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SPEAKERS

Pastor Dow Boyer

All right, so let's open up in a word of prayer, and then we will jump into Philippians two verses 19 through 30. So this is going to feel a little different. It's been pretty heavy the last couple of weeks, but this week's really going to deal with a couple of individuals. You know, Paul talked a little bit about himself in verses 17 and 18, but these verses today are going to talk about two other people, and I think all these people all exemplify having the the mind of Jesus, which was kind of what started a long discussion here in verse five, and then then through verses six through 11, that example of Jesus. So pretty cool how it all breaks out. But anyway, let's pray, dear Heavenly Father. We thank you for this day, Lord. I thank you that people are diligent and coming and studying. And for those watching online, we're so excited. For those that that watch each week, it's encouraging to me. I know several stop me and tell me that they've been watching and they really appreciate things. And I've had people text me through the weeks, and I had no idea. So, Lord, it's a great era that we live in today, where technology can get this word out to people that couldn't otherwise be here. So we're thankful for that, Lord. We certainly pray that your word would be clear tonight, and Lord, that it would help conform us to the image of Christ, and that we'd be more like you as a result. We love you and praise you in Jesus' name. Amen. Okay, so it's going to be exciting. Everybody been doing okay with the study so far? Yeah. Okay, two people said something. Great. This is awesome. We'll get the rest of you on board today. I'll just I'll convince the online people that they're just all the people are glitching. They're just talking a little slow, and it's taken a minute to process, but anyway, all right. Verse 19, and a few of these verses were actually subject to some Q and A a few weeks ago in chapter one, so they may spark some more Q and A today. I'm not sure we'll end up in a different spot, but at least we're to that place that we said we were going to be at eventually, so starting in verse 19, Paul says, "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." So that seems like we've moved on. We've transitioned a little bit here because if we remember back to verse 17 and 18, the focus is on joy and rejoicing and a mutual joy on both sides. And now he's saying, "I'm going to talk about two people." This first one is Timothy here, but it's interesting. The first thing he's saying right here is I trust, you know, and this really comes from this idea of I have full confidence in, I hope in something. This actually is a little different than when he says trust a little bit later because this is related to the Lord. But in verse 23, we're going to see something a little different in here, but what we do know is this: He's trusting that the Lord's going to do the work for him to get Timothy to them, and it was important to him because he says, "I want to know their state." Well, it's Indiana, of course. No, not that state. But what he wants to know is their current situation, right? And I've got a little bit here, a little bit of note in case you want to look at it or not. It's the Greek word peri, and it gives the idea or concerning something or

to give an account of. And so I think that at this point he's saying it will give me comfort if I can send somebody I trust to let me know how you're really doing. Right. Keep in mind. Here's what's been going on so far: is Epaphroditus comes and brings a gift, and then updates him on what he's seen. You know, we had like 10 years prior to this was him visiting. That was your Acts 16. Then you have Acts chapter 20. So there's been two visits. Although Acts 20 seems like it was just a touch down very briefly and take off. However, there was both of those, so there had to be some interaction from Luke once he said, "Hey, what'd you find out those five years that you were there?" So obviously he's had that interaction, right? Timothy was with him, and now we've got this situation where Epaphroditus comes and says, "Hey, all your brethren, this church that you started, here's a gift." And as we read kind of through this a little bit, they understand, "Wow, Paul's needs are greater than this gift that we sent." So this causes Epaphroditus to actually stay back and do some work, and so that he could get some more money to help Paul. He actually becomes a laborer with Paul, as we're going to look at a little bit later. But through all this, Paul says, "I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you." There is going to be an emphasis on urgency when you see both of these. Being sent back to Philippi, and we don't really pick up anything too tragic in this book of Philippians, but we do. We will catch a little bit of some people coming in unawares, and and Philippians chapter three. We know that Udaeus and Sentucky are having an issue that's causing discord in the church, right? So we know there are some things, but but it is interesting. I think more so about maybe where he's at, and what might be on the, I guess, on the horizon for him than anything else. But there's an emphasis here on trusting Jesus that Timothy will be sent shortly unto them. So with some urgency, but this will give him comfort because of who Timothy is. You know, sometimes you send somebody out to give you a report, and you don't really know if you can trust the report. You know, I I was a sales manager for a number of years, and I always wondered. You know, with some of my reps when I wasn't out on appointments. There were certain reps who would come back, and they they would know how to game the system a little bit. They would know how to mark things in the database to make it look like they were doing stuff