

Faithful Examples to Follow (Philippians 2:19-30)

Zionsville Fellowship | Ryan Hallahan | July 12, 2026

Outline:

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In the early 90s, there was a very popular Gatorade advertisement featuring Michael Jordan, probably the most famous basketball player of all time. The ad featured the slogan, “Be Like Mike,” and showed all kinds of people trying to play basketball like him. It is natural for us to want to imitate traits that we see in others, and many people at that time dreamed of being just like Mike.

So let me ask a question of all of you this morning: Who do you want to be like?

This is a heart check for us right at the beginning. What was your initial reaction when I asked that question? Would imitating the person you thought of move you closer to Christ or further from Him?

In our text this morning, we will see two examples of faithful men who show us a picture of what a Christlike life looks like.

With that introduction, let’s read the text. Philippians 2:19-30.

¹⁹ I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be cheered by news of you. ²⁰ For I have no one like him, who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. ²¹ For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. ²² But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel. ²³ I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me, ²⁴ and I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also.

²⁵ I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need, ²⁶ for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious. ²⁹ So receive him in the Lord with all joy, and honor such men, ³⁰ for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

As you heard that passage, perhaps the main thing that jumps out is that Paul is talking about travel plans. That is certainly a key part of this passage. Remember, this is a letter written to a real church in history. Part of the reason Paul is writing them is to update them on his plans and the plans of his co-workers.

However, we have to ask the question, “Why is this passage here?” For example, in most cases, when Paul talks about travel plans like this, it is near the end of the letter. You see that in letters like Romans, Colossians, 1 Corinthians, and others. In this case, we are still in the first half of the letter. If you were to flip over to chapter 4, this passage would fit in very nicely right before verse 10 in that chapter. He could have given the update and then closed the letter with a thank you and a greeting.

So why is this here? While Paul is certainly covering some travel logistics in this passage, there is more to it.

Over the past weeks, we have been in a section of the letter that started in chapter 1, verse 27. Throughout this latest section of the letter, Paul has been exhorting the Philippians on how to live. As we get to our text this morning, Paul is talking about the plans he has for himself and his co-workers, but at the same time, he is giving us two faithful examples of men who are living out what he has just been writing about.

Sometimes, the best way to get a point across is to show an example. For instance, let's say you are trying to learn how to cook something complicated. Reading the directions in a cookbook might not be enough to get it exactly right. Sometimes, you need someone to show you or you need a video with an example of someone cooking that recipe. That might be what Paul has in mind here. He has told the Philippians to live in a manner worthy of the gospel. It is a very high standard, so it is helpful for Paul to show them that this is not impossible. There are people living this out whom they can learn from.

The fact that we are to imitate these faithful men is clear in chapter 3. In chapter 3, verse 17, Paul says, "[Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us.](#)" Of course, in that verse we also see that Paul is also a great example for us.

One thing to keep in mind for us as we read this text today is not only has Paul given the Philippians two examples, but this text also gives *us* two examples, as well. Those two examples are Timothy and Epaphroditus.

We see Timothy in verses 19-24 and Epaphroditus in verses 25-30.

In each section, we'll see similar elements. In each case, Paul talks about his desire to send them, his reason for sending them, and then a commendation.

Before we look at this in more detail, I'd like to briefly remind you of the setting. Knowing the context here is really helpful in picking up on some of the details. Remember that Paul planted the church in Philippi about ten years before he wrote this letter. You can read about that in Acts 16. Timothy was with him when the church was planted, so he was well known to the Philippians. Now, as Paul wrote this letter, he was in prison in Rome, which you can read about at the end of Acts, in chapter 28. The Philippians found out that Paul was in prison, and so they decided to send one of their own members, Epaphroditus, to bring a gift and serve Paul. In those days, if you were in prison, your needs had to be met by family and friends. And so Paul had both Epaphroditus with him as well as a few co-workers like Timothy.

That gets us up to speed on the situation, so let's dive into the text.

Timothy (v19-24)

Let's start with Timothy in verses 19-24.

