

Christians in Rome were **not interested in the problems at Philippi**.

- Paul had a hard time getting someone interested in going to check on the church.

In these last two sections of the chapter Paul closes by introducing two helpers in ministry, Timothy and Epaphroditus.

- Timothy and Epaphroditus were two ordinary people

Phil 2:19

19 But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state.

Timothy: (one who honors God)

- Paul met him during his first missionary journey.
- Timothy was a reliable friend to Paul.

It was Timothy whom Paul called on

- when he needed someone to go from
- Athens to Thessalonica in 1 Thess 3.

It was Timothy whom Paul sent from Ephesus to Corinth,

Timothy often ministered to Paul, Acts 19.

Paul called Timothy “my beloved and faithful son in the Lord” 1 Cor 4.

Paul was like a spiritual father to Timothy.

Paul was sending him from Rome to Philippi which is about 800 miles.

He knew that he’d be encouraged by Timothy’s report upon hearing of the state of the Philippian church.

To be encouraged is to be in good spirits.

In Acts 27:22 Paul urged the captain of the ship:

22 And now I urge you to take heart, for there will be no loss of life among you, but only of the ship.

A few verses later he says:

Acts 27:25

25 Therefore take heart, men, for I believe God that it will be just as it was told me.

James 5:13

13 Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms.

Being cheerful is the same as being encouraged. In some languages becoming encouraged” is “to have one’s heart return.”

Paul spoke words of encouragement earlier in the letter when he told the church:

Phil 1:27

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,

Phil 2:20 For I have no one like-minded, (to be activated by the same motives. Used only here) who will sincerely care for your state.

Paul cared for the churches - 2 cor 11:28.

Timothy had the same mind as Paul in that he had a genuine love for the church.

“like minded” genuine, sincere and authentic. “Equal souled”

In Phil 1:7 Paul said it was right for him to think of them as being partakers with him of grace.

They were to be like-minded with one another as they are with Christ.

Jonathan and David:

In 1st Sam 18 we’re told that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.

1 Cor 16:10

10 And if Timothy comes, see that he may be with you without fear; for he does the work of the Lord, as I also do.

2 Tim 3:10

10 But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance,

Jesus said in Matt 10 that a disciple is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master.

Paul said there was no one who genuinely cared for the state of the Philippians as Timothy.

Notice the contrast from Timothy being like-minded to the selfish.

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

Of all his friends, the only one he could get to visit the church in Philippi was Timothy.

It seems Paul is speaking of unbelievers in verse 21, however, if you'll recall from chapter 1, some were making it worse for Paul while he was in jail by preaching Christ from envy and strife.

Some were self-centered, this is all about me.

I'd say we each live in one of two camps. We either live in the camp that says:

Phil 1:21

21 For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

Or we live in the camp that Paul says:

Phil 2:21

21 For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

If we say we live in the 1:21 verse,

- then we have to be all in.

Timothy himself needed a little encouragement from time to time.

Paul had to remind Timothy not be intimidated by others.

Paul said to the young Timothy:

1 Tim 4:12

12 Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

2 Tim 1:6-8

6 Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.

8 Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel according to the power of God,

Paul says of Timothy:

Phil 2:22

22 But you know his proven character (to make something known as valuable after it has gone thru a testing), that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel. Timothy had a good rapport amongst others.

But Paul didn't take Timothy with him right away.

- He didn't elevate him in ministry.

Years later Paul wrote to Timothy and explain the importance of permitting young converts to grow before thrusting them into positions of authority in ministry.

1 Tim 3:7

7 Moreover he must have a good testimony among those who are outside, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

Paul said in verse 22 speaking of Timothy, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.

Under Roman law a special ceremony marked an individual's recognition as a "son."

Whether a son was a family member by birth or by adoption,

- only when recognized as a "son"
- did he achieve full rights of that relationship,

But as believers we achieve this status in God's family through our faith in Jesus Christ. Gal. 3:26.

Phil 2:23

23 Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me.

There are 3 different types of hope in the NT. Here in verse 23 hope is (to expect with desire).

Example:

- Emmaus-road,

Luke 24:21

21 But we were hoping that it was He who was going to redeem Israel. Indeed, besides all this, today is the third day since these things happened.

A second use of the word hope: 1 Tim 5:5.

1 Tim 5:5

5 Now she who is really a widow, and left alone, trusts in God and continues in supplications and prayers night and day.

Phil 2:24

24 But I trust in the Lord that I myself shall also come shortly.

Paul was hoping to visit the church of Philippi soon, however, he wasn't sure of his status as a prisoner. So he couldn't say with certainty that he's be there soon.

Where is your hope?

Do you rest in the Lord when you have trials in our life?
Is your hope in the Lord in all circumstances of your life?

