



ADVANCING  
THE  
GOSPEL

Philippians 2:19-30

---

# Introduction

---

- Paul offers two great examples of Christlikeness in Timothy and Epaphroditus.
- These two men were faithful servants of Christ, fully devoted to the advancement of the Gospel.
  - Timothy faithfully cared for the Christians in Philippi.
  - Epaphroditus faithfully suffered for the Gospel, nearly to point of death.

# Give yourself away



Philippians 2.16-30

## Paul

- Joyful service
- Generous love
- A life in Christ

## Timothy

- Proven character
- Genuine service
- Serving Christ

## Epaphroditus

- Served others
- Risked his life
- Serving Christ

# Philippians 2:19-21

---

# Timothy

---

- In verse 19, Paul transitions from his instructions on Christlike obedience by offering two great examples of men whose lives radiated the light of the Gospel.
- This passage begins what is known as Paul's "travelogue."
- While away, Paul intends to send Timothy to the church in Philippi.
- Timothy was a dear companion in Paul's Gospel ministry.
- In Philippians 1:1, Timothy is mentioned with Paul as a sender of the letter.

# Rome to Philippi



---

# Timothy

---

- This is the same Timothy who joined Paul in Acts 16:1–4 and whom Paul called “my true child in the faith” and his “beloved child” (1 Timothy 1:2 and 2 Timothy 1:2).
- Though the Philippians knew Timothy, Paul promotes him as an example of faithfulness and someone who would stand out in caring for the believers.
- In verse 20, Paul says Timothy is “genuinely concerned” for their “welfare.”
- Here, the word “genuinely” (*gnesios*) implies “one who is considered a valid member of a family, legitimate, true.”

---

# Timothy

---

- Timothy's love for the Philippians was familial and deep.
- So much so that Paul says he is "concerned" (*merimnao*), which is typically translated "anxious."
- Paul wants these Christians to know that Timothy yearns for their growth and faithfulness in Christlike so much so that it affects his spirit.
- Paul's own life faithfully demonstrates a deep concern for the Philippians.

---

# Timothy

---

- Paul compares Timothy to those who work and serve out of selfish motivation and not for the sake of Christ (verse 21).
- Connecting this to the beginning of chapter 2, selfish ambition characterized many within the Christian community.
- Paul's point concerning Timothy is clear – this faithful brother was unique in his character and devotion to Christ.
- His concern for the Philippians was not a ploy to get money.

---

# Timothy

---

- In Romans 16:18, Paul says those who spread divisions “do not serve our Lord Christ, but their own appetites, and by smooth talk and flattery they deceive the hearts of the naive.”
- This was not the case with Timothy.
- His love, both for the Philippians and for Christ, was faithful and genuine, making him an example of Christlikeness for the church in Philippi.

---

# Timothy

---

- Philippians 2:15 is the call to be blameless and innocent. Nothing is more damaging and debilitating for the Church and its mission than its members all working for themselves, even manipulating others for their own gain.
- The body of Christ is called to view fellow believers the way Paul and Timothy saw the Philippians.
- Paul's aim is that when the Church lives this way, the Gospel will advance and flourish. The world will see such selflessness and be unable to speak against it (Titus 2:7–8; 1 Peter 2:12).

# Philippians 2:22-24

---

# Timothy

---

- Continuing his commendation of Timothy, Paul moves beyond Timothy's passion for the Philippians to his passion for Gospel ministry.
- It is Timothy's passion for the Gospel that fuels his love and concern for the Philippian believers.
- Paul speaks with deep love for Timothy, saying they work together like a father and son, a common metaphor for a teacher and his disciple.
- Paul experienced many letdowns from others (2 Timothy 1:15; 2:17; 4:10, 14). But Timothy was not only faithful to Paul, he was faithful to the ministry.

---

# Timothy

---

- According to verse 22, Timothy had a genuine character and proven faithfulness.
- “Proven character is produced by perseverance in the experience of suffering (Romans 5:3–4), and the evidence of proven character is faithful service that validates a confession of the gospel of Christ.”
- This quality in Timothy is what Paul so deeply appreciates and calls the Church to. Timothy was a prime example of Christlikeness and living in a manner “worthy of the gospel” (Philippians 1:27).

---

# Timothy

---

- “We are obedient to the gospel and meet its demands when we are active in the ministry of love. This active love is the obedience of the confession of the gospel.”
- This describes Timothy’s faithfulness to advancing the Gospel and caring for other believers with Gospel sincerity. This is why Paul has confidence to send Timothy in his place (verse 23).
- Paul would send Timothy as soon as Paul knew how things would go with him. Paul had confidence that he would be released soon.

