give attention to the interest of others.

2 To look to the interest of others is to care for others, putting them and their needs ahead of our own.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*“We release the sweet aroma of life when we live for one another rather than for ourselves.” (Randy Cordeiro)**

3 Each one in the community of Christ is to have this care for others.

4 It is a shift from caring about me to caring about others.

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*“We are here for the sake of others, for the countless unknown souls with whose future we are connected by a bond of compassion.” (Albert Einstein)**

5 We are made for more than just to care about ourselves.

6 The lifestyle of the transformed requires a shift from me to you.

7 The Old Testament gives a wonderful example of someone who made the transition from me to you.

8 There are two books of the Bible that are named after women, Ruth and Esther.

9 The book of Ruth records the marriage of a Gentile girl to a Jew; and the other, the marriage of a Jewish girl to a Gentile Monarchy.

10 The little book of Ruth, some 85 verses in length, is a beautiful story of love.

11 Elimelech and Naomi took their two sons, Maholon (means sick) and Chilion (puny) and went to live in Moab.

12 Elimelech died and the two sons married Moabite women.

13 Naomi experienced total disaster in that then her two sons died and Naomi was left with her 2 daughters-in-law.

- 14 Hearing there was plenty to eat in Bethlehem, “the house of bread and peace,” Naomi decided to return to her native land so she said to her two daughters-in-law, “Go back, each of you, to your mother’s home. May the Lord show kindness to you, as you have shown to your dead and to me.” (Ruth 1:8)
- 15 They wept because of the bitter situation she had.
- 16 As one person observed, Murphy’s law seemed to have been in effect.
- 17 After convincing Orpah to go back to her home, she kissed her and left, but Ruth clung to her.
- 18 The Hebrew word order places the noun “Ruth” ahead of the verb, thus emphasizing the contrast between the responses of the two women, “Orpah kissed...good-bye, but Ruth clung.”
- 19 Ruth responded this way.  
**“Where you go I will go, and where you stay I will stay. Your people will be my people and your God my God. Where you die I will die, and there I will be buried. May the Lord deal with me, be it ever so severely, if anything but death separates you and me.” (Ruth 1:16-17)**
- 20 Ruth made the transition from me to you, from serving self to serving another.
- 21 Ruth wasn’t looking out for herself she was looking out for Naomi.
- 22 Naomi was too old to work in the fields, remarry, and continue her line and hold on to any assets she had back home, so Ruth committed to be with her to care for her.
- 23 She went with Naomi and cared for her.
- 24 Her commitment to Naomi as well as her commitment to God was acknowledged by Boaz, who later pronounced a blessing on Ruth not only for her care and sacrificial loyalty to Naomi, but for her faith and acceptance of the God of Israel.
- 25 “Boaz said. **“I’ve been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband-how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge.” (Ruth 2:11-12)**
- 26 She had begun to trust in God and God was caring for them.
- 27 The Psalmist painted a similarly picture of God’s care when he wrote, **“He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge; his faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.” (Psalm 91:4)**
- 28 Sad words in the New Testament of those who rejected God’s care.  
**“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, you who kill the prophets and stone those sent to you, how often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing.” (Matthew 23:37)**
- 29 Blessing after blessing followed from Ruth’s trust in God and from her selflessness in her care for Naomi.

- 30 Not only did Ruth marry a charming, wealthy businessman, but her great-grandson, David, also became king of the country she immigrated to, Israel.
- 31 She serves as an example of someone who cared for another and made the transition from me to you or from myself to others.
- 32 The Apostle Paul teaches us that care for self is to take a back row to care for others.
- 33 Care for others requires unselfishness.

**ILLUSTRATION: When the Henrico County School system decided to sell 1,000 used notebook computers to the public in 2005, in Richmond Virginia, they never imagined the scene the sale would generate. The morning of the sale, people began lining up at 1:30am. By 7 o'clock, the crowd was estimated to be 5,500 people. When the gates opened, the rush to purchase \$50 laptops turned into a violent stampede with people getting thrown to the pavement, beaten with folding chairs, and nearly driven over. Seventeen people were injured by the mob, with four taken to the hospital for treatment. Police say there were no arrests, though witnesses reported people threw themselves forward, screaming and pushing each other. Jesse Sandler said he was one of the people pushing forward, using a folding chair he had brought with him to beat back anyone who tried to cut in front of him. As he tapped at the keyboard of his new laptop, Sandler said, "I took my chair here and threw it over my shoulder and I went, 'Bam.' They were getting in front of me and I was there a lot earlier than them, so I thought that it was just."(—Associated Press, \$50 Laptop Sale Turns Into a Free-For-All, August 17, 2005.)**

- 34 The interest of self over the care of others was driving their action.

**ILLUSTRATION: Luke tells the story of the Good Samaritan, another example of caring more about another than self. The Samaritan did not allow what others thought, circumstances, schedule, or position stop him from caring for a man he did not know who had been beaten on the road and left bleeding.**

- 35 He looked not only to his own interest but to the interest of others.
- 36 What God has given us, He has given us so we could use for ministering to others for God's glory.

