

Philippians 2:19-30 – 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... But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need... Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and the such like him in high regard;

Review Structure of Philippians

- One main point (Philippians 2:1-11)
- Nine surrounding passages that support the main point
- Thought, character, and behavioral examples
 - Mostly Paul's example
 - Timothy and Epaphroditus are also highlighted
- Three main hortatory passages (challenges)

The Example of Timothy (2:19-24)

Paul's Expected Action

Paul uses the word “ἐλπίζω *elpizō*,” translated *hope*, to express his plan to send Timothy to the Philippian Church. This word indicates an earnest expectation. This hope is in the Lord Jesus, so therefore we can determine that, through God's plan, he is sending Timothy to them. This earnest expectation is stated again in verse 23.

Paul will send Timothy as soon as he “finds out the things concerning him.” This is not a contingency but more of a question about timing.

Paul then concludes this section by stating that he plans on coming to them shortly. The word *trust* is translated from “πείθω *peithō*” and indicates that Paul is persuaded in the Lord. This is not the same level of confidence or assurance as “ἐλπίζω *elpizō*.” This level of uncertainty is confirmed in verse 23.

Paul does seem to indicate that he is looking to be released soon. Perhaps the question is not “if” but “when” (and the delay could be significant). Regardless of Paul's situation, Timothy is being sent to Philippi.

Purpose of Timothy's Visit

In verse 19, Paul wants Timothy to give him a report about the church in Philippi. But we also know that Timothy was not and never had been a simple messenger. Timothy was entrusted to complete what was lacking in Thessalonica and was left in charge in Ephesus to carry on the mission for Paul.

We can then surmise with a degree of certainty that Timothy was also coming to teach, correct, and encourage the saints at Philippi as well.

Timothy's Proven Character

Timothy is a well-known person in the Gentile regions. He was picked up in Lystra and was with Paul from his second missionary journey onward.

At the time Paul met Timothy, they were roughly 45-50 and 30-35 years old, respectively. Although not mentioned, Timothy was in Philippi during Paul and Silas' imprisonment in Acts 16. Paul directed Timothy to go to various churches to complete doctrinal training, provide encouragement, and report back. Timothy was with the apostle in Ephesus during his third missionary journey. While in the city, he and a man named Erastus were sent by Paul to minister to brethren in Macedonia, one of the cities in Philippi (Acts 19:22).

PHILIPPIANS CHAPTER 2

Paul trusts Timothy to minister, to express his wishes, and to receive the required information to take back to him.

- Like Paul

It should not surprise us, then, with all we know about Timothy, that he is uniquely qualified because not only did Paul trust him, he also had a long and intimate relationship with the Philippians Church.

Timothy is a *kindred spirit*. I actually like this translation as the word “ἰσόψυχος isopsuchos” means equal souled, same spirit, like-minded.

The adverb *genuinely* is “γνησίως gnēsiōs” and is the adverb from “to become” and could mean legitimate, or really, or naturally. The adjective is used of Timothy in 1 Timothy 1:2. The understanding of this word is contested by scholars, but the use of it seems to indicate a unique relationship that is only experienced by a few (Titus 1:4; Philippians 4:3).

- Unlike Others

Paul contrasts Timothy and himself with “οἱ πάντες” (“the all”) in verse 21. This is obviously hyperbolic as Epaphroditus is mentioned just a few verses later. The point was not to discount each and every person but to demonstrate the uniqueness of Timothy and anyone else that maintains service for the long haul.

For example, Demas, who is a fellow worker and beloved in Colossians 4:14 and Philemon 24, is later referenced in 2 Timothy 4:10 as having forsaken Paul (and consequently the Lord) because he loved this present world (Philippians 3:18-19).

Conclusion

Many times in Scripture, God gives us people to serve as examples for the faith to pattern ourselves after (in the faith). We are not to pattern ourselves after their dress, their haircuts, or their choice of entertainment. The question is what they do in regard to the truth of God and the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Uphold the truth against adversaries

Demonstrate true unconditional love to the brethren

Are willing to sacrifice for the sake of the Gospel