# Philippians 2:25-30

---

# Epaphroditus

---

- After addressing Timothy, Paul commends his messenger Epaphroditus.
- There are two important aspects to these verses:
  - One, the faithful companionship between Paul and Epaphroditus
  - Two, the faithful service of Epaphroditus for Philippian church and the Gospel.

---

# Epaphroditus

---

- Like Timothy, Epaphroditus was a vital co-laborer in the Gospel with Paul. Paul addresses him as a brother, a fellow worker, a fellow soldier, a messenger and a minister (verse 25).
- The use of “brother” is a common reference Paul makes in his letters to fellow believers, occurring more than 130 times.
- The description of “brother” is almost always in the plural or in a general way, “our brother.”

---

# Epaphroditus

---

- After commending the example of Epaphroditus, whom the Philippians knew well, Paul shares his reason for sending Epaphroditus back to them (verses 26–27).
- Epaphroditus had a special and dear relationship with the Philippian church, perhaps as a native to the city. Paul describes how, in his sickness, Epaphroditus was concerned for the Philippian church.
- Even in suffering, he was not primarily worried about himself, but was concerned about his fellow believers.

---

# Epaphroditus

---

- In fact, the only other use of the word for “distress” (*ademoneo*) in the New Testament is when Jesus was in the Garden of Gethsemane (Matthew 26:37; Mark 14:33).
- Paul calls the Galatians to bear one another’s burdens; sharing the weight of ministry and hardships in the Christian life.
- Epaphroditus remained committed to this calling above all else.

---

# Epaphroditus

---

- Paul uses the struggle of Epaphroditus as an example of faithful service for the Gospel.
- Epaphroditus was ill and nearly died.
- It is quite possible that Paul's description of Epaphroditus' near-death experience (Philippians 2:27, 30) was meant to parallel Christ's work (Philippians 2:8).

