

# Timothy and Epaphroditus

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- [ 0 : 0 0 ] Welcome to our services today and we pray that the Lord's blessing would rest upon everything that we endeavour to do in his name.
- We seek his blessing upon his word and the preaching of his word this evening. Let us draw near to God in prayer.
- Eternal and ever-blessed Lord, we give thanks unto thee that we have access into thy presence.
- And that as we draw near to thee in this act of worship, we pray, O Lord, that everything that we endeavour to do in thy name would be to the glory and the praise of thine own name.
- That thou art the one who must increase and that we would decrease. That we would focus upon thyself.
- [ 1 : 1 6 ] That thou, O Lord, would be all and in all for us. And to that end we pray, O Lord, that thou would draw near to us through thy spirit.
- That thou would open our hearts to receive thy word. That it would be lodged in our heart. That it would bring forth evidence in our lives.
- That our behaviour and our attitude and our conversation in life would be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.
- That we would be true light bearers in this world. And that those who observe us would see the gospel at work in our lives.
- O Lord, that we would set forth Jesus Christ and him crucified. We give thee thanks, O Lord, for the work of thy grace in the hearts of sinners such as we are.
- [ 2 : 3 1 ] And we give thanks that in spite of the struggles that we have in life. Despite the fact of the struggle that we have with our besetting sin.
- That we are assured and confident of this very thing. That where thou hast begun a good work. That you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.
- We give thanks unto thee, O Lord, that thou art the one who worketh in us. That thou art the one who worketh both to will and to do of thine own good pleasure.
- And as thou work in us, so we are called to work out our own salvation. With fear and trembling.
- O Lord, we give thee thanks that thou hast through thy spirit implanted in our heart. That desire for holiness.
- [ 3 : 4 0 ] A desire to do away with sin. And a desire to walk in the way of righteousness.
- O Lord, you know that we have a fallen nature. You know, O Lord, the struggles and the hardships that we face each day as we contend with sin.
- But blessed be thy name. That in Christ we can have the victory. And that in Christ we will have the victory.

O Lord, we give thee thanks for that great promise that the day shall come when all aspects of sin shall be forever put behind us.

In our glorification. In that day when we shall in body and soul be made like unto Christ. O Lord, we give thee thanks that we have that living hope through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

[ 4 : 48 ] And so we pray that as the gospel is proclaimed this night, that it may go forth in power and in the demonstration of thy spirit. In convicting, converting and in the building of thy church.

Bless all thy servants who proclaim thy word. Bless us, we pray thee as islands and as a nation. O Lord, look upon us, we pray thee with compassion and pity and in love.

And we pray, O Lord, that through thy gospel thou would draw a people to thyself. A people who would see their need. And the sufficiency of Christ to meet with that need.

Bless, we pray thee, our homes and our families. Bless thy people. Let them be true light bearers in this world. Bless those who are ill.

O may thy healing hand be with them. And those who mourn over the passing of loved ones. Bless our young people and our children when there is so much to entice them away from the gospel.

[ 5 : 58 ] We pray, O Lord, that thou would raise up a generation that would fear thy no name. And who would witness for thee in this world. We pray, O Lord, that thou would bless our leaders.

Grant them wisdom. And grant to them, O Lord, that they will be mindful that righteousness alone exalted a nation. That sin is a reproach to thee.

O Lord, have compassion and pity upon us. And we give thanks to thee, O Lord, for the technology that grants to us that we can be together in this act of worship.

We pray, O Lord, that thou would grant to us wisdom and guidance in these coming days and weeks as we come out of lockdown. That we would do everything to protect one another.

And we pray, O Lord, that as we prepare, that we would have the knowledge and the guidance of thine own spirit.

[ 7 : 02 ] And that everything that we endeavour to do would be to the good of our people. We ask, O Lord, that thou would continue with us now and forgive us for our many sins.

In Jesus' name. Amen. We shall now read the word of God as we find it in the epistle of Paul to the Philippians and chapter 2.

If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, fulfill ye my joy that ye may be like-minded, having the same love, be not one of God, of one mind.

Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man in his own things, but every man also on the things of others.

Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant that was made in the likeness of men, and been found in fashion as a man he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

[ 8 : 32 ] Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name, that that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not us in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you, both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Do all things without murmurings and disputings, that ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world.

Hold ye fast the word of life, that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.

For the same cause also do ye joy and rejoice with me. But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state.

[ 9 : 52 ] For I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ. But ye know the proof of him, that as a son with the Father, he has served with me in the gospel.

Him, therefore, I hope to send presently, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me. But I trust in the Lord, that I also myself shall come shortly.

Yet I suppose it necessary to send unto you, if I would like this, my brother and companion in labour and fellow soldier, but your messenger and he that minister to my wants.

For he longed after you all and was full of heaviness, because ye have heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.

I send him, therefore, the more carefully, that when ye see him again, ye may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Receive him, therefore, in the Lord with all gladness and whole such in reputation, because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death, not regarding his life to supply your lack of service toward me.

[ 11 : 11 ] May the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word. And with the Lord's help, we would like to look at a passage running from verse 19 to the end of the chapter.

For a number of weeks now, we have been studying chapter 2 of this letter, and I would like this evening to conclude our study on the chapter.

So we shall look at the passage and seek in the Lord's help from verse 19 to the end of the chapter. And especially focusing upon Timotheus or Timothy and Ephaphroditus.

Paul has been laying emphasis on the believers at Philippi and on me and you, that if we are Christians tonight, that we are to let our conversation or our conduct or our behaviour to be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.

And he urges us to have the mind of Christ in us. Or, as we saw when we were studying that part of the letter, having already the mind of Christ in us.

[ 12 : 32 ] That because we are in Christ and the spirit of Christ is in us, therefore we are to have the same attitude as Christ.

We have to have having the mind of Christ in us. whom Paul says forth as our example, who did not grasp his privileges by looking to his own interests, but he looked to the interests of others.

And he took upon him the form of a slave or a servant and was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. And we are to follow that example by looking not to our own interests, but to the interests of others.

And having received the gift of salvation, he commands that we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling. Now we saw that salvation can be spoken of in three ways.

There is the past, wherein we can say, I am saved. That points to our justification. There is the future, wherein we can say, I will be saved.

[ 13 : 50 ] And that points to our glorification. But there is the present, wherein we can say, I am being saved. And that is the process or the work of sanctification.

And it is to that process that Paul makes reference and commands us to work at it. Solely because God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

God works, and we work. And we have to do so without murmurings and disputings, so that we may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world, holding forth the word of life.

That I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. Yea, and if I be offered upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I joy and rejoice with you all.

For the same cause also do ye joy and rejoice with me. And Paul then presents examples of two men who embody the attitudes that he has been exhorting the Philippians and me and you to cultivate among ourselves.

[ 15 : 16 ] And these two are Timothy and Ephaphroditus. Paul turns his spotlight first on Timothy because he plans to send Timothy to Philippi as soon as his own case is known.

But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state. For I have no man like-minded who will naturally care for your state.

For all seek the road not the things which are Jesus Christ. But ye know the proof of him that as a son with the Father he has served with me in the Gospel.

Him therefore I hope to send presently as soon as I shall see how it will go with me. Now, as we noted at the beginning of our study of this letter, Paul mentions Timothy as one who is with him.

It has been suggested that he mentions Timothy because he served as Paul's secretary by writing down Paul's transcript of this letter.

[ 16 : 27 ] Of course, the church at Philippi would know Timothy from Paul's visit among them. But it is interesting that Paul attaches the name of Timothy to his salutations in another five of his letters in 2 Corinthians, 1 and 2 Thessalonians.

Colossians and Philemon. Now, Paul was an apostle of Jesus Christ and this is a title that he uses along with his name in most of his letters apart from the letters to the Thessalonians where he just mentions his name and his letter to Philemon where he names himself as a prisoner of Jesus Christ.

But in this in the church at Philippi it is something that is very unique as we have already noted. he gives himself and Timothy the same title as servants of Jesus Christ.

And he does so I think because there was a unique relationship forged between Paul and Timothy in the Gospel. Paul speaks of Timothy with great affection.