that they really weren't doing, and make it look like a relationship was happening with people that were prospective clients that really wasn't there. You know, and then you would sit down and have these reviews, and you know some of your some of your reps you could trust because there was productivity, both in the office and in closing business, right? And there was others when they're trying to tell you a story, and you're like, "Man, you don't have much credibility." Right? I sense this with Paul that he's saying the the way that I could have good comfort with the report is by sending somebody that I trust, and it's even like us in ministry today, right? I mean, there are qualifications for people who should be put into ministry. There should be a trust built so that you know they can do the job, right? And this is going to say a lot about who Timothy is when we read through this a little bit more. So, moving on to verse 20 and 21, talking about Timothy, he has a very strong compliment. One of the stronger compliments that Paul ever uses in his writings. He says this in verse 20 about Timothy: "I have no man like-minded, and I just want to pause there for a second. He's going to explain a little bit more here, but but I wonder when I was looking through this and studying this week, and it was kind of I had it was a me looking in the mirror type moment, but I'm like, how would I Be described. It was challenging to me. Are there people in my life that says I have nobody as like-minded as Dalboyer? And and you know maybe you're saying yeah well that kind of sometimes it comes with a job and there'll be a certain percentage that that that feel that way, but I'm like, but have really been in the trenches with me and believe and trust wholeheartedly that I have no man like-minded like Dow Boyer. And I thought, what an awesome compliment! You know, they're obviously in Second Timothy chapter four verse 12. He's going to talk about let no man despise your youth. So he's younger than Paul, but not necessarily what I would consider a youth has some experience. He's grown in his experience, especially since his days in Lystra and these Acts 16 as he's going into Macedonia with Paul. And we've now had 10 years of maturity going on. He's actually with Paul in the in Roman prison. He's he's a fellow servant over there with him, but he says, "I have no man like-minded." And then this is what he says next: in this age where we debate whether empathy is a real word, or whether we should just say sympathy, or whether we're talking

about compassion, what we hear about Timothy, I think, is a really big compliment, almost as big as the first. And he says, "Who will naturally care for your state?" And then he's going to describe what sets Timothy apart because he's saying people in general. In verse 21, he says they will seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ. Part of what set Timothy apart was that he was so like-minded with his mentor, but he had this natural care for the well-being of other people. So of course, if there was somebody that Paul would want to be sent to give a report, it would be Timothy. Now remember, we talked about like-minded. Even Philippians two two. Remember what Paul was saying to the church. This wasn't the first time. He's used this word. He he says, "Fulfill ye my joy that you be like-minded." So he was telling the church that he says it would fulfill my joy that you be like-minded. So it would make sense that he said, "I have no man as like-minded as Timothy." This was a characteristic apparently that Paul valued in people, and I would say that it should be a principle that you value in people and in your relationships. In a world where we just are constantly saying, "Well, we just put aside all of our differences," right? What about the people that come alongside you that align doctrinally, align with a biblical worldview, right? That are like-minded in the things that are important to you, right? Shouldn't you be closely tethered to those people? I think it's important here that Paul wanted them to be like-minded and to be of one accord, but he's sending them somebody who says, "I've not been around anybody right now who is as like-minded with me as Timothy, so I think this makes Timothy very unique. I feel like this also describes that Timothy was living out this idea of having this mind in him, which was also in Christ Jesus. In Philippians two five, we of course the first example is Jesus in verses six through 11, but I truly believe if you want to back up even into 17 and 18 that that Paul might have been one of these examples, and then Timothy is an example of this, and our final example in this chapter will be Paphroditus. This naturally care for your state. This this word care is the same word that you find in Philippians four six when used differently, but it's be careful for nothing, or be anxious for nothing, or don't worry, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. I think that the point here too is that when he says naturally care for your state, one thing that really stuck out to me is the idea that some people are just forced to do a job, and maybe they're good at it because they know their roles and responsibilities. Maybe as an employee, they totally are where they need to be doing what they're supposed to do. Maybe they're given the reports they're supposed to give, but would they naturally do that? I like that this word kind of is used here. It's like it's not a chore for Timothy. He's one of those types that he's he's so like-minded and he naturally cares for the condition of other people, it's not a job for him. For some of us, it is. You know, the discussion in our house sometimes is. You know, I think it's probably the same for anybody who has multiple kids. But you know, when when me and my wife are talking and we see things in our