Verse 19 starts by saying, "[I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon.](#)" Paul wants to send Timothy soon. We'll see that he is sending Epaphroditus right away, but Paul says that Timothy would come a bit after. The reason for that is in verses 23-24.

Paul says he first wants to see how it goes with him. He wasn't sure at this point whether he would be released from prison, and if he were released, when it would happen. We don't know the exact reason, but we can guess that Paul is waiting to send Timothy, perhaps, so that Timothy would be able to bring an update to the Philippians about Paul's condition.

Another reason he might have waited to send Timothy is that there was perhaps some work or ministry that Timothy was involved with to help Paul or further the work in Rome, and he needed to finish that. We can't know for sure, but that is another possibility.

Paul wants to send Timothy, but notice there is a little phrase in there. It is easy to just read over phrases like this. In verse 19, Paul says that he hopes *in the Lord*. That phrase *in the Lord* occurs nine times in this letter. Three of those

are in our passage this morning. So what does it mean when he says *in the Lord*? We see in verse 19 that he hopes *in the Lord*. In verse 24, he trusts *in the Lord*. In verse 29, he tells them to receive Epaphroditus *in the Lord*.

As believers, we are in Christ and Christ is sovereign over everything that happens in our lives. And so when Paul says he hopes *in the Lord* to send Timothy, he is recognizing that it is up to God if Timothy gets there or not. A similar idea appears in verse 24 where he says he trusts *in the Lord* that he will be able to visit them soon. Proverbs 16:9 says, “[The heart of man plans his way, but the Lord establishes his steps.](#)” When he tells them to receive Epaphroditus *in the Lord*, he is telling them to receive him in a way that honors Christ. By using this phrase, *in the Lord*, so frequently, we see that Paul saw everything through the lens of being in Christ. As believers, Christ should influence all of our thoughts and actions.

I don’t know about you, but I want my vocabulary to be a little bit more like that. There are a lot of times when I don’t talk or think *in the Lord*. Paul’s entire life was lived through that lens. That’s why you see that phrase so many times in this letter and in his other letters.

So Paul has a desire, if the Lord wills, to send Timothy and hopefully eventually visit the Philippians himself.

Next, we see the reason why Paul wants to send Timothy.

The second half of verse 19 says, “[so that I too may be cheered by news of you.](#)”

The reason Paul wants to send Timothy is so that Timothy can then come back and give a report on the Philippians. Assuming the report is good, Paul would be cheered by that news.

Epaphroditus is going to deliver this letter, and then sometime after that Timothy would show up. Paul wants to see how they are doing. He wants to see if the letter had the desired impact. If you go back to chapter 2, verse 2, Paul wrote, “[complete my joy by being of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.](#)” If the Philippians are living out what Paul wrote them, it would complete Paul’s joy and he would be cheered by that news. Remember in chapter 1, verse 8 how Paul yearned for the Philippians. We’ve seen how Paul’s main purpose is the furtherance of the gospel. He said in chapter 2, verse 23 that it would be far better to depart and be with Christ, but he knows how important it is to continue the ministry. Paul loves the church so much, and it brings him joy when they are living out their faith in a manner worthy of Christ.

So the reason Paul wants to send Timothy is to be cheered by news that the church in Philippi is living out their faith and the gospel is progressing. You might read that and think it is strange or that it sounds a bit selfish. Paul wants to send him so that he can be cheered and receive joy. But if you think about it, what is actually bringing Paul joy is the progress of the faith of the Philippians. So it isn’t selfish at all to want to be cheered, because what he is really saying is how much he wants their faith to progress. He receives joy when Christ is honored by them.

So we’ve seen Paul’s desire to send Timothy and his reason for sending him. The next question the passage answers is “why Timothy?” Paul had other co-workers with him. In chapter 4, verse 21 Paul gives a greeting from the brothers who are with him. He had choices. But he chose to send Timothy. This isn’t the only time he sends Timothy. For example, in 1 Thessalonians 3, it says that Paul sent Timothy to visit the Thessalonians and then in 1 Corinthians 4 and 16, it says that Paul sent him to visit the Corinthians.

