



Two Testimonials

- I. Introduction. In Philippians 2:5-11, Paul gives Jesus Christ as the perfect example of humility and of one who puts others' interests ahead of his own. Jesus is the role model for servant leadership. However, in 2:19-30, Paul adds two personal examples of men who lived and modeled Christian humility and servanthood. Both of these men were familiar to the Philippian church.

- II. Two Servant Leaders
 - A. Timothy- Philippians 2:19-24
 1. Timothy was unique. Timothy was not like anyone else to Paul. Timothy had the capacity to take a genuine interest in the welfare of the Philippians without a selfish motive. Other people looked out for their own interests, but Timothy always looked out for the interests of Jesus. Paul's words referred back to 2:4. Timothy was a living example of a humble man who looked after the interests of Jesus and the church before his personal agendas. Timothy was a very unique individual in that way.
 2. Timothy was reliable. Paul saw Timothy as a spiritual son. Timothy did not have a Godly father in his life (2 Timothy 1:5), and Paul filled that role. They were like father and son. Timothy had proved himself as a faithful minister of the gospel and servant of the church. Paul had sent Timothy to Corinth, Thessalonica, and Ephesus, and now he wanted Timothy to visit Philippi. Paul trusted Timothy completely with the Philippian church, and Paul believed Timothy would lead the church back to unity and faithfulness to Christ. Paul hoped to get out of prison and join Timothy in Philippi.
 3. From what you know about Timothy from this passage and other scripture, what are some character traits that make Timothy a strong leader in the Kingdom of God? Why do these character traits make him a strong leader?

 - B. Epaphroditus- Philippians 2:25-30
 1. Epaphroditus was committed. Paul introduced Epaphroditus as a brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier. Paul also referred to him as "your messenger." The word "messenger" comes from the Greek word "apostolos" where we get the English word "apostle." There is no indication that Epaphroditus held the office of apostle in Philippi; he was simply a messenger sent to Paul from the church in Philippi to minister to Paul. He left his job, spent weeks on the road to visit Paul in Rome (the trip was 815 miles one way), brought Paul gifts, and spent time with Paul encouraging him during a difficult time. During the trip, he got sick and almost died. Paul told the Philippian church to honor him because he almost died for the work of Christ. That is commitment!

2. Epaphroditus was compassionate. Epaphroditus was a compassionate man. He cared about Paul and his suffering. He came to encourage Paul and be with him during a difficult time. While he was with Paul, he became very ill. When the Philippian church found out about the illness, Epaphroditus was distressed because he didn't want the church to be concerned for him. He had great concern and compassion for both Paul and his fellow believers in Philippi.
3. Epaphroditus was a comrade. Paul used a military term to describe his relationship with Epaphroditus. First, he was a brother- his death would have brought Paul "sorrow upon sorrow." These words describe the closeness of their relationship- they were truly spiritual family. Second, they were fellow workers. They worked together to spread the message of Christ and build the church. They were a good team who worked hard together to grow the Kingdom of God. Third, they were fellow soldiers. They served together in God's army to accomplish the mission of Christ. Epaphroditus and Paul were close friends, co-workers, and comrades together for the sake of Christ and the Philippian church. Paul let the Philippian church know that Epaphroditus had been a huge encouragement to him. God had healed Epaphroditus, and Paul was sending him back home to minister to the Philippian church.
4. What are the character traits in Epaphroditus that make him a strong leader? Why would people want to follow him?

III. Application. Paul charged the church to be humble and learn to look out for the interests of others. He gave Jesus as the ultimate example of humility and servanthood. In 2:19-30, Paul gives the testimonies of two incredible men that believers can look to as examples of servant leadership. As men of God, we should strive to become men like Timothy and Epaphroditus.

- A. Who in your life do you hold up as example of the type of leader you want to follow? What character qualities do they possess that you admire?
- B. What are your best qualities as a leader and Christian man?
- C. What is one character trait that you would like to work on to become a better man? What are some things you can change or add to your life to grow in this character trait?