kids, and we're like, "Do they get that from you or do they get that from me?" The bad stuff's all from me, and the good stuff is all from her. And I was paid $10 to say that tonight. But but no, I mean we kind of look at that. And for us, it's like we have a daughter, Addie, who is man, she is very introverted, and I'm more on kind of that side, Rachel's very outgoing, but she she's naturally she naturally outgoing, right? Me, I became more outgoing, not naturally. It was I mean, sales taught me that, playing sports taught me that, but I had to get out of my comfort zone in order to do that. I wouldn't describe me as naturally extroverted, but I would describe my wife that way, right? And so some people just naturally are, man, they're lovers of people. They care more about people than they care really even about all the Bible verses and everything. But they just naturally are engaging people, right? And so obviously Timothy cared about doctrine clearly all throughout Scripture. I'm not saying that at all, but but he had a natural care for people and where they were at, and that cannot really be debated. They're from Scripture, and that he's even being contrasted with people that were much different than him that seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ. So, verse 21 talks about those that seek their own. This isn't the first time that we've heard this, right? Backing up in Philippians two four, he had to tell the Philippians, "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. I love the example of marriage in Ephesians chapter five, but in verse 29, as he's talking about how men should love their wives as their own bodies, he says something very important about what we

naturally. Do, and that is in verse 29 of Ephesians five. No man ever yet hated his own flesh. And we're reminded. I think it's in Second Timothy chapter three when he's talking about perilous times are going to come, and he starts listing all these things that people are going to be doing. And one of the things he mentions is people are going to be lovers of themselves. We don't really need to be commanded to love ourselves, and we never are in Scripture. But we naturally will love ourselves, and so when he's saying all seek their own, that's a pretty good general statement, because that's pretty much how we naturally are. But the things which are Jesus Christ, just like it's a choice for a man to love his wife to the point of dying for her, even though we know this truth in that verse 29 that no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but he nourisheth it and cherisheth it even as the Lord, the church, we might ask ourselves: Like, are we surrounded by people that are seeking their own? I mean, every book, every motivational speech is all about how to be the best version of you and get everything you want out of this life. We are taught even from an early age in school, and it's far worse today than when I was in school. That you can be anything you want, you can you can achieve anything you want, and I'm not saying there's anything wrong with that. But but once seeds get planted for there, it is all about a life of seeking your own and not the well-being of other people, and it's become a real problem in the world today. Not that it's new, but we see it a lot today. But I like what Paul says that for the believer, especially in Colossae, how there's a different thing to seek. It's not yourself. Colossians three verses one through three says, "If ye then be risen with Christ." So I would say today, if we are believers, right? If we have placed our faith in the death, burial, and resurrection to wash away our sins and give us eternal life, if we've been sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, then we should seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection or your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ. so, when you're looking at Philippians chapter two, he's saying Timothy is not one of these people. He is the opposite. He is more on the positive example side and didn't represent the general norm. I think it's important that we recognize that in the contrast, he would not be classified as one who seeks their own and not the things which are Jesus Christ. But my question would be, from a practical standpoint, what could be said about you today? Are you one that does seek your own, or are you one who seeks things which are above? Even Israel, as they were being preparing to be offered the kingdom, this is a very popular verse in Matthew 633. Even Israel understood the importance of seeking the most important things, and it says this in Matthew 633: Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. Now, this isn't a promise for us today, but it is that same example of saying what you are seeking is it of yourself or what you want and your desires, or is it of the Lord? It kind of gives the idea that can you be trusted to care for other people if you are seeking only what you want? And again, you go back and you look at the qualifications of deacons and pastors. You know, there's things like not not given, not greedy, not giving over to filthy lucre, right? And and these things just basically making it really clear, given to hospitality, people that are not seeking themselves, managing their house well. That means caring for the people in their house. I think it's important to be able to say, man, am I a selfish person? What is it that I'm seeking? If I want to be trusted with the important things in this in the body of Christ today, am I rooted in my own selfishness and seeking only what I want? Or can it be said about us? I don't know anybody as like-minded as fill in the blank. I think it's a great thing to strive for. In verse 22, as he moves on, he says as he's appealing to the Philippians of the importance of Paul or Timothy coming to them, he mentioned two reasons in the previous verse. But now he's going to say, "Ye know the proof of him." Not only am I saying these things about Timothy, but you have experienced Timothy. Right? He was present on that missionary journey. He was present in Acts chapter 16. He was present in Acts chapter 20. As well as I'm sure there has been communication sent back and forth from Epaphroditus because he would have met Epaphroditus while visiting Paul imprisoned. He says, "You know the proof of him that as a son with the father he hath served with me in the gospel. Acts 16 one through three. We talked about this a little bit in in our background week. I think it's week one. It says then came he, being Paul, to Derbe and and Lystra, and behold, a certain disciple was there named Timothy or Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess and