Timothy is clearly a trusted associate of Paul and a faithful example that we can learn from. And we see why here in this passage. Verses 20-22 are a commendation of Timothy.

Verse 20 says, “[For I have no one like him.](#)” Paul has no other co-workers like Timothy. The word *like* there is a way to say that Timothy is like-minded. You could say that he and Paul are kindred spirits. In 1 Corinthians, Paul writes about having sent Timothy to them, as well. He says in 1 Corinthians 4:16 to be imitators of himself, and then in verse 17 he says, “[That is why I sent you Timothy, my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, to remind you of my](#)

ways in Christ." Paul is confident to send Timothy because he is just like him. So, what is it about Timothy that makes him a faithful example, just like Paul? First, in 2 Timothy 3:10-11, it says that Timothy had imitated Paul's "teaching, conduct, aim in life, faith, patience, love, steadfastness, persecutions and sufferings." Here in chapter 2, Paul gives another way that Timothy is like-minded. Verses 20 and 21 say that Timothy "will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ."

Timothy is genuinely concerned for the Philippians' welfare. He is authentic. That means that he doesn't have selfish motives. Do you know anyone like that? I think this is somewhat rare. How often do you talk to someone, and they ask you a question because it is really a way for them to share something about themselves? Or we are often tempted to do something because we want to look good in front of others. Our natural tendency is to be self-centered. That is why Timothy is the one that Paul wants to send. He has no one else that will be genuinely concerned for them.

Verse 21 gives a little more detail about what it means to be genuinely concerned like this. It says, "For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ." It isn't clear who they *all* refers to here. On one hand, Paul could be talking about his other co-workers besides Timothy. That wouldn't make a lot of sense, though, because in chapter 4 he sends a greeting from those brothers. It might be that he is talking about those whom he mentioned in chapter 1, verse 17, where he says that there were some preaching Christ out of selfish ambition. Regardless of who it is, Paul says there are people who seek their own interests and don't have the genuine concern that Timothy has.

There is a connection between these two verses. In verse 20, Paul says that Timothy is concerned for the welfare of the Philippians. Then in verse 21 he says that Timothy seeks the interests of Christ. So you can make the connection that what interests Christ is the welfare of the Philippian church.

When Paul says the welfare of the Philippians, he is talking about their progress in the gospel. Their living out their faith in a manner worthy of Christ. Them living in joyful unity. Those are interests of Christ. That is Paul's main focus in this letter, and Timothy is like-minded in that he also is genuinely concerned that the Philippians continue to progress in the gospel.

Timothy genuinely puts the concerns of others before his own.

Are you genuinely concerned for others? Timothy is an example to try to imitate. In the Bible, the church is called the body of Christ. If one part of the body is not functioning well or is not healthy, the whole body suffers. So we should be genuinely concerned that everyone in our body is growing in their faith.

So, Paul is going to send Timothy and he wants to send him because he has no one else like him in that he is genuinely concerned for others. The next reason Paul commends Timothy is in verse 22. He is proven and has served with Paul like a son with a father. In those times, a son would apprentice for years learning his father's craft. In a similar way, that was the case with Timothy. He had served alongside Paul for years and had proven his faithfulness in ministry.

If you look at that word *served*, we've seen a similar word already in this letter a couple of times. If you remember back to the beginning of the letter, Paul referred to himself and Timothy as servants of Christ Jesus. That has the idea of a slave willingly giving his life fully to his master. In this case, giving themselves fully to Christ. We saw the same word *Servant* used of Christ himself earlier in chapter 2 as Jesus was fully obedient to the Father.

Here, when Paul says that Timothy has served with him in the gospel, that word *served* is the verb form of that word for servant that we saw earlier in the letter. So what that means is that Timothy had proven that his life was fully committed to Christ. The gospel was the foremost priority in his life. Paul had obviously seen it, and the Philippians had also seen this firsthand.

