

## *Valley Bible Church – Sermon Transcript*

### **A Priceless Pair Philippians 2:19-30 Part 1**

It has been fun watching my twin grandsons grow up and watching them learning from others.

I remember the boys when they were just learning to pick up their toys that their mother would get in and help them pick up their blocks and she would be singing, “Clean up, clean up everybody everywhere; clean up, clean up everybody do their share.” Was this effective? Not only did she get the boys singing the song and picking up blocks we all were singing the song and picking up blocks.

She could have simply told the children to pick up the blocks but she chose to give them an example. What makes an example or model of righteous conduct so powerful? Models or examples show us what the precepts can't. Precepts or commands tell us what to do but not how to do it. We need people to flesh out the precepts and principles of God's word so that those precepts and principles can come alive for us. The boys were being shown not only what they needed to do but how they were to do it.

I have shared all of this with you to set the stage for the next passage we will be studying which is Philippians 2:19-30. In this passage Paul will introduce two men who hopefully will serve as examples for us. He will show us not only what we should do but how we should do it.

The first example that we will look at is Timothy in Philippians 2:19-24. Let's begin by reading **V. 19, “But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.”** There are three underlying reasons for Paul to send Timothy to the Philippians.

Paul had a great affection for the Philippian church. In **Philippians 1:3-4** in Paul's opening prayer he prayed these words, **“I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, (4) always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all.”** Then in **Philippians 1:8** he said, **“For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus.”** He continues to express his affection in **Philippians 4:1** when he says, **“Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown, so stand firm in the Lord, my beloved.”** Paul certainly wants to send Timothy to the Philippians for a number of reasons but certainly one of those reasons would be the affection that he had for them.

Paul was aware that the unity of the church was being threatened from within. We saw this in **Philippians 1:27** where Paul says, **“Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.** Paul builds on this theme in **Philippians 2:1-4** and spells it out very clearly in **Philippians 4:2** when he speaks of the disharmony between Euodia and Synteche.

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Paul was aware that the church was suffering opposition. We saw this in **Philippians 1:28-29** “**in no way alarmed by your opponents - which is a sign of destruction for them, but of salvation for you, and that too, from God. (29) For to you it has been granted for Christ’s sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake.**” We get a better idea of who those opponents might be in **Philippians 3:1-2** where Paul says, “**Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord. To write the same things again is no trouble to me, and it is a safeguard for you. (2) Beware of the dogs, beware of the evil workers, beware of the false circumcision.**” There were three underlying reasons for Paul sending Timothy to the Philippian church. His affection for them, internal challenges, and external challenges.

In light of these various underlying reasons combined with Paul’s present imprisonment he has determined to send someone to them that will represent him and that someone is Timothy.

Notice how he frames what he says, “**I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you ....**” Paul does not say, “**I hope to send Timothy to you**” rather he says, “**I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you .....**” Everything in Paul’s life was submitted to the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus even his plan to send Timothy to the Philippian church.

“**In the Lord Jesus**” is not simply a pious phrase. It represents Paul’s philosophy of life. Paul wants every aspect of his life submitted to the person, purpose, and plan of Christ. We need to share this same approach to life.

Consider your own life. Do you see what you are choosing to do or planning to do as an extension of the person, purpose and plan of Christ? Hopefully your answer is yes. Hopefully you are not simply flying by the seat of your pants allowing your life to be shaped more by the thinking of this world rather than by Jesus. And hopefully as you submit what you are doing to the person, purpose, and plan of Christ you also will joyfully accept the outcome those actions as an expression of God’s sovereign plan.

Paul certainly was willing to do this and this is why he says, “**I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you.**” He believed that this decision to send Timothy best reflected in light of all the circumstances that he and the Philippians were facing the person, purpose and plan of Christ and was willing to accept whatever came as a result of this purposed decision..... Beyond being moved by the principles and precepts of God’s word to take such an action what personal factors contributed to him selecting Timothy to be sent? In order to answer this question we need to know a little about Timothy.