believed, but his father was a Greek. Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium. Him would Paul have to go forth with him, and took and circumcised him because of the Jews which were in those quarters, for they knew all that his father was a Greek. This will eventually lead to him being with Paul. They go into Philippi. They're right there with Luke, and they're coming alongside. They go by the river. They're normally they would go for a synagogue, but people were gathered by the river. So Timothy was present for all that. He says, "You know the proof of him." Just 10 years earlier, this young man is the same Timothy that I'm talking about. I've always, I think, any time I'm I see periods of time in the Bible. I'm always thinking, what was I doing 10 years ago? And I was starting my job as a youth pastor here full time 10 years ago. And not so. I would say when it came time, and we found ourselves saying, what do we do now as a church? You all had to make a decision, but you knew the proof of me. You had seen me serve for 10 years in the church. Pastor was gracious enough to allow me to fill the pulpit several times. I wasn't an unknown commodity. You knew the proof of me, right? And I think this is kind of what he's saying here. That that with Timothy he says you knew the proof of him that as a son with the father he hath served with me in the gospel. We know in Acts he's with Paul when he comes back through in Acts chapter 20, and he says we sailed away from Philippi after the day of unleavened unleavened bread and came unto them in Troas in five days, where we abode seven days. So we know at least twice they had interaction with Timothy, five years apart. This is not the only place, though, that Paul calls Timothy a son. We obviously already saw in Acts chapter 16, it's clearly not a biological one, but he calls him this from a spiritual standpoint, and in multiple places, not just here in Philippians two, but also First Timothy one two, says unto Timothy, my own son in the faith, grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. You ever notice a lot with Paul how everything is family terms? You know whether it's brother, brethren, sons. I'm going to talk about this a little bit on Sunday. So here's a little spoiler for you, as we are thankful for family this Sunday. But anyway, back at it. First Timothy 118, this charge I commit unto thee. This was 16 verses after he just in the introduction called him a son. But he says, I commit unto thee, son Timothy, according to the prophecies which went before on thee, that thou by them mightest war a good warfare. And then he starts the next letter in Second Timothy one two to Timothy my dearly beloved son, grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and Jesus Christ our Lord. First Corinthians 417, he says, For this cause have I sent unto you Timothy, who is my beloved. Son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways, which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. Now, I think this is an interesting verse here that would also explain that Paul and his trust in Timothy. That's because I think, judging by this, he has sent Timothy out to do this work before. Another reason why he could trust it. Another reason why it was going to give him comfort that if Timothy said, "Here is the state of the church of Philippi," First Corinthians 417 that we just looked at, he says, "To who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ?" He was not merely taking a pulse; he was instructing them in remembrance of my ways, which be in Christ, as I teach everywhere in every church. Paul knew that the message, the doctrine, was there was not going to be any confusion. They were like-minded. He could send Timothy out to not only check on the churches, but to open up the Word of God, to exhort them, right, to be able to encourage them, and if needful, to reprove them all through Scripture as though Paul were doing it himself. And that takes doing life with someone for a while, I mean, think about how loyal Timothy was to Paul. As a young man, seeing these terrible things happen to to Paul at Philippi, yet he didn't leave the missionary journey like John Mark did. When it was time to go again, you would see, right there was Timothy. When Paul's in prison, who was there? Timothy. I've often told people that I had this idea years and years ago to write a book that because I was enamored with the relationship between Jonathan and David, and I wanted to write a book. I've had a lot of aspirations to write a book. Write a book; they they become dreams. They don't actually happen. Maybe that'll change now in life. I don't know. But I wanted to write a book called Finding Jonathan. I was kind of so fascinated with the relationship between Jonathan and David. But as I've grown in my faith, I think the relationship between Paul and Timothy would be something I would want to delve into much deeper than that. And I think every Paul should be looking for a Timothy to pour into. It does no good, right?

