



KING'S CHAPEL

Daily Devotional - Philippians Study

Week 3 - Day 4

Approaching God: Prayer - *O merciful Father, who in the beginning did create us, and by the passion of your only begotten Son have created me anew, work in me now, I ask you, both to will and to do of your good pleasure. And forasmuch as I am weak, and can do no good thing of my own will, grant me your grace and heavenly benediction, that in whatever work I engage in today, I may do all to your honor and glory; and that, being kept from sin and daily increasing in good works, so long as I live in the body I may ever show forth some service to you; and after my departure may receive pardon of all my sins, and attain eternal life.*

Anselm

Watch the Video - Look at the Book: Philippians 2:12-13 - (11 minutes)

"How to Work Out Your Salvation" by John Piper - [click here to watch the video](#)

(Look at the Book is a video series produced by Desiring God Ministries that helps bible students learn to study a passage by watching Pastor John Piper break down a short text. You look at a Bible text on the screen. You listen to John Piper. You watch his pen "draw out" meaning. And then you pray.)

Here's what's helpful about this video:

- Watching Piper work through a passage of scripture logically challenges and helps visualize how to spend some extra time meditating on scripture and connecting the dots between Paul's key themes and ideas. This helps us learn how to do that ourselves in bible study, & that taking a few extra mins to be slow, quiet, and focused in my time with God is worth it!
- Piper tackles a sometimes confusing passage of scripture and helps us understand - what Paul means when he says, "work out your own salvation..." while pulling together and summarizing a number of key ideas in chapter 2. There is also a helpful illustration in this video that clarifies what my obedience looks like in light of God's past and present grace, and the future glory that he promises for his children.

Bible Reading, Study & Meditation - Philippians 2:19-24

Slowly read today's passage 2 or 3x's. Circle or underline important words or phrases.

Paul now illustrates the themes he has been laying out in chap. 2 - of Godly leadership, unity & gospel partnership, and working out the implications of our salvation by pointing to two flesh and blood examples in the lives of Timothy & Epaphroditus.

Philippians 2:19-24 - **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.

Daily Study Questions

If all of Paul's writing was solid, dense, abstract theology we would never know what he was really like as a human being. We might have the idea that Paul lived the kind of Christian life one imagines from some popular literature: a life without stress or strain, a life of pure unmitigated joy and gladness, cheerfully doing the work of the Lord and preaching the gospel without a care in the world. This passage about Timothy, and tomorrow's on Epaphroditus help us put Paul and his work - and his feelings and emotions - in true perspective.

- How does Paul describe Timothy? What character and leadership qualities does he point to?
- How is Timothy different from others Paul has worked with? How does Paul indicate his profound trust in Timothy?
- What do you think is the connection between looking after the interests of others (2:4) and looking after the interests of Jesus (vs. 21)?

Meditation & Reflection Questions

- How are Christian friendships different from other friendships?
- What encourages you about Timothy's life? What challenges you? Have you experienced or known of a relationship like that of Paul & Timothy? What was it like?

Close in Prayer:

Thank God for partnerships in the gospel. Thank him specifically today for people with whom you serve and have served in even the simplest and seemingly insignificant ways. Ask God to show you someone you should bring alongside with you, or whom you should come alongside to work in partnership.

Summary Notes on Philippians 2:19-24

All that we know of Timothy, one of Paul's closest co-workers, suggests that he sometimes came across as somewhat nervous and unsure of himself. But Paul has complete faith in him as a man and as a Christian, and is writing this short reference for him because he intends to send him to Philippi once there is more news about his own situation. (Verse 23 looks like a cryptic reference to the possibility of a trial which might end with Paul's release - or perhaps with his death.) The Philippians clearly know Timothy already, but Paul is eager to emphasize that he will care genuinely for them and be a true servant of the gospel in Paul's place. Epaphroditus, who we shall meet in the next paragraph, will take the present letter, but he lives in Philippi and will stay there. Timothy will visit them in order to bring news back to Paul.

The portrait of Timothy here, brief though it is, gives plenty of food for thought about the nature of Christian ministry, and of the training and mentoring of younger disciples by older ones. The key to it in this case is that Paul & Timothy have worked together like father and son - in a culture where, as in many parts of the world to this day, most sons follow their fathers into the family occupation, and learn how to do it by watching and copying. Something of that intimate bond has now happened with Paul & Timothy, and Paul trusts the younger man fully to act as he would himself.

It is interesting that he doesn't say, "Timothy is a wonderful teacher" or even "Timothy is a very devout and holy man," but, "Timothy will genuinely care for you." The definition Paul seems to be adopting for a good pastor - and the implication is that he himself was like this - has more to do with sheer unselfish love than anything to do with the person themselves. Indeed, Paul contrasts Timothy favorably with others (whom he doesn't name; but it's a rather bleak picture): the others, he says, are all looking after their own interests, rather than those of King Jesus; but Timothy is different.

Notice, particularly, how "looking after the interests of Jesus," and being "genuinely concerned for your welfare rather than his own" are, for Paul, two ways of saying the same thing. For Paul, the communities that give allegiance to Jesus as Lord and King were not distantly related to their master. He and they were bound up together, he was present with them, his own spirit lived in them individually and corporately. Thus, to serve Jesus and to serve his people are one and the same. To care for the church is to care for the Messiah's body. And doing this, clearly, is part of what Paul means by "working or serving alongside me as a fellow servant for the gospel."

Observe, finally, the way in which Paul is holding Timothy as an example of the attitude he has urged the Philippians themselves to adopt in 2:1-4. And the attitude which was supremely shown by Jesus himself in 2:6-8. He has learned, through the gospel, the art of putting others before himself, and is thereby fit not only to speak the gospel but also to stand as a model of what it means. As so often, we see here how the personal networks which Paul set up served not just to keep people in touch with each other (in a world, of course, long before cell-phones and Zoom chats); they served to maintain the unity of the church. Timothy's forthcoming visit to Philippi would be one more link binding the church to the surrounding churches in northern Greece. It is still important in our day, too, that churches in different parts of the world develop and maintain lively contacts with one another. Friendship in the gospel across barriers of race, geography, culture and class is an excellent way of helping today's church to be what Paul believed it should be: the single new humanity, the light in God's dark world.