Who exactly is Timothy? From **Acts 16:1-3**, **2 Timothy 1:5** and **2 Timothy 3:14-15** we learn that Timothy was a native of the area around Derbe and Lystra in the province of Galatia. His spiritual instruction largely came through his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois who are described as being strong in the faith. His father was a Greek and therefore Timothy most likely was formally educated in Greek culture. We do not know exactly when he was converted. We do know that when Paul first met him in **Acts 16**, though being very young, was already a proven believer.

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In fact he was so spiritually alive and mature that Paul invited him to join he and Silas as they continued on their second missionary journey which led them eventually to Philippi where this newly reconstituted missionary team was used of God to establish the Philippian Church.

This meant that the Philippian church would have known Timothy well. But they may not have known how close Paul and Timothy had become. Paul and Timothy after their stay in Philippi had become bonded together in a very special way. The closeness can easily be seen in the various expressions Paul uses to refer to Timothy such as his “son in the faith,” “his true child,” his “co-worker,” his “fellow servant.”

In light of all these things that I have shared it should not be surprising to see how Paul came to the conclusion “in the Lord Jesus” to send Timothy to the Philippian church.

Notice the word “shortly.” What does this mean? Does it mean in a day or two, a week or two, a month or two, what does he mean? If we look down to **Philippians 1:23** we get some help, **“Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me....”** Paul certainly wanted to send Timothy as quickly as possible but apparently Paul felt that there would be some significant information about his own situation available shortly that the Philippians would be interested in so he made the sending of Timothy conditional on that information.

Again why was Paul sending Timothy? There were three underlying reasons: (1) He had a deep affection for the Philippians, (2) He had been made aware that the unity of the church was being threatened and, (3) finally he had been made aware of the opposition that the church at Philippi was suffering. Those are the underlying reasons but Paul will now in **verse 19** give us an additional reason that is specifically stated. Let us continue to read the verse, **“But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.”**

The stated reason for sending Timothy to the Philippian church was that he might be encouraged by their condition (1 Corinthians 13:4-7). Isn't this interesting. Paul is very positive. I guess he could have said, **“But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly so that I might know if I have reason to be discouraged.”** I know that it is easy for us to get down on people. I know that it is easy for us to assume the worst of people. But certainly Paul is choosing not to do this. Some of you might say well he had good reason. The Philippians had a good track record and this is true. But I believe it goes beyond this. I believe it is rooted in love.

Remember **1 Corinthians 13:4-7** **“Love is patient, love is kind, and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, (5) does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong, suffered, (6) does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; (7) bears all things, believers all things, hopes all things ....”** People who are filled with love will be filled with hope toward those who are the object of their affection.

When love is disappointed in the one in whom it trusted, it will hope for better things, although others may long since have ceased to do so. Love never despairs of anybody.

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Of course, it does not try to persuade itself that a thief is honest or that the criminal is innocent, but it knows that with God all things are possible..... Do not give up on your husband, wife, child, or parent.

Since Paul is sending Timothy for reasons that are stated and unstated he wants the Philippians to accept him as enthusiastically as they would himself. In order to accomplish this he provides for them a profile of Timothy that serves as a model or example to us. What are the features that Paul includes in his profile of Timothy?

They should accept Timothy as enthusiastically as they would accept Paul because Timothy is similar to Paul. Let us read **verse 20** **“For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.”** Paul and Timothy were kindred spirits. The word “kindred spirit” (ISOPSUCHOS) literally means “equal souled” or “equal minded.”

They were so similar that for Paul to send Timothy would be just as if Paul himself was able to visit them. We see this spelled out for us in **1 Corinthians**. This was a church that had many more problems than the church at Philippi and Paul is very concerned for them. So what did Paul do? He sent Timothy to them. Let me read for you **1 Corinthians 4:14-17** **“I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. (15) For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. (16) I exhort you therefore, be imitators of me (17) For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways ....”** Timothy was so totally a kindred spirit with Paul that Paul could exhort them on the one hand to be imitators of him, and in order to encourage them to in fact do this, he sends Timothy to spell all of this out for them. He can spell it out because Paul and Timothy were kindred spirits.