For even if you think about water, for all for all this water to go into a vessel and never be released, right? There is something to be said about the fact that Paul didn't just like having him around. He was my pal, he was my buddy, but to the point where he could go and teach as though he were Paul. That meant there was those moments of training up him as a leader, pouring into him. I think we should all be looking for a Timothy or somebody that we're pouring into. If we've been fortunate enough and we've had opportunity enough to be able to study, or we've been in the Word of God, or we're further down that path, we should be looking for a younger believer, and we should be mentoring them. There will come a point where you won't be able to do it any longer, and if you've raised up nobody underneath you, then it will all stop. And it would have all stopped if Paul wouldn't have invested in Timothy. He had to be able to lay the charge of the this mystery message at the feet of young Timothy, in the same way that Saul's clothes were left at the feet of, or that sorry, Stephen's clothes were left at the feet of Saul. He was passing the baton, but he had to be trusted. This says you a lot about Timothy. Moving on, though, in verse 23, it says, "Him, this is Timothy. Therefore, I hope to sin presently." And I think this is a little interesting. I don't have a good answer for this, but in verse 19, we definitely know that he was stressing that I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy. But in verse 23, Paul's saying, "Therefore I hope to sin presently." I think both things can be true at the same time. You know, it's Paul basically knowing this was this was a burden put on his heart, and he was believing that the Lord was going to be able to send Timothy. But the last part of 23, though, is interesting. Remember earlier he talked about shortly. I want to send him shortly to you. Now he's saying I hope to send presently, so. Soon as I shall see how it will go with me, and this is why I believe the way I do, and it's okay if you don't, about the fact that Paul will mention in both chapter one and now in chapter two, it seems he's either bipolar or from his perspective, he's like I'm trusting God that I'm going to see you again, but he says other things here that makes it he's leaving himself an out, saying God may have a different plan. I need to see how this is going to go with me, and the only reasonable explanation from that, since he's in prison, is how is this going to turn out? Am I going to get out of prison? Am I not going to get out of prison? And I think he has he's able to say I have full faith in God that God can do this, but I'm not privy to know God's will in this matter. And I'm going to show some verses. I think it's going to support that line of thinking here briefly. But if you don't land there, that's fine. I mean, I don't. It's not. We're not going to split hairs over this. Just what I believe. But Philippians 113. We know he says, "So that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace and in all other places." So we know he's in prison. Verse 20 and 21 of chapter one. This is kind of where we got into our Q and A that night. Says, "According to my earnest expectation and my hope, and in nothing I shall be ashamed. But with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. I didn't want to revisit that whole chapter, that whole end of chapter one, but there's a couple of points there. But we'll get back to that here in a second. Now he says in verse 24, and this is the part where I said it sounds a little bipolar. He says, "But I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly." Now he started out tonight in verse 19, talking about, "But I trust the Lord. Timothy had not gone yet, but he was trusting the Lord that that was going to happen. Later, he says, "I will presently send Timothy." But now he's saying here, "I trust in the Lord that I also myself shall come shortly." There's that same urgency. This is the second time we've seen trust being used in here. Paul will come shortly if the Lord wills it. So I put a little note on here. We see the word "shortly" in verse 19. Presently in verse 23. Shortly again in 24. There was a point of punctuality. There was a sense of urgency. So a couple of things we can deduce from the from the book could it have been maybe even a third thing with Epaphroditus's health, but we do know that at some point there was a gift that wasn't enough. We do know that there is a quarrel between two ladies in the church in Philippians chapter Four, right? So we do know a couple of things are going on there, as well as his prison situation. So we don't know what specifically the urgency part. Why shortly? Why presently? But we can kind of look at some of the things we do know there, and it could be any number of things, or it could just be Paul saying, "We're not really here to waste time. We want to redeem the time. It's important since I'm not there to get Timothy to you." So there's a little something there. We're doing a Q and A. There might be

somebody has something to add to that. I referenced here a couple of these things in Philippians 4:2. I beseech Judas and Sentucky that they be of the same mind in the Lord. So I believe wholeheartedly that there was a fraction or a faction that was being caused, and there was division, and that's where your Philippians two one through four was kind of landing, and there was enough there going on that that these ladies, whatever the issue was, that he actually tells them in verse three of Philippians chapter four that we need to go work with these ladies to get this fixed. So Philippians 415 and 16, as far as the other possible example, he says, "Know ye Philippians know also that in the beginning of the gospel when I departed from Macedonia, no church communicated with me as concerning giving and receiving, but ye only. For even in Thessalonica, ye sent once and again unto my necessity. So we know there was a gift, and we know Epaphroditus. When he went to deliver the gift, he ended up having to stay, and this is where he got sick, and different things like that, which we're going to look at here shortly. So first section here tonight was about Timothy. The second part that we're going to look at tonight, a little brief, a little bit more brief than the other one, but is Epaphroditus. So, in verse 25, he