

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Who in your life has shown a genuine concern for your welfare? Who has modeled a selfless heart?
2. Who has lived a life that you desire to emulate? From your church? From church history?

DIG DEEPER

Read Philippians 2:19-24

TIMOTHY

1. Look back at Acts 16:1-5 for background on how Timothy came to join Paul and Silas on their 2nd missionary journey. What do you observe about Timothy in this passage?
2. Read 2 Timothy 1:5. What is unique about Timothy's childhood?
3. Why does Paul want to send Timothy to the Philippians?
4. What high praise does Paul give Timothy in verse 20? How is Timothy an example to us of Philippians 2:3-4?
5. How is verse 21 a challenge to you personally? How do Christians get tangled into world pursuits rather than Christ's goals?
6. Paul had such a special relationship with this young man. Timothy learned the OT Scriptures at a young age, but he came to know Christ through Paul's preaching which is why Paul views himself in verse 22 as a _____ and Timothy as a spiritual _____ serving together in the gospel (see also 1 Tim 1:2 & 2 Tim 1:2).
7. After Paul was released from house arrest in Rome, Timothy traveled with him to visit the churches that had been planted. They went to Ephesus and were saddened to find error in the church concerning Jesus' divinity and humanity. Paul left Timothy to look after the Ephesian church, install elders, and correct error while he went to visit the churches in Macedonia (Philippians). Paul wrote Timothy (the letter of 1 Timothy) while Timothy was pastoring this Ephesian church. Paul's last letter before his death was to Timothy (the letter of 2nd Timothy) written from a Roman dungeon before his execution. Read 2 Timothy 1:4 & 4:9. What was Paul's request in his last days of life?

According to Foxe's Book of Martyrs...Timothy remained in Ephesus until AD 97. During a pagan celebration of a feast called "Catagogian," Timothy severely reproved the people in the procession for their ridiculous idolatry. This antagonized the partygoers who beat him with clubs *in so dreadful a manner that he expired of the bruises two days later.*" Though Timothy was possibly looked down upon as being young in the start of his ministry (1 Timothy 4:12) and often sick (1 Timothy 5:23), he surely did not die as the 'timid Timothy' that some people regard him as.

Read Philippians 2:25-30

EPAPHRODITUS

8. Epaphroditus was most likely a spiritual leader in the Philippian church that came to Rome to minister to Paul's needs and deliver the gift of money to help with Paul's expenses. What five descriptions does Paul give this man of God in verse 25?
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
 - e.
9. Epaphroditus' journey does not go as expected. What were some of the hardships Epaphroditus experienced as he ventured to Rome to give Paul this generous gift from the Philippian church?

Have you ever experienced hardships when you were going about the Lord's work? Was this discouraging for you?

10. We see that Epaphroditus was a man that was willing to set aside his personal plans to make a long journey to Paul for the sake of the gospel. He encountered many trials on this mission. Trials do not always come in the form of persecution. In Epaphroditus' case, his trial was that of sickness that almost led to death. When trials come, we have two choices: cling to Jesus or grow hardened and bitter towards the Lord. Epaphroditus gives us a great example in his time of trial. While hardships have the tendency to cause us to focus exclusively on ourselves and our pain, who is Epaphroditus most concerned about? See verse 26.
11. What does Paul say should be done for Epaphroditus in verse 29? Why is it vital for local churches to honor men and women who serve the Lord with distinction? What is the danger of doing it?

BRING IT HOME

12. Where are the places in your life that you have been tangled in worldly pursuits instead of Christ's goals?
13. How do you cultivate a servant heart of selflessness rather than selfishness?
14. What made Timothy a great friend to Paul? Do you have friends like that? Are you a friend like that?
15. What is the motivation to live a life like Timothy or Epaphroditus? Why is it better than living self centered lives?

PRAYER POINTS

- Pray that we would take a genuine interest in the welfare of others.
- Pray that we would not get tangled in worldly pursuits but seek Christ's interests above our own.
- Pray that we would not be discouraged when trials come but that we would press on during hardships, clinging to Christ, knowing He is at work and will bring about His purposes.
- Thank the Lord for the men and women that serve Him faithfully in your local church.