

“Paul’s Helpers”
Philippians 2:19-30

INTRO:

Examples are important. Years ago I saw a sign on a desk that said, ***“What you are shouts so loud, I cannot hear a word you are saying.”*** Do we think about this? When we witness it is vitally important our lifestyle does not clatter so loud no one can hear our testimony. The Apostle Paul recognized this truth. So, when he chose those who would go to Philippi as his emissaries, he sent folks whose lives sustained what they believed.

I. Timothy (verse 19-24)
II. Epaphroditus (v.25-30)

I. Timothy (verse 19-24)

A. When the Apostle Paul sent Timothy to them, he did not include a resume of all the work he did for Paul in other churches. We know some of the ministry Timothy had from places like **1 Corinthians 4:17**;

“For this reason I have sent Timothy to you, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord, who will remind you of my ways in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church.”

And **1 Thessalonians 3:1-2** which reads;

“Therefore, when we could no longer endure it, we thought it good to be left in Athens alone, and sent Timothy, our brother and minister of God, and our fellow laborer in the gospel of Christ, to establish you and encourage you concerning your faith.”

B. Paul was more concerned that the Philippians knew what kind of man Timothy was than what kind of work he had done. So, he wrote about why he would send Timothy to them.

1. Timothy was a man who loved God’s people and would therefore naturally love them (v.20).

“For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state.”

Timothy was like Barnabas the man the church at Jerusalem sent to Antioch. He was a good man who would rejoice at the grace of God in their midst and encourage them to stay close to the Lord Jesus.

2. He was a special man because others available to Paul to send to them were not of this mind. (v.21)

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

They desired other things other than a single minded devotion to Christ. Why did Paul write this? He did it first to show us what a remarkable Christian servant Timothy had

become. He also wrote this so that the Spirit of God might challenge our hearts. Would God the Holy Spirit say of us, we are more concerned with the things of Christ than we are of our own things?

3. Finally, Paul wrote about how faithful Timothy was in his service of Christ at Paul's side. (v.22)

“You know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel.”

The question this asks us is how faithful are each of us in our service for Christ?

B. Because Timothy was all of these things Paul was going to send him to them when he knew what the verdict of his situation was. (v.23)

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

II. Epaphroditus (v.25-30)

A. The second person Paul was sending to Philippi was Epaphroditus. (v.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.”

Epaphroditus was the bearer of the Philippian Church's gift for the Apostle Paul. There is much speculation about who Epaphroditus was. Was he the pastor of the Philippian church? We really don't know. We do know that he was someone in God's eyes and an important person to the Apostle Paul.

B. When he arrived at Rome with the gift for Paul everything did not go well for him. (vs.26-27)

“[I am sending him] 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.”

1. Epaphroditus cared much for the people in the church at Philippi. He longed for them, and he was concerned because they knew he had been sick.

2. Paul did not hide the seriousness of the illness the Lord had brought him through. He could have died, but God healed him. What does this do for our health, wealth, and prosperity teachers? God spared him for the church's sake and for Paul's.

C. There is one more issue here we need to see. Paul points out how the church should treat those who give their lives to serve Christ. (vs.28-30)

“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.”

Now what about you and me? If we were there with the Apostle Paul and he were to send us to represent him, what could he write about our character? Are we, those who love Christ so much, that His Word and His church is of supreme importance to us?