---

# Epaphroditus

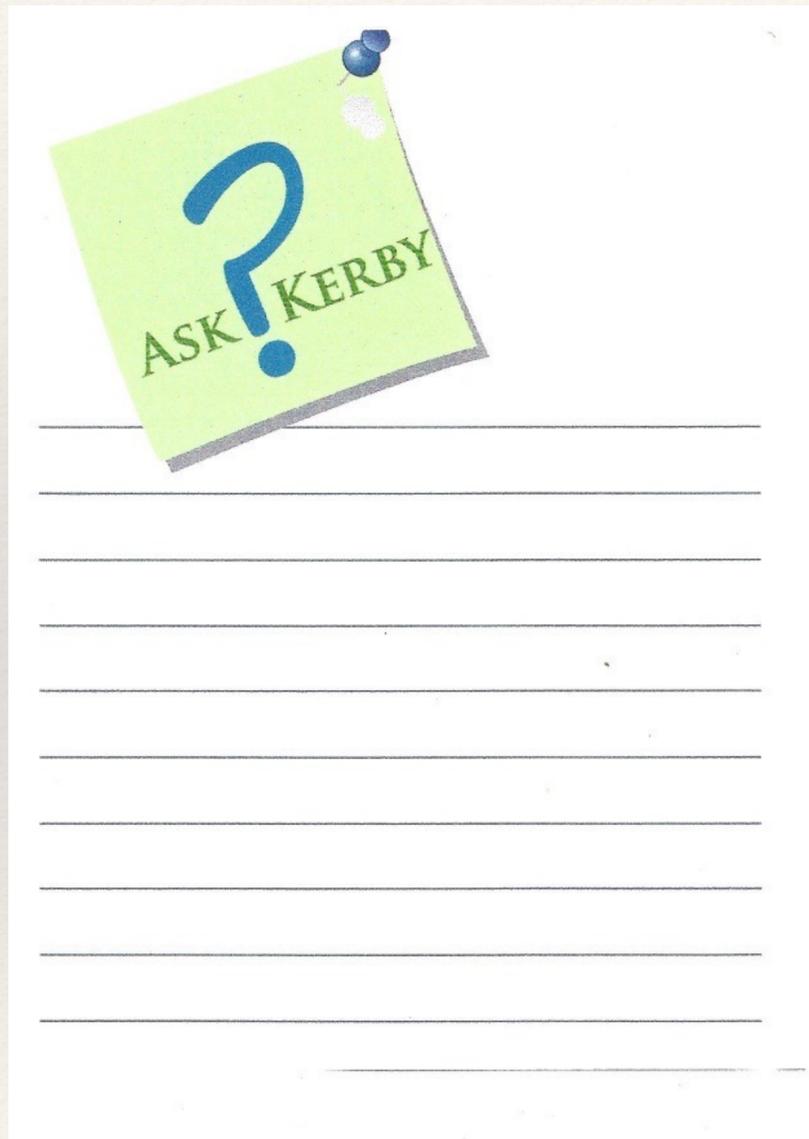
---

- In verse 29, Paul tells the Philippians to honor him and rejoice all the more in his return.
- Paul makes it clear that Epaphroditus' service and sacrifice were not so much for Paul as they were for Christ.
- Paul explains in verses 29-30 that Epaphroditus risked his life for the work of Christ in taking the Gospel forward and serving his fellow minister, Paul.
- This is the life of a faithful minister who seeks the advancement of the Gospel above personal comfort, safety and health.

---

# Ask Kerby

---



What about when the Bible quotes from non-biblical sources?

---

# Hebrews 11:37

---

- “They were stoned, they were sawn in two, they were killed with the sword.”
- The reference to Jews being sawn in two is NOT found in the Bible.
- References can be found in the book, *The Ascension of Isaiah* (1:9; 5:2; 5:14).
- This is a heretical document probably written after the New Testament was completed by a Christian scribe who also claimed to be the prophet Isaiah.
- This doesn't really raise any problems (because of who wrote it and when).

---

# Hebrews 11:37

---

- Catholics argue that these verses (11:35-37) are an allusion to 2 Maccabees 7:13-14 - “After he had died, they tortured and maltreated the fourth brother in the same way. When he was near death, he said, ‘It is my choice to die at the hands of mortals with the hope that God will restore me to life; but for you, there will be no resurrection to life.’”
- It does document that there were martyrs during this period, but it doesn't say anything about Jewish prophets or about the death of Isaiah.
- More likely the writer of Hebrews was merely reminding Jewish people of their oral traditions about the martyrdom of Jewish prophets.