If we are looking for someone to emulate, we want someone who is proven. If you were at Colin Smith's Puritan seminar a couple of weeks ago, he made the great point that it is beneficial to read books by faithful Christians who have passed away. He said this is because they had finished the race and not walked away from the faith. We should look to emulate people who have proven themselves faithful. We should see how they lived their lives and try to follow their example. In addition to reading books *by* faithful Christians, another way to go about finding worthy examples is to read books *about* faithful Christians. Our family reads missionary biographies together, and each and every one gives an example of someone that I would love to imitate. For example, when I read the biography of George Muller, I immediately wanted to grow in prayer following his example. A third way to go finding someone to emulate is to find one of the many faithful people within our body and get to know them well. Find those among us that are proven. Finally, as we see in our text today, another place to find faithful examples is in the Word.

This section has shown us that Timothy is a great example of someone whom we can try to imitate. He put the needs of others before his own and he proved that the gospel was the foremost priority in his life.

Epaphroditus (v25-30)

Next, we see another example in Epaphroditus in verses 25-30. We don't know much about him because he isn't mentioned in the Bible outside of this letter. Similar to what we saw with Timothy, we'll see in this section Paul's desire to send him, the reason for sending him, and a commendation.

First, Paul's desire to send him. Verse 25 says, ["I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need."](#)

Paul wants to send him back to Philippi. Remember, Epaphroditus was sent to deliver a gift and serve Paul while he was in prison. But Paul now wants to send him back, and we see the reason in verses 26-28. It says, ["for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed he was ill, near to death. But God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious."](#)

Epaphroditus got sick, and we aren't told how they found out, but somehow a message got back to Philippi, and the church was worried about him. Epaphroditus, on the other hand, wasn't worried about himself. He was distressed because the church was worried about him. Each side is distressed for the other. The text says that God showed mercy by saving Epaphroditus from death. It was merciful both to Epaphroditus and also to Paul. If Epaphroditus had died serving Paul, it would have caused Paul great grief not only to lose a faithful brother, but also because he would have given his life serving Paul.

So, Paul is sending Epaphroditus back to Philippi, most likely along with this letter. And one of the reasons he is writing and commending Epaphroditus is because he wants to ensure that there is no confusion about the reason for his return.

Epaphroditus was sent with the gift from the church and also to serve Paul. So, if Epaphroditus comes back to Philippi, maybe a little bit earlier than they expected, there might be some in the church tempted to think that maybe he didn't fulfill his duties, or maybe he failed his assignment. Paul wants to make it abundantly clear that this isn't the case. And we'll see more about how Paul describes the ministry of Epaphroditus in a second.

But first, let's take one quick detour here. Notice the end of verse 28, where Paul says he would be less anxious by sending Epaphroditus back. One of the best-known passages in Philippians occurs in chapter 4, verse 6, where it says, ["do not be anxious about anything."](#) When I read verse 28, my mind immediately goes to that verse in chapter 4. How can he say not to be anxious in one chapter, and say that he is anxious in another?

Even though some English translations use the same word in these two verses, the context and words used in the original Greek are not the same. In chapter 4, Paul is warning against the kind of anxiety that is rooted in fear and a lack of trust in God. Here in chapter 2, Paul's focus is more on being relieved from pain or sorrow.

When you translate between languages, sometimes there are not equivalent ways to say things. For example, in French, if you wanted to say the English word *siblings*, there is not an equivalent word. So you have to say the French words for brothers and sisters. One way to tell when there may be cases like this, where there could be nuances in the original language, is to look at a few reliable English translations. There are great tools like Bible Gateway that allow you to pull up a text in multiple English translations at the same time. If you notice that trusted translations choose a different word, that can be a clue that there may be a nuance to the wording in the original language. I bring this up because simple things like this can easily distract you from the fact that the Bible is the inerrant Word of God. It is helpful to have a few tools like this in your toolbox as you read and study the Bible. That was a quick detour, now back to Epaphroditus.

So Paul desires to send him back to Philippi, and we've seen the reason why he wants to send him. Now, let's see how Paul describes Epaphroditus and how he commends him.

