Philippians 2026 Series -Lesson 20

"Like Minded For Service"

Spheres of Grace Ministries International, Inc.
by
Dr. Troy S. Welch, Pastor-Teacher
6809 E Hudlow Road
Hayden, ID 83835
(805) 701-6643

Introduction:

Last time we examined Philippians 2:17-18 in which we were challenged to rejoice with others even in the midst of their affliction, knowing that God is causing even that to work together for good to those who love God.

The statement of verse 18 was,

For the same cause also do ye joy, and rejoice with me.

This is in the imperative - a command. There is an important principle here - we are to rejoice with others even in the midst of their affliction knowing that God is causing all things to work together for their good. An expanded translation from the Greek says,

"But as for you, You even be continually rejoicing in the same thing and continue to rejoice with me."

Paul is going to continue with that emphasis when we get to Chapter three. But before continuing with that thought, he interjects some personal matters concerning his affairs with the Philippian believers. Yet, in them we have some basic principles for living the Christian life.

So our text for this study is Philippians 2:19-30 in which we are going to examine the text from an expanded translation. Eleven verses? Now don't panic because we are just going to do a light exposition of the chapter. An expanded translation is not to be misunderstood to be an interpretation of the passage but expands on the translation by utilizing more of the grammar to get a clearer understanding.

Text: Philippians 2:19-30 in an expanded translation:

"But in the Lord Jesus, I confidently expect, to send Timothy to you quickly, in order that I also may be of good cheer, having then come to know of your circumstances. For I do not

have any other who is like souled, one who genuinely will care for the things concerning you. For without exception all of them seek, the things concerning themselves, not the things of Christ Jesus.

But you know from experience his character, which has been approved through the process of testing, that as a child serves a father, he has served as a bond slave with me into the furtherance of the gospel. This one therefore I am confidently expecting to send to you immediately when I ascertain what my circumstances are going to be. But, I have come to a settled conviction in the sphere of the Lord that I also myself will come to you shortly.

But, after weighing the facts, I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, and your apostle sent as a minister to my need. For he was constantly longing after all of you, and was being troubled because you heard he was ill. For indeed he was ill coming near to death; but God had mercy on him, and not him only but also on me, lest I would have grief piled on grief.

More eagerly therefore I have sent him, in order that seeing him again you may rejoice and I may be less grieved. Receive him therefore in the sphere of the Lord with all joy and hold such ones in high esteem. Because on account of the work of Christ he drew near death, exposing his life in order that he might fill up that which was lacking in your spiritual service toward me.

There are three men identified in this section of The Epistle To The Philippians that we would do well be like minded: Paul, Timothy, and Ephaproditus. Let's observe a few things about each by which we might pattern our lives. Each of these had taken to heart that passage we studied back in ...

Philippians 2:5-8 which said,

> ***Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.***

Let's look briefly at these three men:

I. Like Minded To the Apostle Paul:

Remember that Paul has challenged us to develop the mind of Christ. Paul had not only developed the Mind of Christ himself, he was receiving and revealing "The mind of Christ" in the doctrinal revelations he was receiving as an apostle. Our understanding of Basic Bible Doctrine is largely due to doctrine Paul was receiving from God as an apostle. (An apostle was one who had the battle plan and the authority to reveal that plan to others and execute the plan.) We have the doctrines of the Church Age largely due to the Apostle Paul who was given the doctrine that guides the Church Age Believer in living the life God has designed for us.

Paul's Philosophy was stated back in Philippians 1:21

"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.

The proof of that is evidenced in II Corinthians 10:12-11:33:

12 For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise.

13 But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

14 For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ:

15 Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly,

16 To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand.

17 But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

18 For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

Chapter 11

1 Would to God ye could bear with me a little in my folly: and indeed bear with me.

2 For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.

3 But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him.

5 For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles.

6 But though I be rude in speech, yet not in knowledge; but we have been thoroughly made manifest among you in all things.

7 Have I committed an offence in abasing myself that ye might be exalted, because I have preached to you the gospel of God freely?

8 I robbed other churches, taking wages of them, to do you service.

9 And when I was present with you, and wanted, I was chargeable to no man: for that which was lacking to me the brethren which came from Macedonia supplied: and in all things I have kept myself from being burdensome unto you, and so will I keep myself.

10 As the truth of Christ is in me, no man shall stop me of this boasting in the regions of Achaia.

11 Wherefore? because I love you not? God knoweth.

12 But what I do, that I will do, that I may cut off occasion from them which desire occasion; that wherein they glory, they may be found even as we.

13 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.

14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.

15 Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.

16 I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little.

17 That which I speak, I speak it not after the Lord, but as it were foolishly, in this confidence of boasting.

18 Seeing that many glory after the flesh, I will glory also.

19 For ye suffer fools gladly, seeing ye yourselves are wise.

20 For ye suffer, if a man bring you into bondage, if a man devour you, if a man take of you, if a man exalt himself, if a man smite you on the face.

