

August 31, 2025
Philippians 2:19-30
“Proven Character, Lives Worth Imitating”

Principles And Practical Application

Note that the apostle did not or simply could not heal Epaphroditus. He performed many miracles before hand, but not this time for a dear friend. Paul wrote, I am so thankful that the Lord restored his health. Apparently, the performing of miracles associated with the Apostle's office was beginning to wane away. Later Timothy will become sick and he does not heal him either. Instead he instructs him to take a little wine for his frequent illnesses, see **I Timothy 5:23**. Apostolic powers were waning.

Timothy was a native of Lystra, a part of modern day Turkey. By the time of this writing, the two had served together for about ten years. Paul's true child and **kindred spirit** in the faith. Paul considered him a: beloved son, beloved and faithful child in the Lord, fellow worker, brother, and fellow bond servant. The goal of discipleship is reproduction. In **I Corinthians 4:16-17** Paul said, imitate me. Timothy had a unique and godly characteristic of being sympathetic. He cared about the welfare of others. Timothy, like Paul was a true shepherd of God's people. In **v 20**, “No one else like him” literally reads, “no one of equal soul.” Not everyone was like that, Paul calls out many who seek only their own interests **v 21**. This group was preaching the gospel but out of envy and strife, worldly, self-centered. Not heretical but men who had lost their way and placed themselves in Jesus' place.

Epaphroditus, just a servant, not a great preacher or one holding an office. One who was faithful and trustworthy. He was courageous. To Paul he was a: brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, messenger, and minister to people's needs. The two had an **abiding friendship**. In service to the work of the ministry, he got so sick that he came close to dying. His was a life worth imitating.

Application: Paul was on the horns of a dilemma, all of the people, at least those he had available to him, were not of the same spirit as Timothy, **v 20**. The others who should have been men of God really only had their own interests at heart, not those of Jesus, **v 21**. Timothy stood out as a rare gem in the midst of a world of self-seekers. He had been tested and proven. Epaphroditus was the perfect example of a sold out to Jesus layman. They worked like slaves side by side in the gospel ministry. Timothy and Epaphroditus: faithful, dependable, qualified models for others to aspire to **emulate** according to the call God has placed on your life.