First, in verse 25, we get five words to describe Epaphroditus. He is a brother, worker, soldier, messenger, and minister. As a brother, he shares a special relationship with Paul, both being in Christ. As a worker, Epaphroditus was focused on the task in front of him. As a soldier, you might say that Epaphroditus had *joined the battle*. Maybe you've seen that phrase around ZF over the last few months as our missions theme for the year. James Faris talked a few weeks back about the history of Philippi, and there would have been a lot of retired soldiers living in the city. So Paul calling Epaphroditus a soldier here probably had some added significance to the readers of the letter. We also see that Philippi sent Epaphroditus both as a messenger to deliver a gift and as a minister to serve Paul's needs.

Earlier, we saw that Timothy was commended for having genuine concern for others. We see the same thing with Epaphroditus. Verse 26 says he was longing for the church in Philippi because they were distressed about his illness. Most people's reaction in this situation would probably be to worry about their own recovery and circumstance first. But not Epaphroditus. His concern was how his church was doing, not his own health.

Not only does Epaphroditus show genuine concern for others, but he also is an example of someone fully committed to the gospel. Verse 27 tells us that he was near to death. As we already mentioned, God had mercy on him, but verse 30 gives us some more detail. Paul adds that he ["nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me."](#) He was sent as a messenger to serve Paul and got sick. The question is, what does it mean when it says that he nearly died for the work of Christ? How did he risk his life?

When I read this, my first reaction is to think about someone risking his life for Christ by sharing the gospel in a dangerous closed country somewhere among a tribe of cannibals or something along those lines. And at first glance it doesn't seem like this situation is something like that. We aren't told exactly what happened, and there are various opinions and interpretations. One scenario makes the most sense to me, although we can't know for sure. Imagine Epaphroditus is traveling to Rome and becomes ill on the way. Perhaps it would have been easy to turn around at that point or stop, but imagine that he presses on and continues with laser focus on getting to Rome to deliver the gift and serve Paul. And in that way, he would have been risking his life doing the harder thing of continuing forward with the work, despite his health. And by pressing on, perhaps he almost died by doing that. That could be one possibility.

Regardless of how it happened, we can take Paul at his word. What are we meant to imitate from this? Epaphroditus is an example of someone that was fully committed to the work of the Lord. He was willing to take a risk to serve God. He cared so much about being a faithful worker that he risked his health.

Now, the point here is not to disregard our health. The point is that Epaphroditus was focused on the gospel. What types of things do you tend to take risks on? What types of things do you tend to go all out for? Maybe a business venture. Maybe having the perfect yard. Maybe getting that next promotion. Maybe your kids' sports careers.

Do you put more effort into the advancement of the gospel or your own sanctification than you do those sorts of things? Epaphroditus had the right priorities. When we get to heaven and meet Jesus, will we be excited to talk about how we lived our lives? Or will there be things we wish we would have prioritized differently?

There is one last point in this section about Epaphroditus. As we said earlier, Paul would have wanted to ensure that the Philippians knew how faithful Epaphroditus was so there would be no confusion. And because of his faithfulness, Paul says that the proper way to welcome back Epaphroditus is to receive him with joy and honor him. We see that in verse 29.

If you know someone who is faithful like Timothy or Epaphroditus, show him or her honor. When our missionaries return on a visit, we should show them honor. We actually have two missionary families visiting us today who are back from serving in various places in Asia. Show them honor and rejoice at their faithfulness.

We've seen in this passage that Timothy and Epaphroditus are two faithful examples that we should try to emulate. They both put the needs of others before their own and made the gospel the foremost priority in their lives.

I want to make one other observation. Do you remember a few weeks back, earlier in chapter 2, we saw how Paul was writing about unity and then gave Christ as the ultimate example? I'd like to go back and read chapter 2, verses 3-11:

³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others. ⁵ Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. ⁸ And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. ⁹ Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, ¹⁰ so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, ¹¹ and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

With that in mind, look at verse 21, which says, “For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.”

Verse 21 looks a lot like verse 4. Seeking the interests of others, not his own. This was Paul's command, which Christ perfectly lived out.