When he wrote his first letter to Timothy he writes my own son in the faith. And the relationship between them was both spiritual and personal.

[ 17 : 49 ] The relationship was bound by their faith in Jesus Christ. Paul and Timothy met when Paul was passing through Lystra on his second missionary journey and it is generally accepted that he introduced Timothy to Christ.

That Timothy was possibly one of his converts. Timothy travelled together with Paul and was by his side as Paul was here imprisoned in Rome.

Now we also know that Timothy's mother was Jewish but his father was a Greek. And we know that Timothy learnt the scriptures at his mother's knee in 2 Timothy chapter 1 Paul wrote when I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee which dwelt first in thy grandmother Elis and thy mother Eunice and I am persuaded that in thee also.

How often Christians owe so much to a mother's instruction. Augustine wrote how his mother Monica travelled in prayer for his salvation.

In the confessions that he made to God Augustine testified to her faithfulness. He wrote these words My mother your faithful servant was weeping for me to you weeping more than mother's wept for the bodily deaths of her sons for she by that faith and spirit which she had from you saw the death in which I lay and you Lord heard her prayer you heard her and you did not despise her tears which fell streaming and watered the ground beneath her eyes in every place which you prayed indeed indeed you heard her oh how much we many of us do owe to a mother's instruction and to a mother's prayer Paul says to the church at Philippi that he trusts in the Lord Jesus to send

[ 20 : 08 ] Timothy shortly unto them notice that here as well as when he speaks of his own expected reunion with the Philippians he is very conscious of God's sovereignty and control over all things and he is a man who submits himself to that notice what he says but I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you but I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly Paul is completely aware that his whole life and that every circumstance in his life is under the sovereignty and the control of the Lord that begs a question how do you and I approach our planning for the future do we formulate our plans with humility always aware that the

Lord is sovereign and in complete control and that he has both the right and wisdom to overrule our choices and to redirect our paths you know it may be good for us to think of the words of James in chapter 4 ye that say today or tomorrow we will go into such a city and continue there a year and buy and sell and get gain when ask ye know not what shall be on the morrow for what is your life it is even a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away for that he ought to say if the Lord will we shall live and do this or that well Paul was such a person who committed himself to the sovereignty and the control of the Lord then we find here that

Paul gives the reason why he is sending Timothy that I also may be of good comfort when I know your state this expression I also implies Paul's confidence that the church at Philippi will be comforted or glad and encouraged or heartened by what Timothy tells them about the progress of the gospel through Paul's witness in prison we know that this was one of the things that caused concern to the church at Philippi as we have already seen in our study and he is also confident that he himself would be encouraged and heartened by the news that he would receive back regarding their own state in Philippi and this journey that was to be undertaken by Timothy to go from Rome to Philippi and back required weeks in a most toilsome difficult and demanding journey over land and sea however however what we want to draw your attention to briefly tonight is that there are four things that

Paul says about Timothy first of all he says for I have no man like minded now what does Paul mean well he means that he is sending a person who shares his mind and his heart who is of kindred spirit he is like Paul himself who puts the interests of others first before his own he is someone who has the mind of Christ Christ who puts the interests of others before his own Paul also shows a deep concern for the welfare of God's people of the churches that he has established and secondly Paul says that Timothy who will naturally care for your state Timothy was concerned for others he had a great concern for the church at

Philippi he will genuinely care for them just as much as Paul does you see here we are reminded that we should always be concerned for one another having the mind of Christ should leave us concerned for one another put in the interest of others first before our own we should be concerned about the welfare of one another not only physically but also spiritually Paul wrote to the Galatians and he says bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ this very much goes against the mindset that we find in the world today when everyone is so concerned just about themselves but the

[ 25 : 34 ] Christian is to be different he's got to put or she's got to put the interests of others before their own interest they have to have the mind of Christ or having the mind of Christ they put the interests of others first before their own interests they bear one another's burden thirdly Paul praises Timothy for his concern for Jesus Christ he always puts Jesus Christ first that's why he is able to put the care of others first because he puts Jesus Christ first he says for all seek their own not the things which are Jesus Christ's who are the ones who seek their own does he mean the entire population of

