

***Mind of Timothy – like-minded with Paul***

*Philippians 2:19-24: 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. 20 For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. 22 But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father. 23 Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; 24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly. NASU*

Having looked at the mind of Christ and his mind regarding his life in Christ, Paul, in verses 10 through 30 shows his readers the mind and heart of two of his fellow servants, Timothy and Epaphroditus.

Timothy is the spiritual son of Paul, someone he could trust to minister as he would, in humility and with the mind of Christ; they are together. As witnessed by the great work they achieved in the Lord. ***1 Timothy 1:2***

***1 Timothy 1:2: To Timothy, my true child in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.***

Unfortunately, many, even in the church, only serve others for the their good; they seek their own interests, for their own glory, trying to build up a name for them self. This does not describe the attitude or mindset of Paul’s beloved son and brother in the faith, Timothy. Young Timothy had proven himself to Paul and the church in Philippi; he had faithfully fulfilled his duties, both small and large. Timothy’s commitment to the Gospel and serving Paul can be likened to the relationship of Jonathan and David; Jonathan was diligent in every way to help David be successful and prosper. ***1 Samuel 18:1-3***

***1 Samuel 18:1-3: Now it came about when he had finished speaking to Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as himself. 2 Saul took him that day and did not let him return to his father's house. 3 Then Jonathan made a covenant with David because he loved him as himself.***

Timothy’s heart for the people of God was in harmony with Paul’s; Timothy cared for and loved the believers and sought to minister the love of God to the people of God. For their growth and spiritual well-being, Timothy took his responsibility for the word of God and people of God very seriously. ***1 Thessalonians 2:7-8; 2 Timothy 1:13-15***

***1 Thessalonians 2:7-8: But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. 8 Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.***

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***2 Timothy 1:13-15: Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. 14 Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you. 15 You are aware of the fact that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.***

***23 Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; 24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly.***

Paul did not allow his circumstances to stop him from fulfilling his ministry. When Paul could not fulfill a need, he searched out a gifted, like-minded qualified believer to whom he delegated responsibilities (Timothy and Epaphroditus); throughout Paul's letters we regularly see references to his planning but which was always subordinate to the Lord. ***Romans 15:28-29; 1 Corinthians 4:14-17; 2 Corinthians 8:16-18; Philemon 22***

***Romans 15:28-29: Therefore, when I have finished this, and have put my seal on this fruit of theirs, I will go on by way of you to Spain. 29 I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ.***

***1 Corinthians 4:14-17: I do not write these things to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children. 15 For if you were to have countless tutors in Christ, yet you would not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. 16 Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me. 17 For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church.***

***2 Corinthians 8:16-18: But thanks be to God who puts the same earnestness on your behalf in the heart of Titus. 17 For he not only accepted our appeal, but being himself very earnest, he has gone to you of his own accord. 18 We have sent along with him the brother whose fame in the things of the gospel has spread through all the churches***

***Philemon 22: At the same time also prepare me a lodging, for I hope that through your prayers I will be given to you.***

### ***Mind of Epaphroditus – the work of Christ***

*Philippians 2:25-30: 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; 26 because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27 For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you. 29 Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard; 30 because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me.*

As Paul reviews the mind of Christ, his own thoughts, and attitudes as well as those of Timothy and now Epaphroditus, they provide his readers with an outline or road map of thinking for the believer. Not only in their service to God, but also with respect to their daily walk and relationship with everyone with whom they come in contact.

In verses 5-11, Paul looked at the humility of Christ, which revealed the mind of Christ:

- 1) Jesus is God; Jesus humbled Himself.
- 2) Jesus emptied Himself of His glory.
- 3) Jesus denied Himself His prerogatives.
- 4) Jesus came as a man.
- 5) Jesus humbled Himself, willingly and gladly, for others not by others.
- 6) Jesus bore the penalty of our sin.
- 7) Jesus died a death of humiliation.

Then in verses 12-18, Paul revealed his mind towards the things of Christ. Our walk is a daily effort, we are *work out your salvation with fear and trembling; fear of being self-willed and trembling at the thought of failing our Lord. We are not to be grumbling or disputing. Rather, we are to strive to be blameless and innocent, showing ourselves to be children of God. We are to appear as lights in the world by holding fast the word of life, before this crooked and perverse generation. Paul calls on believers to sacrifice themselves (poured out as a drink offering) in the service of others. Believers are to serve others joyfully and corporately, share my joy with you all and share your joy with me. In verses 19-24, Paul noted how Timothy was of a kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.*

Now Paul addresses Epaphroditus, who had been very sick; Paul praises God for his recovery and healing. Here we see the depth of Paul's relationship with Epaphroditus – how close they were and necessary they were for each other in the work of the ministry. Paul was not a Lone Ranger Christian; he depended greatly on others to help him fulfill his ministry, as did Peter and the other Apostles. ***Colossians 1:1, 4:7-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:1-2; Hebrews 13:22-24; 1 Peter 5:12; 2 Peter 3:15***

***Colossians 1:1: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, and Timothy our brother,***

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*Colossians 4:7-9: As to all my affairs, Tychicus, our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord, will bring you information. 8 For I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know about our circumstances and that he may encourage your hearts; 9 and with him Onesimus, our faithful and beloved brother, who is one of your number. They will inform you about the whole situation here.*

*1 Thessalonians 3:1-3: Therefore when we could endure it no longer, we thought it best to be left behind at Athens alone, 2 and we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith, 3 so that no one would be disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this.*

*Hebrews 13:22-24: But I urge you, brethren, bear with this word of exhortation, for I have written to you briefly. 23 Take notice that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you. 24 Greet all of your leaders and all the saints. Those from Italy greet you.*

*1 Peter 5:12: Through Silvanus, our faithful brother(for so I regard him), I have written to you briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God. Stand firm in it!*

*2 Peter 3:15: and regard the patience of our Lord as salvation; just as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, wrote to you,*

Paul was hoping to send Timothy to the Philippians on the ruling on his case, once rendered. While he was waiting for the decision, Paul sent Epaphroditus with an update and to relieve their worries regarding Paul and his situation.

Paul was willing to sacrifice his needs to minister to the Philippians and Epaphroditus, who wanted to comfort the flock in Philippi, who were concerned for his health. As with Timothy, Epaphroditus, worked with Paul to fulfill the ministry of the Lord, to get the word of God out and to build up the Lord's body. *Romans 1:11-12; Galatians 6:2; Ephesians 3:13; 4:11-13*

*Romans 1:11-12: For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established; 12 that is, that I may be encouraged together with you while among you, each of us by the other's faith, both yours and mine.*

*Galatians 6:2: Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

*Ephesians 3:13: Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.*

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*Ephesians 4:11-13: And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.*

Paul instructs the Philippians to receive and hold in high regard Epaphroditus, and all men who minister the Word of God in a faithful, loving manner. Epaphroditus' faithfulness had almost cost him his life; he, like many men, put the work of the ministry before themselves and their own comfort and health. *1 Corinthians 1:12; Colossians 4:7-17*

*1 Corinthians 1:12: Now I mean this, that each one of you is saying, "I am of Paul," and "I of Apollos," and "I of Cephas," and "I of Christ."*

*Colossians 4:10-12: Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, sends you his greetings; and also Barnabas' cousin Mark (about whom you received instructions; if he comes to you, welcome him); 11 and also Jesus who is called Justus; these are the only fellow workers for the kingdom of God who are from the circumcision, and they have proved to be an encouragement to me. 12 Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bonds slave of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings, always laboring earnestly for you in his prayers, that you may stand perfect and fully assured in all the will of God.*