21 I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit where in soever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also.

22 Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I.

23 Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more

abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft.

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine owncountrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;

27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.

28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.

29 Who is weak, and I am not weak? who is offended, and I burn not?

30 If I must needs glory, I will glory of the things which concern mine infirmities.

31 The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is blessed for evermore, knoweth that I lie not.

32 In Damascus the governor under Aretas the king kept the city of the Damascenes with a garrison, desirous to apprehend me:

33 And through a window in a basket was I let down by the wall, and escaped his hands.

Are You Like Minded To Paul?

II. Like Minded To Timothy:

He was a young man sold out to God.

Timothy was a young man, probably a teen-ager when he was converted at Lystra during Paul's first Missionary Trip. Paul had led in the ordination of this young man whose mother and grandmother were dedicated women. Paul recognized the young man's spiritual gifting, and they ordained him to the Gospel ministry. He had traveled with Paul and had served a number of Churches. He was with Paul at Rome when Paul was writing this epistle to the Philippians as we noted in the introduction to this letter. When Paul was traveling, he had a group of men that traveled with him from time to time in what turned out to be a traveling seminary. Timothy was the "Teachers Pet" among the students, and relied upon him for assistance in his own

ministry. I identified with Jeremiah in the Old Testament and Timoth in the New Testament because I, like them, entered the ministry early. I was admonished by Paul's instruction to Timothy in I Timothy 4:12 "…Let no man despise thy youth…" No one would give me a chance to preach when I was nine – I was too young! But once they did give me that opportunity when I was twelve, there were plenty of opportunities and no one seriously questioned my call and ministry when the Czhurch at King City called me as pastor when I was sixteen. But in the flyleaf of my Bible I wrote, Ephesians 4:12 – *"…let no man despise they youth…"* There were some challenges when at the age of Nineteen I was hired to be the Associate Director of Men's Ministries for the California Southern Baptist Convention, and I clung to Paul's challenge to young Timothy, "…Let no man despise thy youth…" That no longer seems to be a problem for me. No! Now it is my "Old Age" that could be a hinderance to service, if I allow it.

Timothy had become an ardent participant in developing the mind of Christ. We don't have any of his sermons or any documentation of his ministry but we have Paul's acknowledgement and statement…

Approved Through Testing (Philippians 2:20-22)

For I do not have any other who is like souled, one who genuinely will care for the things concerning you. For without exception all of them seek, the things concerning themselves, not the things of Christ Jesus.

But you know from experience his character, which has been approved through the process of testing, that as a child serves a father, he has served as a bond slave with me into the furtherance of the gospel.

Are You Like Minded To Timothy? You have your own designed ministry, but are to be likeminded, "…let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus…"

III. Like Minded To Epaphroditus:

His life was secondary to his service to God: (Philippians 2:30)

"....Epaphroditus my brother and fellow-worker and fellow-soldier, and your apostle sent as a minister to my need. For he was constantly longing after all of you, and was being troubled because you heard he was ill.

Because on account of the work of Christ he drew near death, exposing his life in order that he might fill up that which was lacking in your spiritual service toward me.

Are You Like Minded To Epaphroditus? He was sent to Rome by the church at Phillippi to take some financial support to Paul to sustain him during his incarceration. Paul was under house arrest and was responsible for his own support

(no meals on wheels from the prison). The Church at Philippi had supported Paul's ministry but lost contact with him after his arrest in Jerusalem two years before. When they located him in Rome they sent a care package by one of their ministers, Epaphroditus. When he got to Rome he found that the care package he brought was inadequate to meet Paul's financial needs and so he stayed there to raise money and help the situation. While he was there, he got sick and almost died. Although Paul had healed many people there is no record of any supernatural healing, but he recovered and was now being sent back to Philippi with this letter.

We don't have much information about him but Paul identifies him as *"…your apostle, sent to minister to my needs…"* And, although he did not have the same ministry as Timothy, he had developed the mind of Christ and was using those principles to live out God's design for him.

It is important to note the differences in these two men and the uniqueness of each of their ministries, but they are commended for developing the Mind of Christ – thinking compatible to the doctrine of Christ,

Conclusion:

Paul said he had none that was like minded to Timothy. However he then cited the faithfulness of Epaphroditus. We are each held to the same standard but have personal ministries. Although there are basic principles related to all of us those principles are applied in a personal wat that relates to our gifting and calling. Yet we are all to develop the Mind of Christ, that is to think like doctrine of Christ and we are enabled to do that by understanding and accepting the doctrines related to the Church Age.

God is still looking for those who will die to themselves and live for Him. will you be that person?

But it All Begins at Salvation:

For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God...
The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life...
With the heart man believes unto righteousness...
But with the mouth confession is made unto salvation...
For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved!

"… and your joy no man taketh from you…"
(Luke 16:22)