Philippi does he mean all the Christians at Philippi does he mean certain workers who were available but were unwilling to be sent by Paul to Philippi because they were preoccupied with their own interests it is so easy to put other things first before the things of Jesus Christ and when we don't put Jesus Christ first then we don't put others first there is a sense in which the world seeks their own things as we have noted and not the things of Jesus Christ but Christians can also seek their own and put their own things before the things of Jesus Christ just as well we do not need to go into any specifics just now all we need to do is just examine ourselves me to examine myself and you to examine yourself in regards to what do we put first in our life well here is an example for us of how our life ought to be the willingness of

Timothy to serve Jesus Christ by serving others provides an example for which Paul rebukes everyone who looks out for their own interests and not those of Jesus Christ and not those of others and the last thing that he says about Timothy is this that he has proved that he can work with others but he know the proof of him that as a son with a father he has saved me in the gospel Timothy has proved himself to the Philippians as a person by remaining faithful in the midst of suffering and trials he has remained faithful and loyal to Paul as a son with a father in the work of the gospel he has worked along with Paul in the work of the gospel

Timothy stroll as a son to Paul in the faith not only conveyed loyalty but it also conveyed humility Timothy Timothy humbled himself to be an obedient son in the faith to Paul sons and slaves were a people who were obedient to the demands of fathers and masters and in his humility Timothy was obedient to Paul as Christ was as a servant to the will of the father the service of himself and Timothy was a joint service in the Lord Timothy would be a great example to the Philippians of the kind of attitude that he was urging on them in his letter a man who seeks not his own interests but those of others just like Jesus Christ working together in the gospel there is nothing that destroys the witness of the gospel as when believers as

Christians cannot work together in the gospel when some try to promote themselves to look better to look good instead of working together in the gospel Paul and Timothy is an example to us of two who work together in the gospel Paul adds a note why he is not sending Timothy immediately he says him therefore I hope to send presently so soon as I shall see how it will go with me what is waiting for before he sends Timothy what is he waiting for before he sends Timothy well it is not quite clear but there is a general acceptance that he is referring to his trial he did not want to send Timothy until he saw whether he would be sentenced to execution or be set free and he would be able to convey to the church at

[ 31 : 27 ] Philippi through Timothy the outcome of his imprisonment or maybe as a son to the father he needed Timothy to be with him at this time we just cannot be sure however Paul is confident that he will himself visit Philippi but he does not give us the reason of having this confidence but I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly but as we have already noted his confidence is conditioned by the will of the Lord if the Lord will so he trusts in the Lord that he himself will come shortly he understands and believes and confesses that the Lord is sovereign and in control what is to happen and if the Lord wills that he himself will come shortly to the church at

Philippi now after speaking of Timothy and his Christlike character he now turns to Ephraim who appears to be the bearer of this letter on his return to Philippi yet I suppose it necessary to send to you if I prod it is my brother and companion in labor and fellow soldier but your messenger and he that minister to my wants for he longed after you all and was full of heaviness because that he had heard that he had been sick for indeed he was sick nigh unto death but God had mercy on him and not on him only but on me also lest I have sorrow upon sorrow I send him therefore the more carefully that when you see him again he may rejoice and that I may be the less sorrowful receive receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness and hold such in reputation because for the work of

Christ he was nigh unto death not regarding his life to supply your lack of service told me the church at Philippi had sent this man as their representative to minister to Paul and particularly to bring some gifts that would answer to the needs of Paul and we see that in chapter 4 but in the process of ministering to Paul's needs this man Ephaphroditus becomes critically ill twice he says that he almost died whatever his sickness was he came very near to death word about this condition of Ephaphroditus gets back to the church at Philippi how it got back we do not know but it disturbed and saddened the hearts of the Philippians and