---

# Other Quotations in the New Testament

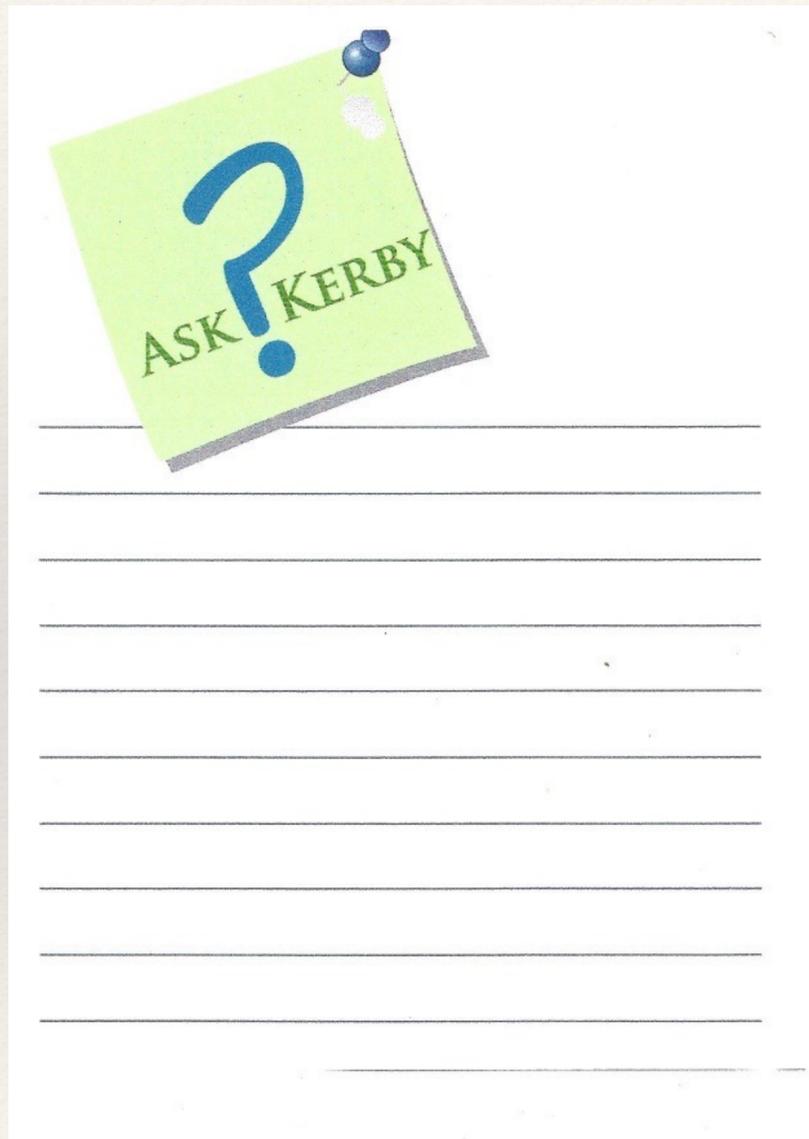
---

- In 1 Corinthians 15:33, Paul apparently quotes from Menander (Greek dramatist) who wrote various Athenian comedies.
- In Acts 17:28, Paul quotes from Aratus (Greek didactic poet) when he says that “some of your own poets say.”
- In Titus 1:12-13, Paul introduces Epimenides, as a prophet of the Cretans.
- In each case, we see that he quotes from a non-biblical source to make a biblical observation. “All truth is God’s truth.”

---

# Ask Kerby

---



Biblical view of antisemitism

---

# Antisemitism

---

- Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN) tweeted: “Israel has hypnotized the world, may Allah awaken the people and help them see the evil doings of Israel.”
- She has criticized the influence of Israel on American lawmakers who have an “allegiance to a foreign country.”



---

# Antisemitism

---

- More than mere words. Jewish people understand their power.
- Sarah Stern (Endowment for Middle East Truth) who had this observation. “We Jews have learned from our long and painful history that words matter. Violence against Jews does not erupt in a vacuum; and the increasing ease with which antisemitic comments are uttered within certain segments of our society is deeply painful and disturbing.”
- Nearly every FBI report of hate crimes over the last decade shows that a majority of acts have been against Jewish people and Jewish targets.

---

# Antisemitism

---

- The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance uses a definition that includes eleven key areas.
- This would include calling for, aiding or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of radical ideology.
- It also includes making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotypical allegations about Jews.
- And it includes those who deny the fact and scope of the genocide of the Jewish people during World War II.

---

# Growing Problem of Antisemitism

---

- FBI reports show an increase in antisemitic assaults, accounting for more than half of all reports. Antisemitic incidents on college campuses jumped significantly a few years ago.
- A survey of almost 6,000 Jewish people across eight nations of the European Union were asked if they considered emigrating from their home country because they don't feel safe.
- Nearly half of those in France (46%) and Hungary (48%) said they considered emigrating because of their antisemitic experiences.

---

# History of Antisemitism

---

- In the book of Esther (3:6), we read the story of how Haman “sought to destroy all the Jews, the people of Mordecai, throughout the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus.”
- Other pagan groups and false religions persecuted the Jews because of their belief in monotheism and their allegiance to God.
- After the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem and the exile of Jews in AD 70, some Christians interpreted the event as a punishment for Jews for the death of Jesus. Sadly this idea provided a foundation and justification for a Christian form of antisemitism.

---

# History of Antisemitism

---

- Some of the myths:
  - Blood libel myth - Jews murder Christian children in order to use their blood in the baking of unleavened bread during Passover.
  - The Protocols of the Elders of Zion - a fabricated text supposedly describing a Jewish plan for global domination.
  - Stab in the back myth - Germany lost World War I because of the people back home (notably the Jews).

---

# Response

---

- Most Christians accept the biblical principle that the Jews are God's chosen people. Deuteronomy 14:2 says, "For you are a people holy to the Lord your God, and the Lord has chosen you to be a people for his treasured possession, out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth."
- This may also partially explain why antisemitism exists. God chose the Jews, and thus Satan opposes what God has chosen.
- If you think about it, antisemitism is irrational (small number of Jews in the world, the land area of Israel).

---

# Response

---

- Even if someone doesn't believe the Jews are a chosen people, he or she should still treat the Jews with the same dignity as any other religious or ethnic group.
- All of us are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27) and worthy of respect and dignity.
- Antisemitism is contrary to any human rights standard that exists even in the secular world.

---

# Response

---

- In America, we should also ask our elected officials to take a stronger stand against antisemitism.
- Some commentators talk about the Democrats' antisemitic problem and anti-Israel stance. This was not always the case for the party: President Harry Truman, Robert Kennedy, Joe Lieberman.
- The Jewish people deserve our respect and our protection.