says, "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you.". Epaphroditus. Now he uses another family term here. He calls Epaphroditus my brother. Most likely, Paul would have had interaction with him in Acts chapter 16, and then Paul clearly has had interaction with him, if not on Acts chapter 20. Clearly, why he's in prison because he came and delivered a gift, and he stayed for a little while, and we know this based on what we're getting ready to read. At this point, he calls him a brother, but he also says companion in labor. But then he also says fellow soldier. This gives the idea that Epaphroditus, when he was with him, right, or even the the point of the reputation he had in Philippi, right. When you're saying somebody is a fellow soldier, that is the fact of you saying yourself, you're a soldier, and that the fight that you're in, this person is alongside you in the fight, and the fight for him was over souls and over raising up the church. So I think this tells you some things about Epaphroditus. He wasn't merely a messenger giving a gift. He's called brother, companion in labor, fellow soldier. It's interesting though in this verse because these first three things says this is who he is to me. But not only is he this to me, he says, but your messenger, he's one of you. He brought the gift, and he says, and that he that ministered to my wants, Epaphroditus was unique in the fact that with Timothy, Paul had the majority of the information. With Epaphroditus, the Philippians had the majority of the information about Epaphroditus, and you're going to see that when you see what happens here in the next few verses. Because in verse 26 it says, "For he longed after you all." This talks about Epaphroditus's relationship to the Philippians, where he was from. He longed after you all, and he was full of heaviness because that ye had heard that he had been sick. When I was trying to look at this section here, I think we're going to see in these verses the heart of Epaphroditus, the health of Epaphroditus and the healing of Epaphroditus seems to be the way this breaks out in my mind. The easiest way to understand that he longed after you all, and he was full of heaviness because that you had heard that he had been sick. Most of us are full of heaviness because we're sick, but but here he's thinking to himself that the fact that I'm sick, these people mean so much to me. I know they're now worrying after me, and that was almost compounding things to Epaphroditus. Not only was there some sort of sickness that he was nigh unto death, but that he, on top of that, it was the care for the people and knowing that his absence and them wondering if they were going to see him again, how heavy that was on their hearts. In verse 27, he says, "For indeed he was sick, nigh Unto death. Paul, I think, through the Holy Spirit, is adding this extra extra bit of information here to let you know that he didn't have a cold. There is reason for their heaviness. This sickness he had was severe. He was nigh unto death. Whatever it was, it could have killed him. He was near death. But here's the phrase that may give some people some challenges. But God had mercy on him, and we'll talk about this here briefly. I'm sure it'll be the source of some comments afterwards. But this mercy, though, wasn't just for Epaphroditus. However, it was clearly God showed mercy on Epaphroditus. Yeah, but what's mercy? Well, we clearly know from the next verse that, and from the fact that He sent Epaphroditus back, that he didn't die. So, what other kind of mercy would it be other than he was healed? Nothing else makes logical sense when you're looking through there. Oh, he had mercy on his sins. What? He already called him a fellow labor, a fellow soldier with him, so he's already saved. So it couldn't have

been that. You can. Run down the list. You can explain away. You can use your preconceived ideas to not want to see what's clearly in text here. You can even say, "Hey, it's a once-in-a-lifetime sort of thing," but you still have to acknowledge it was real and it happened. He says God had mercy on him. He wasn't an apostle. He wasn't one of the 12. This wasn't Paul. He had mercy on him. But then he says this: This mercy wasn't just for him, not only on him only, but on me also. Why, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow? So, a couple of things here. I mean, the question. This is good for for us to understand that things have progressed, that there's been that there's been some new information, because you can turn even in earlier Acts chapter 14, and we can see this about Paul, Acts 14 eight through 10. It says, "There sat a certain man of Lystra, impotent in his feet, being a cripple from his mother's womb, who never had walked, the same heard Paul speak, who steadfastly beholding him and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said with a loud voice, "Stand upright on thy feet," and he and he leapt and walked. Where is that Paul? What's changed? It had to be God showing mercy on Epaphroditus. It wasn't Paul walking up and say, "Hey, in the name of Jesus, brother, you're healed. Let's send the good report back to Philippi." Why didn't Paul heal him? That's a logical question there too. I think you find that answer in First Corinthians 13, eight through 10. This is that famous passage on charity, popular in marriages left and right. Valentine's Day, right? Verse eight says, "Charity never faileth, but whether there be prophecies, they shall fail; whether there be tongues, they shall cease; whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away. For we know in part, and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. There has been a change, and you're like, well, yeah, but that was just this one instance, was it? How about Second Timothy 420 at the very end of his ministry, Erastus abode at Corinth, but Trophimus have I left at Miladam sick. Why didn't he heal him? That had gone away. These were signed gifts. They had passed away. We now had the perfect. We have the complete revelation at this point. There was no need for anybody to prophesy for the Lord to give new words. We we had complete information. Now this is what Paul is saying. He's like, I I know there's nothing that really has to be added to this. We don't need this anymore. So when we were child, as we talk about in the verses coming after this, he goes, "As a child, I did things that children do, but I put away childish things now." And