Paul and Ephaphroditus is aware of this for he longed after you all and was full of heaviness because that he heard that he had been sick for indeed he was sick nigh unto death so Paul comes to the conclusion after reflecting upon all the facts that the best thing to do with Ephaphroditus was in order to save the pressure upon the spirit of the Philippians and in order for them to know about his well-being was to send him back to them in person now we have already named in our study at least three of the conversions which took place while Paul was at Philippi there was Lydia was converted quietly down by the river side slave girl was converted publicly and noisily and with a high dram of a riot that followed and the city jailer was converted when his prison collapsed around him however one of the most exciting conversions that took place at

Philippi was of this man named Ephabroditus he has a Greek name which implies the possibility that he was brought up in a pagan environment however at some point he was converted to Christ and Paul reminds them in verse 30 that this man because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death not regarding his life to supply your lack of service toward me his willingness to risk his life to the point of almost dying the service of others made him another example of one who had the same attitude of mind as Jesus Christ here he is first described to us in his relationship to Paul he is my brother my companion in labor and my fellow soldier and then he is described in his relationship to the church of

[ 36 : 52 ] Philippi he is your messenger and minister will respect to my needs now bound up in that two fold relationship of evaporated to Paul and his relationship to the church at Philippi there is much instruction for instance let us look in his relationship to Paul he is called for my brother that's what Paul calls him now what makes a man another man's brother in what sense could Paul identify Ephaphroditus as his brother Paul was born a Jew and a swan who belonged to the strictest sect of the Pharisees as we shall see in chapter 3 of this letter he was proud of his heritage and despised the lifestyle of the pagans nevertheless he calls this man

Ephaphroditus my brother now there was a time in Paul's life and if you had introduced this man to him he would have turned away from the very mention of his name he would never have used this term my brother towards this man these two men would have nothing in common with each other their religion were miles apart how then did this come to pass what brought these men into a relationship of brotherly love it was the gospel that was the great instrument to take these two men who naturally would have been poles apart to the point when Paul now says regarding Ephaphroditus my brother it was the work of God in Jesus Christ that brought these two men together when

Christ came into their lives all the barriers came tumbling and crashed into the ground while if Ephaphroditus could look back to his paganism and Paul to his judaism nevertheless there was now one thing that brought them both together and this little phrase my brother speaks volumes for the grace and mercy of God in Christ that brings sinners like Paul and Ephaphroditus into the very family of God they were united together by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit and of the faith in Jesus Christ one of the great privileges being a Christian is that there is no colour no race no language there is previous religion or no religion at all that causes a barrier between the people of

God we saw that earlier on today in our morning service such were you he says as he gives that list of enormous and horrendous sins such such he says were some of you but a change came through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit but now but now you have turned your back upon those things in which you gloried before in which you worked so hard before you've turned your back on them and here we have the example in Ephaphroditus and the Philippians Ephaphroditus and Paul brought together under the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ they both came to discover their sin they both had come to discover the only provision for the sin in the person and work of

Jesus Christ Paul in the following chapter is able to say yet doubtless and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord for whom I have suffered the loss of all things and to count them but done that I may win Christ and be found in him not having mine own righteousness which is of the righteousness which is of God by faith they both came in different ways but in their consciousness of their sin they have come to lay hold of the only provision that is made for sinners in the grace of God in Jesus Christ which is able and sufficient to meet what needs of sinners as we find in the language of another letter that

[ 42 : 10 ] Paul wrote when he wrote to the Galatians in chapter 3 and he says for you are all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ this is amazing grace that brings people from diverse backgrounds diverse personal experience but brought together because of their common discovery of their need of sinners a common discovery of God's only provision for sinners in Jesus Christ a common experience of repentance and faith that has brought us broken and helpless to the feet of Christ pleading for nothing but for his mercy and it is this that has brought us into this intimate family relationship so that we can have delight to call one another my brother we can so often recognize each other as

Christians and remain quite cold and show no commitment or any affection towards each other but here Paul uses the possessive personal pronoun my shepherd shepherd but they were not only united in faith but they were also united in gospel work Paul also calls them a companion in labour this reminds us that when we come to

