

# Fellow Soldiers For Christ

## Philippians 2:19-30

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**Teaching Aim:** To see and appreciate the missionary zeal of Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus. To have this missionary zeal become active in our own lives and in our own church, inspiring us to reach our community for Christ!

### **DIGGING DEEPER INTO GOD'S WORD (BIBLE STUDY)**

#### **Part I: Paul had no one like-minded like Timothy, his protégé (Phil. 2:19-24)**

1. For what purpose did Paul send Timothy to the Church of Philippi (vs. 19)?
2. There were many who called themselves Christians in the Rome metropolitan area, but according to **verse 20**, how many had the qualities of Timothy? What was the difference between Timothy and the Roman Christians? What does it mean when two people are "like-minded" or "of a kindred spirit"? Have you experienced this in ministry? If so, with who? How did it affect your ministry?
3. Notice that Paul didn't immediately take Timothy into ministry after coming to faith, but left him behind in Lystra after his first missionary journey to develop at his home fellowship. List some reasons why it is important to disciple and develop new believers into the faith before putting them in positions of leadership. (See **1 Tim. 3:6-7**) How does **1 Timothy 4:7b-8** apply to every Christian?
4. Why do you think Timothy was listed with Paul in the introduction of this letter (See **Phil. 1:1**) and confirmed again here as "sincerely caring" for the Church of Philippi? (See **Acts 16:1-3,12**) Have you ever gone on a mission's trip? Did you develop a special bond with the church or the people you served with? Why did Timothy care so much about the Church of Philippi?
5. In Paul's day, he said "*all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus*" (vs. **21**). Do you see any similarities in this statement to our own day? If so, how? How can such an

attitude affect a church?

6. The Philippians had known Timothy and his proven character for over ten years at the time of this writing, ever since he joined Paul on Paul's 2<sup>nd</sup> Missionary Journey to Philippi (**vs. 22**). What special relationship did Paul and Timothy share with each other? (**See 2 Tim. 1:2**) Why do you think Paul and Timothy were so close?
  
7. Was Paul Timothy's "biological father" (**vs. 22**)? (**See Acts 16:1; 2 Tim. 1:3-5**) What does it mean to be a "spiritual son"? Were there any other young disciples Paul referred to in the Bible as his "spiritual sons"? (**See Tit. 1:4; Phile. 10**) Men, do you have a spiritual son? Ladies, do you have a spiritual daughter? Why or why not? Why is it important to disciple others?
  
8. What was delaying Timothy's departure (**vs. 23**)? Why was the outcome of this preliminary hearing so important to Timothy and to the Philippians? How was information communicated in Biblical days?
  
9. What was Paul's feel for how his preliminary hearing would turn out (**vs. 24**)? Why is it important for us to keep a positive attitude when we go through the tough times? How do our attitudes affect other people in our sphere of influence? Experiment this week and randomly smile at people you meet. How did they respond in return?
  
10. How old was Timothy in comparison to Paul? What are some things we can learn about Timothy from **1 Tim. 4:12-14a; 1 Tim. 5:23; 2 Tim. 1:7-9; and Heb. 13:22-23**? Timothy was known to be somewhat timid, but how did he face his timidity? What areas of ministry are you timid in? What would God have you do to overcome your fears?

## **Part II: Paul's faithful co-worker Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25-30)**

1. Epaphroditus is mentioned only here and **Phil. 4:18** in the Bible, yet he made a lasting impact on Paul. What five virtues does Paul describe of Epaphroditus in **verse 15**? "Messenger" is the same word as "apostle", what does the word apostle mean? (See Dictionary) How was the apostleship of Epaphroditus and that of Paul's different?

2. According to **verse 26**, why did Epaphroditus want to leave the mission field in Rome and return to Philippi? How serious was his sickness according to **verse 27**?

3. Paul demonstrated apostolic powers in healing the man from Lystra in **Acts 14:8-14**. Is someone with the gift of healing like Paul able to heal everyone who is sick? Why or why not? (**See Phil. 2:27; 2 Cor. 12:7-9**) What was the basis of Epaphroditus' healing according to verse 27?

*NOTE: This section of scripture offers us some valuable insights on divine healing:*

- 1) Sickness does not always mean that a person has sin in his or her life.
- 2) God doesn't always heal the way that we want Him to.
- 3) Healing is a mercy from God, not a right upon demand.

4. How should we react when sickness comes into our own life or into the life of a loved one?

5. According to **verse 28**, why did Paul send Epaphroditus back to the Philippians? How should the Philippians (and every Christian for that matter) respond to missionaries who have risked their lives for Christ (**vs. 29**)?

6. In what way had the Philippians lacked in service toward Paul (**vs. 30**)? (**See Phil. 4:15-20**) Had the Philippians let Paul down, or was he speaking to them in a positive way? (See Commentaries)

### **Part III: Conclusion: Each one reach one! - *We are all missionaries!***

1. What do most people think of when they think of a missionary? Does a person have to go overseas in order to be a missionary? Why or why not?

2. Discuss **Rom. 10:14-15** and share how someone fulfilled this verse in your own life in reaching you. What are some ways you can be a missionary and bring **Rom. 10:14-15** alive in your own neighborhood or sphere of influence?

3. Jim Elliot said, "*He is no fool who gives what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.*" Share some aspects of the Jim Elliot story that have challenged you personally.

### **MINER'S CORNER – *Manna to live by!***

- \* It is of the utmost importance to disciple new believers and to develop them in godliness before putting them into positions of leadership.
- \* As Christians we should not let anyone look down on us because of our age, but should set the example for others in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.
- \* Be a **Romans 10:14-15** type of person, totally sold out for Jesus and sharing Christ with others!
- \* It is better to burn out for Christ than to rust out. *What kind of a legacy are you leaving?*