

## Philippians 2:19-30

### Have character that is centered on the Gospel.

Up until now, this chapter has hit three main points, which we've heard from the last three speakers:

2:1-4 was about pursuing humility for unity by remember who Christ is to all of us and keeping the Gospel their first focus.

2:5-11 was about embodying Christ in our relationships by being willing to lay our lives down for the sake of God's glory.

2:12-18 was about allowing God's work to manifest in your life so you can work out.

As I heard those messages, I thought about people I knew that embodied those things and Paul is having that moment here.

Verses 19-30 is an oddly placed chunk of verses because it seems like it would be the end of a letter, but actually Paul is thinking about the last 3 points he's made through the chapter. Timothy and Epaphroditus come to mind as great examples of men that embodied these traits. He's been exhorting the people for a chapter and half and now he's pointing to demonstrations that the Philippians will be familiar with.

Verse 19: "cheered" excited to communicate, not only for good news but any news because he loves them so much, keeps up with the people he invests in

Verse 20: shows concern for others welfare, grateful for colleague, genuine in greek means faithfully which we use differently- honest verses consistent. Example: a friend that's honest vs consistent. Do I care for anyone that way?

Verse 21: commends Timothy for not focusing on selfish interests but has the same interest of Jesus Christ, which was to glorify God. He's a contrast to his generation.

Verse 22: proved himself what? The phrase "prove himself" means "to show true character" like in a hard situation. Timothy lives up to his name/character which means "He who honors God" because he's served alongside Paul, serving in the work of the Gospel. Proving yourself doesn't happen overnight; he had to persevere faithfully/consistently.

"As a son with his Father" parallels the way Jesus was on board for God's vision. Paul and Timothy shared the vision of fulfilling the great commission, which is to spread the Gospel to all nations. We're talking, two of the greatest church planters in the Bible.

Verses 23-24: Paul darling, you're in prison! He was hopeful in crazy circumstances showing confidence in the Lord, and lack of concern for himself. He has this confidence because of what he said earlier in 1:21-25

So far we've seen from Timothy and Paul- a concern for others, a confidence in God, and it's all centered on the Gospel. Now he moves on to talk about Epaphroditus

Verse 25: Who is he? He is only mentioned twice in Scripture. Some research says his name means lovely/agreeable/charming others say Colossal Christian. History records him as this and equates them. Paul speaks so highly of him with titles like brother-warm personal intimacy, coworker-contributing to the same mission, fellow soldier-relentless warrior enduring hardship, and messenger- not only news but financial partnership so he must be trustworthy.

Verse 26: Epaphroditus almost died. Mind you, he's on a 800 mile trek which would've taken him about 6 weeks with lots of germs. This was not a cough and sneeze kind of illness. He almost died. But he's willing to go the distance and is more worried about the Philippians. He doesn't want them to be worried about him so they can focus on their part of sharing the Gospel. Everyone's concerned for someone else! And everyone shares in this common mission.

Verses 27-28: Paul's not even worried about the fact that Epaphroditus almost died. He has confidence in God's mercy, healing, and deliverance from sorrow. It eases Paul's anxiety knowing the Philippians aren't worried. Do I have this confidence in God?

Verses 29-30: this word honor is only used in the NT 5x and means to hold in high regard distinguishably different, "risked his life" echoes 2:8 "obedience to death" for Jesus-this is what's honorable.

So far we've seen in Paul and Epaphroditus and Timothy from earlier, more confidence in God, more concern for others, and it's all centered around the Gospel. But can I throw in there that the whole point of Paul putting this here was to show commendable character? People with character like this are worthy of honor. Am I worthy of honor? Are you worthy of honor?

The bottom line is that we should have character that is centered on the Gospel, which means we have concern for others and confidence in God.

What if we were so concerned for one another that our circumstances didn't even matter? "I just want to encourage you..." What if we went the extra mile the way Epaphroditus did? What if we were consistent and faithful in our relationships the way Timothy was?

What if our minds were so set on who God is alone, that we never worried or wanted for anything? What if we were like Paul- so confident in God's faithfulness, His mercy, His healing, His deliverance from sorrow, His deliverance from anxiety, His joy, His peace...

What if our lives were centered on the Gospel? What if the great commission to share the Gospel was your personal mission statement? (When asking someone to call 911 you have to say a name) These guys put their name in the spot. It was all that mattered, it's the reason for their commendable character.

Because their lives were centered on the Gospel, they could have commendable character, concern for others, and confidence in God.

But how do I have a life centered on the Gospel? What does that even mean? That means you understand (present the Gospel) and you're willing to give your life to Christ.