Christ we are not to be idle but we are to be fellow workers Paul writing to the church at Curran says for we are labourers together with God the Ephaphroditus was valuable to Paul not only because he was a fellow worker but we notice here he was also a fellow soldier why did Paul use this term well it could be because the Christian life in general is likened to a warfare wherein every believer is likened to a soldier he was ready to be engaged in spiritual warfare he was willing as a man to risk his life for the cause of the gospel he was a man who lacked a concern for himself the one thing that mattered in Ephaphroditus life was not



Ephraim but that he might give himself unsparingly to the work of the gospel he was in that manner the same as Timothy and the same as Paul himself was he the same as me and you are we willing to give ourselves unsparingly to the work of the gospel you see the church always needs people like Ephraim he was a man who had the mind of Christ who was concerned for others before he was concerned for himself he stayed with Paul in prison as he took care of Paul's needs he cared for Paul he cared for other Christians he cared for others then we have

Paul's description of Ephraim with respect to his relationship with the church at Philippi he is called your messenger and your minister to my need he was sent he was the sent one from the church at Philippi he took these gifts to Paul he also ministered to the needs of Paul not only upon his material needs but also social needs Ephraim was able to make up for the service that the Philippians themselves were unable to give he speaks here that he supplied your lack of service toward me Ephraim was nigh unto death but says Paul but God had mercy on him and not on him only but on me also lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow obviously the sorrow he was spared from is in reference to the death of Ephraim but

[ 47 : 18 ] Paul does not specify the other circumstances that caused him to have sorrow and that the Lord showed mercy to Ephraim he was spared from sorrow upon sorrow what caused the other sorrows well it could have been the illness of Ephraim it could be his own imprisonment it could be those who preached Christ out of envy Paul just does not tell us what other sorrows were what he does tell us is how deeply he would have sorrowed and grieved over the death of his friend Ephraim you see we must remember that the emotion of sorrow is a God given emotion it is not wrong for us to grieve or express sorrow over the death of those whom we love it is not only a God given emotion but sorrow is a Christ like emotion especially in the face of death in the gospels we read that at the grave of

Lazarus that Jesus wept and we see and reading the gospel that he wept over Jerusalem because of the rejection of him we find one of the prophets Jeremiah saying in regards to his people oh that my head were waters and my eyes have found enough tears that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people to weep over death physically and spiritually is not sin we've already quoted Augustine in regard to his mother who wept over him and it is not wrong for us to weep and to grieve at points of death and to grieve over those who are indifferent and careless to the gospel in fact it would be probably a good thing if there was more weeping over others than we do have and he says here

I sent him there for the more carefully that when you see him again you may rejoice and that I may be the less sorrowful receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness and hold such in reputation Paul here spells out the reason and benefits of his decision to send Ephraim and urges them to plan a joyful reunion because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death not regarding his own life to supply your lack of service told me he draws these portraits for us to show us how ordinary people give themselves sacrificially to serve the needs of others as Christ did they are examples to us Timothy and Ephraim are examples to us of people who give themselves sacrificially to serve the needs of others as Christ did he is here giving us an example of what it is that is expected of us as those who have the mind of Christ what it is like to have the mind of Christ and to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling he shows what it is like to have your hearts open tells the cares and concerns of others what it is like to surrender our plans to the

Lordship of Jesus Christ what it is like to embrace others what it is like how we should bear one with one another whatever the cost to shine forth us lights in a darkened world to have the mind of Christ look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus work out your own salvation with fear and trembling for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure to all without murmurings and disputings be blameless and harmless the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverted nation among whom you shine as lights in the world let us rejoice in one another because of the grace of

God through Jesus Christ may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray eternal and ever blessed Lord we give thanks to thee that thy word gives us instructions and examples of how others have worked out their own salvation with fear and trembling that thou was working in others and so we pray oh Lord that as thou work in us that we would be able to follow the example of others that having the mind of Christ that we would look not merely on our own things but also on the things of others that we would be mindful that we are a family that we are the family of

[ 53 : 18 ] God oh grant to us oh Lord that we would walk worthy of the gospel that we profess to believe and that we would practice the gospel in every way possible in our conversation in our behaviour in our attitude with one another and with others we ask oh Lord that thou would bless us meet with us at our point of need and forgive us for our sins may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit abide and be with you all now and forever more Amen