so, in context, the childish things because they had ceased were tongues, prophesying, right? When you talk about this special knowledge that was that was coming, those things were vanishing away. That's why Paul could not heal them anymore. Couldn't even heal himself. Second Corinthians chapter 12, verses seven through 10: Lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing, the thorn, I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me, and he said unto me, Have a little bit more faith, Paul, and you can move mountains. You guys are looking at your notes. Yeah, it's not what it says. He says, "My grace is sufficient for thee. My strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities and reproaches and necessities and persecutions and distresses for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then am I strong. Something had changed. Think about it. Paul said that the Lord showed mercy not just to Epaphroditus, but for me also, lest I had been overcome with too much sorrow, sorrow upon sorrow. Wouldn't it been easier for Paul just to heal him by faith and not have that sorrow? He couldn't. I think it's important. It's important for us to understand. So what? What are the facts in this situation? I'm a plain thinker, right? So Epaphroditus was sick, nigh unto death. Can't debate that in the scripture. God showed mercy on him. Can't debate that in the scripture. Epaphroditus didn't die. Can't debate that in the scripture. Not saying he never died. I'm just saying that passage, right? And then God showed mercy on Paul also. Can't debate that because that was plainly written in Scripture, and he was showed mercy upon Paul that he wouldn't have sorrow upon sorrow. So I got thinking, well, do you want to kind of build an argument on just one case? And this is a hotly debated topic, and you might be like, "What are you even talking about?" Well, it's this idea that today, in this dispensation of grace, is God active in our lives at all? There's a school of thought that He's not. There's also a school of thought that, well, He is active, but it's only through the Word of God and only through the Holy

Spirit. That's the only way He's active today. And there's debates and scripture on both sides. There's also those who probably are still stuck under the law who says, "Yes, he's active today, and if I'm obedient, he's going to bless me. If I'm disobedient, he's going to curse me." So there's a lot of viewpoints here on, and a lot of questions about how does God work in our lives today? And this becomes a tricky passage depending where you sit on that. But I want to submit to some other scriptures. A few of them we showed a few weeks ago, and I added a couple more that I think might help a little bit. At least defend what I believe, and I'll share that at the end. Acts 2622 says, "This is Paul talking. Having therefore obtained help of God." I think it's important here because he's clearly it wasn't additional scripture. It wasn't a revelation at that point, we don't know what the help was of God, but there's no mention of the Holy Spirit there or other people doing anything. But there is help of God of some sort here to Paul, and he's this is his whole trial with Agrippa, and he says, "I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those things which prophets and Moses did say should come. Earlier in Philippians 119, we talked a little bit about this, but I love this verse. He says, "For I, for I know that this shall listen what he says here, turn to my salvation. How? Through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ. There's be an implication there that not only are we told over and over again to pray, but that there is a response that can come from our praying today. Second Thessalonians three one and two. Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may have free course and be glorified. That's usually not debated, but I don't think the next verse is as friendly for at least one party, one side of the transaction. Anyway, because in verse two he says not just that the gospel would have free course, we can all kind of agree with that, but he says, "And that we may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, for all men have not faith." Why is Paul having them pray that? If God can't do that in this dispensation of grace, or chooses not to do that, that would seem odd to me a little bit. First Thessalonians 525, brethren, pray for us. Pretty simple there, right? Not a whole lot more to it. Just a good place to add. Second Timothy 417 through 18. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me and strengthened me that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion, who delivered him, and the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work. And you're like, yeah, because he's going to be with him in heaven for all eternity. Okay, well then, what's the second part of this? And will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, he changes tenses there. And to a future heavenly kingdom. So he's believing here that the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work prior to this future heavenly kingdom. It's interesting. I love this in Philemon 122. Well, Philemon 22, if you will, since there's only one chapter. But you guys probably wish I'd go through that book with you. Verse 22, he says, "But withal, prepare me also a lodging." Now listen, here's our word, trust again, for I. Trust that through your prayers I shall be given unto you. Now that was not an exhaustive list, but enough to say you certainly can find more evidence than one verse in Philippians to show that, and we haven't. We've already looked at Philippians one six. We've looked at Philippians 213. You can look at First Thessalonians 524. You can also pull up Romans 811, and you'll see that the activity of God in our life. Now, granted, a lot of it coming through the Word of God, absolutely, and through the Holy Spirit. Maybe the Holy Spirit working on other people. Certainly, I can understand all of that as well. But God is not silently waiting for the rapture and just doing nothing, and that we just all got to figure it out, and that then everything else is just in the heavenlies for us. Those are all true about our identity in the heavenlies, but it is to me not accurate to say God has no activity in our lives today presently, and that would be kind of discouraging, I think. So we can talk more about that here in a moment, which I'm sure we probably will. But I at least wanted to show some evidences of that. Philippians 228, he says, "I sent him Epaphroditus; therefore, the more carefully." Of course, I mean he's recovering from near death experience, sending him carefully that when you see him again, you may rejoice, and that I may be the less sorrowful. Send him carefully due to him being sick. We see Paul talking a lot about sorrow in these verses here. One that Epaphroditus, being no longer night of death, God showing mercy on him lest he would have sorrow over sorrow, and now him also attached to this sorrow is the fact that he wanted to make sure that Paphrodite was safe and back with the Philippians. It's interesting how Paul