**"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." (I Peter 4:10)**

- 37 Are you using what God has given you for his glory?

38 The time, talent, and treasure you have?

- 39 The things you have now and the things you will leave behind, are you using them to care for others?

40 Jesus reveals the significance and importance of caring for others.

- 41 He makes it clear that caring for others is a way of caring for God.

**"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after**

**me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.’ Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’” (Matthew 25:35-40)**

42 What we do for others, we do as unto the Lord.

43 The call is to care for others.

44 To care about the soul and their relationship with God.

45 To care about their challenges and tears.

46 I am here today because others cared for me.

47 This church is here because someone cared about others.

48 Ministries take place because someone cares about others.

49 Mission work happens around the world because people care about others.

50 The Legacy ministry that we are introducing on the 23<sup>rd</sup> is all about others.

51 Let me share a portion of a poem written by Charles D. Meigs, titled, “Others”

**ILLUSTRATION: \*\*On Screen**

**Lord, help me live from day to day**

**In such a self-forgetful way**

**Then even when I kneel to pray**

**My prayer shall be for OTHERS**

**Help me in all the work I do**

**To ever be sincere and true**

**And know that all I do for YOU**

**Must need be done for OTHERS**

**Others, Lord, yes, others ---**

**Let this my motto be;**

**Help me to live for OTHERS**

**That I may live like Thee**

52 The call is to care for others.

### **III. (vs.5-8) A CALL TO HAVE A CHRIST-LIKE ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHERS**

**“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus:” (Philippians 2:5)**

1 The mindset or attitude you have is yours.

2 Some theologians have pointed out that literally this verse reads, “This mindset you have ‘in you’ which also is ‘in Christ Jesus.’”

3 The attitude in your community of relationships is to be like Christ, but for that to happen, each one must assume the responsibility to have this kind of mindset or attitude.

4 Each of you is to have this mindset or attitude in you so it will be fully manifested among you.

**ILLUSTRATION: Leader, Fred Smith, said of Attitude:**

**It is the advance man of your true self.**

**It is the librarian of your past.**

**It is the speaker of your present.**

**It is the prophet of your future.**

5 You are the way you are because that's the way you want to be.

**ILLUSTRATION: Victor Frankl, Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist and Holocaust survivor, survived the death camps in Nazi Germany by choosing his own attitude. He said, "The last of the human freedoms is to choose one's attitude in any given circumstance."**

6 Your attitude is to be the attitude of the transformed.

**"The mind of sinful man is death, but the mind controlled by the Spirit is life and peace;" (Romans 8:6)**

7 An attitude abased on the Christ within you and not the circumstances around you.

**ILLUSTRATION: (\*Poem on screen) Fanny Crosby was a blind poet and song writer who wrote over a thousand secular poems and over 8,000 Christian songs. Her songs have been greatly used to encourage the people of God. When she was 8 years old, she wrote this song that reflects her attitude.**

**"O what a happy soul am I! Although I cannot see,  
I am resolved that in this world, Contented I will be.**

**How many blessings I enjoy, that other people don't.**

**To weep and sigh because I'm blind, I cannot, and I won't"**

8 The attitude you choose should be the same as that of Christ Jesus.

9 Jesus sets the standard for the Christian.

10 He gives us a living picture of what the transformed life looks like.

11 What Paul says, in effect, is, "The attitude of mind I have been urging you is exactly that of God Himself, as it has been spelled out in the incarnation."

12 The lesson for the Philippian Christians is plain: as Christ set aside His own interests for the sake for others, so should they.

13 Jesus is the supreme example of the humble, self-sacrificing, self-denying, self-giving service that is part of the transformed life.

**EXAMPLE: Paul said this about Jesus in a letter to the church at Corinth:**

**"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich." (II Corinthians 8:9)**

**ILLUSTRATION: St. Athanasius, theologian, church Father, defender of Orthodoxy and bishop of Alexandria back in the fourth century said, \*\* "He became what we are that he might make us what he is."**

14 Your attitude or mindset should be that of Christ.

15 Verses 6-8 give us a clear window into what this attitude looks like.

16 He set aside His own interest for the sake of others.

17 He did not grasp or seize all that was His as being in very nature God.

- 18 He displayed a mindset precisely the opposite of selfish ambition and empty glory.
- 19 He made Himself nothing, or literally, emptied Himself of many divine prerogatives that He had as God.
- 20 Taking on the nature or role of a servant, He emptied or poured out Himself for others.
- 21 Christ's selflessness for the sake of others expressed itself in His emptying Himself by taking the form of a servant.
- 22 Thirteen of the parables of Jesus mention servants and, in six of those, the principal thrust is servanthood.
- 23 Some of the qualities essential to servant hood he emphasizes are watchfulness, obedience, initiative, hard work, shrewdness, and going beyond duty.

