

NETCAST SERMON NOTES

Series: This Isn't Normal

Date: June 15th, 2026

Title: The Root Before the Fruit

Speaker: Travis Boyd

Key Scripture: Philippians 2:19–30 (with Philippians 1:6, 1:21, and 2:1–18)

The Big Idea: God doesn't just save us, He shapes us; most of us want the external fruit of instant change, but Jesus is far more interested in cultivating deep, internal roots of Christlike character.

The Wax On, Wax Off Reality

Like Daniel in *The Karate Kid*, who grew frustrated doing chores because he wanted the immediate fruit of learning how to fight, we often want God to jump straight to the end result. Mr. Miyagi was doing something more valuable than teaching punches and kicks—he was forming Daniel's instincts from the inside out. In the same way, sanctification is rarely spectacular; it is usually slow, ordinary, and hard to see day to day. Most Christians want self-help techniques, but Jesus wants internal transformation.

Ordinary People, Extraordinary Grace

While Jesus is the ultimate example and Paul seems out of reach, Paul highlights Timothy and Epaphroditus to show us what this mindset practically looks like in normal, everyday church family members. They are living examples of ordinary people transformed by extraordinary grace.

1. Timothy: Christlike Concern

Paul honors Timothy not for his giftedness, preaching, or charisma, but because he genuinely cares like Jesus cares and serves selflessly.

- **What Heaven Values:** While the world and the modern church often celebrate outward accomplishments and impressive stage presence, heaven celebrates Christlike character. Humility isn't thinking less of yourself; it is letting God liberate you from obsession with yourself.
- **The World Cup Tension:** In soccer, mega-stars clash because they want the team to win, but they also want individual spotlight. Greatness often looks like making the extra pass, defending, and sacrificing stats so someone else can shine. We all live in the tension between living for Christ (\$1:21\$) and seeking our own interests (\$2:21\$). We want Jesus to win, but we still want a little credit when He does. Timothy was willing to faithfully play his role because Christ was the ultimate goal.

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2. Epaphroditus: A Life That Only Makes Sense Because of Jesus

Epaphroditus was a brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier who nearly died for the work of Christ. His life completely forces us to ask the foundational question: Would your life make sense if Jesus weren't real? If our time, money, plans, and reputation look exactly like the rest of culture, Jesus is just a side piece rather than the center.

The People Heaven Notices

Greatness is found in the everyday, ordinary followers of Jesus who quietly labor and willingly sacrifice because they are focusing more on the root than the fruit. Paul commands us to "honor such people," listing the modern-day equivalents who scream "look at Jesus" rather than "look at me":

- Group Leaders & Kids Ministry Volunteers
- Student Leaders & Prayer Team
- Deacons & Faithful Givers
- Venue Team & Production Crew
- (Like Sue Ramey, Mrs. Cheese, Joe Powers, Carlos Gloria, Jojo, and Alex).

Discipleship Over Discipline

The Christian life is not behavior modification or moralism, which says, "Change so God will love you." The Gospel says, "God loves you in Christ, and that love will begin to change you." It is not about trying harder; it is about surrendering deeper and abiding in the One who shapes us.

- The Ultimate Echo: Timothy and Epaphroditus are not the heroes of this text—Jesus is. They are merely echoes, while Jesus is the song. They are moonlight; Jesus is the sun. They are the fruit; He is the Root. He who began a good work in you is faithful to bring it to completion

Call to Action / Reflection Question: Are you spending more energy trying to manufacture outward "fruit" for people to see, or are you actively surrendering to the Holy Spirit to cultivate deep spiritual "roots" in your life?