I don't believe that we see this kind of relationship very often in the church. And certainly I believe that Paul would agree with me. Why do I say this? Look at the verse, **“For I have no one else of kindred spirit ....”** When Paul looked around him and considered all the people that made up the church at Rome there was no one that Paul saw as a “kindred spirit” or as “equal souled with him” other than Timothy.

Paul being unable to find anyone in the Roman church who was able to represent him in Philippi is a great reminder to us of the obstacles that we face in discipleship. We know that we are to go and make disciples and to teach them to do all that the Lord has commanded us. We know this because this is the commission that Christ has given to the church in **Matthew 28:19-20**. And what should we expect to happen in the lives of those disciples when they are fully trained? We should expect them to be just like their teacher or teachers. We learn this from **Luke 6:40** which says, **“A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher.”** And this is exactly what Paul experienced in his relationship with Timothy. They become kindred spirits.

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But even though this was true of Timothy it was not true of any other person in the church at Rome at least at the time when Paul wrote this epistle. What does he say, **“For I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition, (20) For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.”** The work of making disciples and helping them to become fully mature is not an easy. There will be many disappointments along the way. But hopefully if we understand the difficulty of the task we will not become discouraged when the disappointments come. But rather we will continue to persevere and if the Lord by His grace blesses us with a single person who happens to be a kindred spirit we will rejoice and consider ourselves rich.

If what I have just shared with you is an observation that encourages you then rejoice. Your response clearly testifies to your desire to make disciples and to train them. If the observation that I have just shared with you seems rather mundane of very little personal use to you I would encourage you reflect on the question, “How serious am I about the work of making and training disciples?”

My hope is that there would be amongst us a large number of believers who are striving to make disciples and to fully train them. What is the first feature that we see in Paul’s profile of Timothy? Timothy was similar to Paul. What is the second feature we see in Paul’s profile of Timothy?

Timothy is sympathetic. Let us again go back to **Philippians 2:19-20** **“For I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition, (20) For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for you welfare.”** Timothy had a genuine concern for the Philippians.

The word translated “concern” is a very strong word. The word “concerned” (MERIMNAO) signifies to be anxious about, to have a distracting care. With this understanding we could translate this verse, **“For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will be anxious about your welfare.”** You could think of this as “godly anxiety.” The burden that Paul felt for the Philippians and that Timothy felt for Philippians was so intense that it would consume their thoughts and energies. Rather than thinking about their needs they would be thinking about the needs of the Philippians.

Timothy like Paul had the disposition of a true shepherd (John 10:11-13). And what is that disposition? We see it in **John 10:11-13**, **“I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. (12) He who is a hireling, and not a shepherd, who is not the owner of the sheep, beholds the wolf coming, and leaves the sheep, and flees, and the wolf snatches them, and scatters them. (13) He flees because he is a hireling, and is not concerned about the sheep.”** Jesus placed the need of the sheep above his own need. Paul placed the need of the sheep above his own need. Timothy like Paul placed the need of the sheep above his own need. He was genuinely concerned for their welfare.

I would hope that this would always be true of my life in relationship to you. I hope that this will continue in my life even as I get older. I hope that this will continue in my life even if I become feeble and infirmed and unable to teach. I would always hope that I and the elders of Valley Bible Church could have this kind of concern for you and for your welfare.

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I would hope we would provide for you an example that you could follow as you would seek to care for one another.

### CONCLUSION

I know that this passage is not very deep theologically. But I would hope that even though this passage may be devoid of deep theological truths that the life of Timothy will serve as a powerful model that the Lord can use to challenge our lives.

Hopefully the Lord will use the life of Timothy to challenge us to stay focused on our discipling efforts even in the midst of disappointments. Hopefully the Lord will use the life of Timothy to challenge us to genuinely care for one another, to even anxiously care for one another in a godly way.