

Study 09

“Paradigm Partners”

Philippians 2:19-30



Dwelling in the Word

1. Prayerfully read through Philippians 2:19-30 and ask: 1) What words, phrases, or images stood out to you? 2) What does this say about what God desires to accomplish in you? 3) How could you respond to what God says in this passage?

Beginning the Conversation

1. Partnership and connection is absolutely essential for Jesus followers. Read 1Corinthians 12:12-31 and 1Peter 2:4-10. Can you brainstorm and other good metaphors (in addition to a body and a temple building) for Christian communities?

Digging Deeper

1. Go back and read 2:1-4. List what the Philippians are told to do and not do in their relationships with each other. How did Timothy and Epaphroditus exemplify these things?
2. Read 2:5-11. How did Timothy and Epaphroditus follow the example of Christ?
3. Timothy was one of Paul's dearest co-workers. With the aid of a concordance, look up the places where Timothy is mentioned in the NT. How does this flesh out the “Partner Profile” Pastor Caley talked about in her sermon?
4. The church at Philippi as a whole exemplified Jesus when they sent Epaphroditus on their behalf to aid Paul while he was under house arrest. What are some things that a faith community can help with together that perhaps an individual does not have the resources to do on their own?
5. Timothy and Epaphroditus are held up as paradigms of partnership. Think back to the gospels; what teachings of Jesus, events, or activities come to your mind around cooperation and partnership? (Two spring to mind for me (Caley): Nicodemus' participation in the burial rites of Jesus with Joseph [John 19:38-41], and Mary's action on Jesus' post resurrection assignment to tell the mourning disciples that he had risen [John 20:17-18])
6. We get a bit of insight into Paul's humble disposition in how he holds his future plans in 2:24 when he comments, “I am confident *in the Lord* that I myself will come soon.” What can we learn from Paul's attitude towards the future?

Living it Out


1. The first invitation from the sermon was to not underestimate the “spiritualness” of practical matters. Reflect back, what events or actions did you experience that on the surface seemed mundane but in reality had profound spiritual significance to you? And, what are some activities you currently participate in that seem spiritually inert? Could you shift your intention or mindset around these activities to recognize their spiritual potential?
2. The second invitation was to welcome and honour people like Timothy and Epaphroditus. Could you send a letter, email, or text to encourage someone who has shown themselves faithful and aided you in your journey with Jesus?
3. The third invitation was to ask the Lord how you could strengthen your co-working. Commit to including this in your prayer life this week and acting on what he leads you to.



Paradigm Partners


Philippians 2:19-30

November 10, 2024
Pastor Caley Tse
Greenfield Community Church



Background Review


Where was Paul when he wrote this letter?
and **why** was he there?



Background Review

Multiple Choice:

In the 1st century,
who provided necessities
for prisoners?



Background Review

Who was Paul's "spiritual son"?



Background Review

True or False:

In the 1st century,
humility was a virtue.



Background Review

What does Epaphroditus have in common with one of the planets?




Scripture Reading: Philippians 2:19-30

²⁵ But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, co-worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. ²⁶ For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. ²⁹ So then, welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor people like him, ³⁰ because he almost died for the work of Christ. He risked his life to make up for the help you yourselves could not give me.



Today's passage, on its face, seems to be mainly about practical matters, but for Paul, all of life is now "**in Christ**"; and therefore concerns the gospel, including the comings and goings of his ministry partners.

The practical is *necessarily spiritual*.



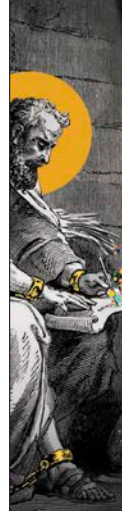
Letter Context

Chapter 2:

- 1-5 Regarding **their** relational attitudes and behaviours
- 5-11 **Jesus** as the divine ultimate paradigm of relational attitudes and behaviours
- 12-18 Regarding **their** relational attitudes and behaviours
- 19-30 **Tim and Epap.** as paradigms of relational attitudes and behaviours ←

Chapter 3:

- 7-17 **Paul** as a further paradigm of relational attitudes and behaviours



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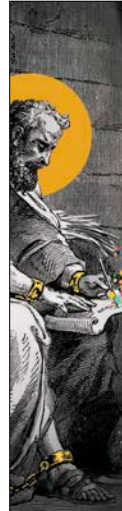
- 7-17 **Paul** as a further paradigm of relational attitudes and behaviours

*All of this is to encourage the Philippians to embrace **Christ's humble** attitudes and behaviours.*

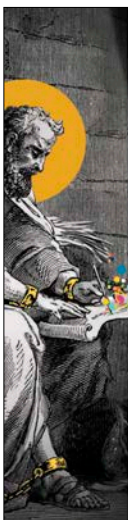


Partner Profile: Timothy

- Born to a Greek father and Jewish/Christian mother.
- Timothy's name means 'one who honours God'.
- He was raised on a steady diet of Scripture.
- Age ~30-35.
- He is Paul's best, because he will show authentic concern for the Philippians' well being.
- He *will* because he *has* already. He was most likely with Paul and Silas when they first visited Philippi 10 years prior.
- Timothy's visit will benefit both the Philippians and Paul as he will report back to Rome faithfully.
- He is an extension of Paul's ministry, and closest partner.

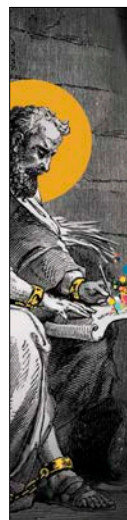


Timothy is commended to the Philippians precisely because he *displayed* the very **servanthood** and **humility** Paul promotes through the whole letter and especially in his descriptions of Jesus Christ.

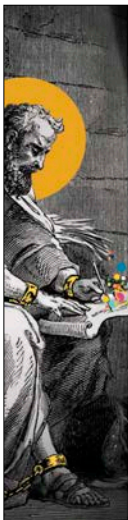


Partner Profile: Epaphroditus

- Born to Greek parents.
- Named to honour Aphrodite.
- Follower of Christ for 10 years or less.
- Age unknown.
- He is one of Philippi's best, because he showed their concern for Paul's well being by bringing goods and support to him.
- His return will benefit both the Philippians and Paul as it will relieve their worries.
- He is an extension of the Philippians' ministry, and Paul's partner also.
- He almost died for the work of Christ.



Epaphroditus is commended to the Philippians precisely because he has *embodied* the very **sacrifice** and **humility** Paul promotes through the whole letter and especially in his descriptions of Jesus Christ.



3 Invitations

Recognize the '*spiritualness*' of practical matters.

Welcome and honour people like Timothy and Epaphroditus.

Ask the Lord how you could strengthen your co-working.