Look at verse 22, which says, “But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel.”

Verse 22 looks a lot like verse 7, where it says Christ took on the form of a servant. Remember we saw that the word *served* was the verb form of the word used to describe Christ as a servant.

How about verse 30, which says, “for he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.”

That looks similar to verse 8, where Christ was willing to die to finish the work that was before Him.

The traits that we are aiming to imitate in Timothy and Epaphroditus are traits of Christ. He is the ultimate example. He put our needs before His own by coming down from the throne, living a perfect life, and willingly dying on the cross in order to pay the penalty for our sins. Christ was fully obedient to the Father's will and plan for Him.

In 1 Corinthians 11:1, Paul tells the Corinthians to [“Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.”](#) In our passage today, Paul is showing us two other examples that we can follow who are also imitating Christ. This is what Paul has been writing about in the entire section leading up to this point. He is exhorting the Philippians to live in a manner worthy of Christ.

That is a high standard. You could say it is an impossible standard. Since we are sinners, none of us can be like Christ in this life. Paul is not expecting us to be exactly like Christ in this life. However, we are called to grow in Christlikeness. I think Paul gives us these two examples to show us that this sort of growth is attainable. Paul has shown Christ as an example. But if he just left Christ as the only example, we would likely be discouraged and say that it is an impossible standard to get to in this life. Paul also puts himself as an example. We see in chapter 3 that he tells the Philippians to imitate him. But maybe there are some that would say, “Well, that is great, but Paul is an Apostle. He is on a different level than us.” So to leave no doubt, we have two more examples here.

Timothy and Epaphroditus are two faithful examples that we should try to emulate in order to grow in Christlikeness. They both put the needs of others before their own and made the gospel the foremost priority in their lives.

We’ve seen some ways to apply this as we’ve gone through the passage, but let’s close by summarizing a few ways that we can respond to this text.

First, is this your goal? When you hear this text, do you desire to be like these men? Do you want to grow to be more and more like Christ? If you are a Christian, you should have the desire to grow in Christlikeness.

Next, if we examine ourselves, how do we stack up to Timothy and Epaphroditus?

Do you put others above yourself like they did? Is the gospel the foremost priority in your life? I recommend spending some time reflecting about the ways that you can grow to be more like this. What things in your life do you put above the gospel? Sometimes it is so easy to be like the culture around us that we don’t even realize how much we are pulled in by it. This is a great opportunity for us to make a course correction, if needed.

Lastly, let’s assume this is your desire. And let’s assume you are not there yet, which is true of all of us. In chapter 3, even Paul will say that he has room to grow. So what strategy can we use to grow in our faith? What is one step that all of us can take to be more like Timothy and Epaphroditus, and ultimately more like Christ?

This is not the only way for us to grow, but one way we can grow in Christlikeness is by being in the Word. We saw it last week in verse 16, where it says to hold fast to the word of life.

This is all over the Bible.

Acts 20:32, [“The word of his grace is able to build you up.”](#)

John 17:17, [“Sanctify them in the truth, your word is truth.”](#)

John 15:7, [“If you abide in me and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish and it will be done for you.”](#)

Psalms 1:3, Those that meditate on the word are [“like a tree planted by streams of water.”](#)

Psalms 119:133, [“Direct my footsteps according to your word, let no sin rule over me.”](#)

Romans 12:2, [“Be transformed by the renewal of your mind.”](#)

And we could go on. We need a steady diet of God’s Word in order to grow in Christlikeness. Chapter 2, verse 13 says that it is God who works in us to will and work for His good pleasure. So God is working in us and one of the ways that happens is through His Word. So one step we can take to be more like Timothy and Epaphroditus, and ultimately more like Christ, is to saturate ourselves in the Bible. God has given us examples and He has also given us a means to become like them. If we are a church saturated in God’s Word, we’ll be a church with a lot of faithful examples.

The more that each of us looks like Timothy and Epaphroditus, the more we look like Christ. The more we look like Christ, the more people around us will see Christ and He will receive more glory.

Let's pray.