Paul's emotional state was often linked to things that were outside his control and people in faraway places. It was going to comfort him that Timothy was doing work far away from him. It was going to remove sorrow, knowing that Epaphroditus had made it back safe. He was concerned for things outside of just in his backyard, and I hope the same can be said about us. It's like sometimes we think things happening 2000 miles away don't affect us. We don't have to care about it, or we don't have to pray about it. It's just all about right here, and I think you should be engaged. You should care. You should care about what's going on all around us. You should care about whether the gospel is going out to all areas of the world. You should care when our brothers and sisters in Christ are in travail, when one member of the body suffers, we all suffer. It's not just Grace Point; it's the body of Christ. All those who have placed their faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He finishes up by saying, verse 29 and 30, receive him, talking about Epaphroditus. Therefore, in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such in reputation, exalt him if you will. That's kind of interesting. Remember verses Philippians two five through 11. This this picture of Christ who was brought really low, obedient unto death on the cross, but then is going to be exalted by the Father and given a name above all names. Every knee will bow, every tongue will confess. You know, in a way, Epaphroditus's life here represents that in a small way because it's like nigh unto death. Receive him back in Reputation goes from being on his deathbed to being celebrated as a hero on his way back. Why? Because for the work of Christ he was nigh unto death. He didn't fall off his motorcycle. The thing that was bringing him nigh to death is doing the work of the Lord, and that's why he's to be recognized in reputation, not regarding his life to supply your lack of service towards me. We already know this work of Christ was kind of described with in verse 25 when Paul said, "He's my brother. He's a companion in labor. He's a fellow soldier, right? He was also a messenger, and he also was the one who delivered this financial gift. But through it all, he was not regarded.". His life. I'm not saying we should take unnecessary risks and lay our head on on train tracks tonight, saying I have so much faith in God that a train's not going to squash my head. But I do wonder that we are too careful, afraid to take a stand, afraid to fight for what's right, afraid to fight for the cause of Christ. I love how it says Epaphroditus thought not of his own life, and this was something that he should be held in reputation for. He did not regard his own life. Remember, even Paul said this about himself. Philippians 121. He says, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." Epaphroditus kind of was living that out, risking his own life, supplying the lack of service. This was obviously talking financially from Philippians 415 16 that we've already looked at a couple of times here tonight. Okay, that was a lot, but we are now through Philippians chapter two, which is exciting. So we're going to look at some good stuff in Philippians three. Paul is going to give a list of his religious feats that he considered as dung, but the key part being in verse 10 that I may know Christ. We're going to see what we can get through next week, and then probably the next couple weeks will be pretty good as we'll start looking into the great New Year's verses, forgetting those things which are behind, and we start getting to Philippians 313 and 14, but lots of good things still to come in these two chapters. But we're at a halfway point. We've we've done well. So let's pray, dear Heavenly Father. Thank you for your word, Lord. Thank you for the opportunity, Lord. We could be talking about anything. We could be out doing anything. But Lord, I think it delights you when when members of the body of Christ come together and choose to just focus on Your Word, Lord, I love reading stories about Mars Hill and different different things in the Bible where they would just go and even when they were just disputing things logically, just trying to understand the universe, and then Paul comes in and they're like, ah, well, we'll hear you again on this. It gives the idea that let's continue this discussion. So I feel like week in and week out, that is what we're doing. We're coming back in. We're continuing the discussion through your word, Lord. We certainly pray, Lord, that the Holy Spirit would give us clarity, Lord, that the Holy Spirit would empower us to live out this word, not as putting ourselves under any law or anything like that, but out of love, Lord, and the Holy Spirit, and being in the Word of God, producing, Lord, that holiness and blameless perspective, Lord, that you want us to have in this life, Lord, so that we can be those lights that shine amongst a perverse generation. Lord, parts of those steps are coming together as believers and studying Your Word, Lord. And I'm thankful for that. I'm thankful for the questions, Lord.

Thankful for Luke and his heart, Lord, as a young man wanting answers. I think that's great, Lord. And I pray that You do great things with that with that desire and His His heart to want answers, Lord. I pray, Lord, that You continue to just move and and mold him into the young man, Lord, that he can be for you. And Lord, we just pray that you just be that everybody here and those at home, Lord, that are watching online. We thank you for them. We thank you for the attendance of the people. We pray you keep us safe now in Jesus' name. Amen. I think I will.