**EXAMPLE: One day, a mother came to Jesus asking a favor for her sons that caused jealousy among followers of Jesus. She asked that her sons would sit at his right and left in his kingdom. Jesus said, "...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave-just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." (Matthew 20:26-28)**

- 24 To have the mind of Christ means to have the heart of a servant like Jesus.
- 25 Scripture says He humbled Himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.
- 26 The unselfishness of Christ is seen in looking at the cross.
- 27 The obedience of Christ was the most radical obedience in the history of God's people.
- 28 Through His death and resurrection, this way of life is possible.
- 29 The work of the cross was to atone for our sins, and atonement is life changing.
- 30 Will you accept the work of the cross in your heart?
- 31 We are redeemed to a new way of life.
- 32 Christ surrendered in obedience and so must we.
- 33 Through humility, I can obey in the same way Christ did.

**ILLUSTRATION: General William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, was once asked the secret of his success. General Booth hesitated a moment, then with tears streaming down his cheeks, he replied, "I'll tell you the secret; God had all of me there was to have. From the day I got the poor on my heart and a vision of what Christ could do, I made up my mind that God would have all there was of William Booth -- God had all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will and all the influence of my life." The birth of the Salvation Army came about through a man who offered his life as a sacrifice to God.**

- 34 Jesus calls us to focus on others out of our love for God.
- 35 To have the attitude or thinking of Christ is to give of ourselves and pour out our selves to others.
- 36 To have the attitude of Christ is to die to self and live for Christ.

**ILLUSTRATION: The Dan Mazur story, By Max Lucado**

Dan Mazur considered himself lucky. Most other people would have considered him crazy. He stood within a two-hour hike of the summit of Mount Everest, a thousand feet from realizing a lifelong dream.

Every year, the fittest adventurers on earth set their sights on the twenty nine-thousand-foot peak. Every year, some die in the effort. The top of Everest isn't known for its hospitality. Climbers call the realm above twenty six thousand feet "the death zone."

Temperatures hover below zero. Sudden blizzards stir blinding snow. The atmosphere is oxygen starved. Corpses dot the mountaintop. A British climber had died ten days prior to Mazur's attempt. Forty climbers who could have helped chose not to do so. They passed him on the way to the summit.

Everest can be cruel.

Still, Mazur felt lucky. He and two colleagues were within eyesight of the top. Years of planning. Six weeks of climbing, and now at 7:30 a.m., May 25, 2006, the air was still, morning sun brilliant, energy and hopes high.

That's when a flash of color caught Mazur's eye: a bit of yellow fabric on the ridgetop. He first thought it was a tent. He soon saw it was a person, a man precariously perched on an eight-thousand-foot razor-edge rock. His gloves were off, jacket unzipped, hands exposed, chest bare. Oxygen deprivation can swell the brain and stir hallucinations. Mazur knew this man had no idea where he was, so he walked toward him and called out.

"Can you tell me your name?"

"Yes," the man answered, sounding pleased. "I can. My name is Lincoln Hall."

Mazur was shocked. He recognized this name. Twelve hours earlier he'd heard the news on the radio: "Lincoln Hall is dead on the mountain. His team has left his body on the slope."

And yet, after spending the night in twenty-below chill and oxygen-stingy air, Lincoln Hall was still alive. Mazur was face to face with a miracle.

He was also face to face with a choice. A rescue attempt had profound risks. The descent was already treacherous, even more so with the dead weight of a dying man. Besides, how long would Hall survive? No one knew. The three climbers might sacrifice their Everest for naught. They had to choose: abandon their dream or abandon Lincoln Hall.

They chose to abandon their dream. The three turned their backs on the peak and inched their way down the mountain.

Their decision to save Hall's life stirs a great question. Would we do the same? Surrender ambition to save someone else? Set aside our dreams to rescue another climber? Turn our backs on our personal mountaintops so someone else might live?

Lincoln Hall survived the trip down Mount Everest. Thanks to Dan Mazur, he lived to be reunited with his wife and sons in New Zealand. A television reporter asked Lincoln's wife what she thought of the rescuers, the men who surrendered their summit to save her husband's life. She

**tried to answer, but the words stuck in her throat. After several moments and with tear-filled eyes, she offered, “Well, there’s one amazing human being. And the other men with him. The world needs more people like that.”**

37 Christ gave His life for us.

38 We were dying in sin without hope, but Christ came to the cross, sacrificially paid the price so that we might have life abundantly.

39 Your life can be transformed by His sacrificial love.

40 Do you have abundant life?

41 We are made to have abundant life.

42 We are made for more than just to live for ourselves.

43 We are made to live for others.

44 We are called to have the attitude and mindset of Christ for others, because Christ wants all people to be saved.

45 Will you ask God to give you a mindset for others?

46 Pray that God will give you a heart for others.

### **CONCLUSION: OTHERS**

**I. (v.3) A CALL TO CONSIDER OTHERS**

**II. (v.4) A CALL TO CARE FOR OTHERS**

**III. (vs.5-8) A CALL TO HAVE A CHRIST-LIKE ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHERS**

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