

RELATED SCRIPTURES

Proverbs 3:3–4 | Colossians 3:12–17 | Ephesians 4:1–6

STUDY FOR SERMON FROM 10.20.24

SUMMARY

After Paul provides lessons on humility (2:3–11, 17–18) to the church at Philippi, he gives them two real-life examples of humility in Timothy, Paul’s son in the faith, and Epaphroditus, the pastor of the church in Philippi. First, with Timothy, while Paul is in prison, Timothy selflessly stays by his side. Paul refers to Timothy as the only one he has who is of kindred spirit (v. 20). Nevertheless, Paul desires to send Timothy to the church for their encouragement and, subsequently, his encouragement when Timothy returns with a favorable report. Timothy is steadfastly selfless as he takes measures to encourage the church and Paul. Timothy is the antithesis of the preachers Paul previously mentioned, who were obsessed with their own gain (1:15–17).

Paul’s following example of humility comes from the church at Philippi itself. The church sent Epaphroditus with a financial gift to Paul while imprisoned in Rome. While he was visiting Paul, he became gravely ill. Word of his illness reached the church and they understandably became seriously concerned for their pastor. By God’s grace, Epaphroditus was restored to health and usefulness to Paul (v. 26–30). Paul resolved and committed to send Epaphroditus back to the church. Despite Epaphroditus’ near-death illness, he remained loyal to Paul, the advancement of the gospel, and his church (v. 26). Further, Paul describes him as a fellow “worker” and “soldier” (v. 25). Paul instructs the church to “receive him in the Lord with all joy,” as one who placed the interest of others above his own.

GROUP QUESTIONS

Share something that surprises, encourages, or troubles you from the sermon or your direct reading of Philippians 2:19–30.

Why is humility such a difficult quality for people to pursue? Based on your reading of Philippians 2, how can someone take active measures to pursue humility?

In what ways does Epaphroditus teach us about putting our interests aside to tend to the needs of others?

If there’s one thing Jesus would want you to walk away believing and receiving as a result of this portion of Scripture, what is that thing?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

As you pray, be sure to include today’s themes in what you bring before God.