Dan 3:24-25

24 Then King Nebuchadnezzar was astonished; and he rose in haste and spoke, saying to his counselors, "Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire?"

They answered and said to the king, "True, O king."

25 "Look!" he answered, "I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire; and they are not hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

The Lord will be with us thru the fire regardless of what it is.

Next, Paul introduces Epaphroditus.

- The name according to Nelson's bible dictionary means "charming" or "handsome."

But the original meaning of his name is "beloved or belonging to Aphrodite"

- Aphrodite was the goddess of fertility,
- the goddess of love.

The name Aphrodite is of pagan origin.

His name may have come from a pagan background,

- but he was a living example of what it meant to serve the living God.

When we surrender to Christ, our past is our past.

Rev 2:17

17 "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."

Paul called him a messenger and a fellow worker.

He's the same person who delivered a gift to Paul while he was imprisoned in Rome.

Paul called it

- a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God"
- and claimed it was more than sufficient.

Epaphroditus worked in the background.

- He didn't need to be recognized,

6

- but was one of those faithful servants.

Jesus said three times in Matt 6 when we're doing good deeds in secret, or when we pray behind closed doors, our Father will one day reward us openly.

Epaphroditus:

- He's only mentioned twice in the bible,
- both times in Philippians.

Phil 2:25

25 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;

5 characteristics of Epaphroditus:

He's a brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, a messenger and one who ministers.

Jesus was speaking to a multitude when someone spoke up and said to Jesus that His mother and brothers stood outside waiting to speak to Him.

His response,

Matt 12:48-50

48 But He answered and said to the one who told Him, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" 49 And He stretched out His hand toward His disciples and said, "Here are My mother and My brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of My Father in heaven is My brother and sister and mother."

It's not always our blood relatives that are nearest to us.

Prov 18:24 there is a friend who sticks closer than a brother.

Epaphroditus was a co-worker or a fellow-worker of Paul and a fellow soldier.

Phil 4:18

18 Indeed I have all and abound. I am full, having received from Epaphroditus the things sent from you, a sweet-smelling aroma, an acceptable sacrifice, well pleasing to God.

The Philippian church sent monetary support to Paul thru Epaphroditus.

- He was willing to serve.

He was a fellow soldier.

We are fellow soldiers because

- we are fighting in the trenches together.

7

As Christians, we're in this fight together. We may lose some rounds, but it's a long fight.

Paul said in:

2 Tim 2:3

You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Epaphroditus was also a messenger, that's one who is sent out.

Then Paul calls him a servant. He ministered to Paul's need.

The word Paul used here for minister is the Greek word "leitourgós"

- We get the English word liturgy from this.
- It speaks of a sacred duty.

Paul is taking the service of Epaphroditus

- and elevating it to the performance of a sacred task.

Why did Epaphroditus risk his life for Paul. Because Paul was evangelizing the gospel.

- Some are called to be hands, some to be feet.

Notice again in verse 25. Paul says, "Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus"

It took Epaphroditus about 6 weeks to get to Paul. While he was there, he became ill, to the point of death. So Paul sent him home.

Not only was Epaphroditus ill, Paul says:

26 since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.

This word "distressed" carries the same meaning of the word used of Jesus in the Garden. It means "full of heaviness."

We read in verse 30 it was for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.

Epaphroditus was Longing for the people back home, he was home sick.

Paul said in verse 8 of chapter 1,

- "I long for you with the affection of Jesus Christ."

Paul could have made a big deal of this, but he didn't.

- Instead he sends Epaphroditus back home.

As we mature we learn things and we often become more understanding

- of other people's weaknesses.

During Paul's first missionary journey, Barnabas and his nephew John Mark went along with him.

At some point John Mark wanted to return home. And he did.

Later, Paul wanted to visit the places visited in the past.

Barnabas wanted to go with Paul, and he wanted to take John Mark again,

- and Paul was like, no, no, no!

It seems Paul's learned some grace by the time he wrote to the Philippians.

27 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.

Paul couldn't heal at will." The Lord had to be in it!

In Acts 28 the father of Publius lay sick of fever and diarrhea, and after Paul prayed for him, he laid hands on the man and the Lord healed him.

Then Paul says in his letter of 2nd Timothy that he left Trophimus sick in Miletus. The Lord chose not to heal him at that time.

28 Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful.

29 Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem;

30 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.

not regarding (risking all, to throw the dice, to gamble on)

Paul is saying, listen guys, Epaphroditus made the sacrifice, he risked everything, he gambled his life to bring provision to me.

We're familiar with Prov 16:33, we may throw the dice, but the Lord determines how they fall. Epaphroditus threw the dice, but the Lord wanted him back home.

So Paul says in verse 29 to receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem:

1 Thess 5:12-13

12 And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, 13 and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. Be at peace among yourselves.