



Shelby Christian Church

WE OVER ME: KILLING ME-FIRST THINKING * PHILIPPIANS 2:19-24, 2 TIMOTHY 1:8-18
2/22/2026

MAIN POINT

KILLING ME-FIRST THINKING

INTRODUCTION

What are one or two words you hope other people use to describe you? Why are these character traits important to you?

The apostle Paul spends much of Philippians 2 using his own life as an example of selfless, sacrificial service for Christ, which was modeled after Christ's own humility and sacrifice. In addition to using himself as an example, Paul also pointed to another believer worth following. Timothy, his coworker whom the Philippians knew, exemplified Christ's mind-set.

UNDERSTANDING

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ PHILIPPIANS 2:19-24

Paul presented Timothy as a second example of a life that shines brightly (2:14–16). In this part of the letter, Paul expressed optimism about his immediate future. He planned to send Timothy to Philippi on a pastoral visit as soon as he learned the outcome of his own legal situation. Paul longed for an update from the Philippian believers, and he trusted Timothy to bring back that report. He fully expected to be encouraged by the news Timothy would share about the church.

What two or three words would you choose to describe Timothy and his ministry?

How would you characterize the relationship between Paul and Timothy? In what ways did their close bond strengthen their ministry for the gospel? When have you experienced a similar kind of partnership?

Timothy modeled genuine concern for others. What distinguishes false concern from true, Christlike care? Why is authentic concern such an essential quality for ministry?

What do you think Paul meant when he wrote in verse 21, “all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ”?

Paul honored Timothy with high praise, noting that Timothy consistently placed Christ's priorities above his own. This reminds us that believers who put the well-being of their church ahead of personal preference are, in fact, putting Christ first and demonstrating their devotion to Him.

If every member of our church truly sought Christ's interests before their own, how might that reshape our church and our wider community?

Take a moment to reflect on your actions this week. Which choices showed that you were putting others first? Which revealed that you were prioritizing yourself?

According to verse 22, what was Timothy's mission, and how did he serve alongside Paul as a co-laborer?

Later in Timothy's life, he would receive a deeply personal letter from Paul—his mentor and fellow worker in the gospel—urging him to remain steadfast in ministry. Paul wrote from prison in Rome, aware that his death was likely approaching. His imprisonment weighed heavily on the churches he had served, and he sought to strengthen Timothy just as he had encouraged the Philippians.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ 2 TIMOTHY 1:8-18

What was Paul concerned that Timothy might be ashamed of?

What specific aspects of Paul's ministry and witness did Paul fear would cause Timothy or others to feel shame?

How did Paul describe the gospel?

What language did Paul use to explain the nature and power of the gospel, and how does that shape our understanding of it?

Why was Paul concerned about shame?

What circumstances made shame a real temptation for believers during this time?

What kept Paul from being ashamed of the gospel?

What keeps you from being ashamed—or tempted to be ashamed—of your faith today?

Paul feared that Timothy and other believers might be ashamed of the testimony about Christ and of Paul himself because he was imprisoned. Paul's chains could have been interpreted as evidence of failure, abandonment by God, or a sign that he had compromised the truth. Some may have assumed that his imprisonment meant he no longer believed in the gospel or that proclaiming Christ was no longer worth the cost. However, Paul made it clear that salvation comes through Christ alone and that the gospel does not depend on any individual messenger. The message remains true and powerful regardless of Paul's circumstances.

What was Paul urging Timothy to do?

In light of these challenges, how did Paul call Timothy to respond in his ministry and leadership?

What situation motivated Paul to call Timothy to faithful teaching (v. 15)?

What had happened among the churches and their leaders that made this exhortation necessary?

Paul urged Timothy to hold firmly to the "pattern of sound teaching," sometimes described as "sound doctrine." This teaching, which Timothy received from Paul, was centered on faith and love in Christ Jesus. Paul stressed the importance of guarding this truth because many believers and leaders had turned away from him—and from right teaching—due to his imprisonment. Rather than following the

shifting opinions of others, Timothy was called to remain loyal to Christ and faithful in his teaching. Paul's concern was not personal vindication but Timothy's faithfulness before God, so that Timothy might receive mercy when he stood before the Lord and gave an account of his ministry.

How does reflecting on what you have learned and experienced help you persevere as a co-laborer in the gospel?

In what ways can remembering God's past faithfulness strengthen you to continue serving alongside other believers?

How does the Holy Spirit help you face the future?

What role does the Spirit play in giving courage, guarding truth, and sustaining you in ministry challenges?

APPLICATION

Paul highlighted three key missionary traits in Timothy's life—concern for others, compassion, and a commitment to co-laboring in ministry. Which of these areas do you most need to strengthen in your own life?

How can our group encourage one another and practice accountability as we grow in these qualities together?

Do you freely offer praise and encouragement, or do you find that affirming others comes more naturally to some than to you?

In what ways do you need to grow in recognizing and celebrating the work God is doing through others?

What specific service or calling do you believe God has placed on your heart for His kingdom?

How are you presently serving with faithfulness and dedication in that calling?

When believers live as “shining stars”—authentic, visible examples of Christian faith—how does their witness impact others?

In what ways do such lives powerfully point people to Christ and help guide others toward obedient, Christ-centered living?

PRAYER

COMMENTARY

Philippians 2:19-24

Paul offered Timothy, his younger coworker, as a second example of Christ's mind-set (vv. 19-20). The apostle felt confident he would be able to send Timothy to Philippi soon. Paul wanted to receive accurate, detailed news about the believers' circumstances and welfare. Also, Timothy would offer needed encouragement and guidance. Knowing the believers were remaining faithful to Christ and were united would encourage Paul. The Greek word translated encouraged carries the sense of comfort and cheer; a good report from Timothy would lift Paul's spirits.

Paul could not go to the Philippian believers, but he would send the best substitute available: Timothy. No one else was like-minded (literally, “equal-souled”) with Paul. The apostle could have meant that of all his coworkers, Timothy most closely matched Paul's servant attitude or spirit. More

likely, however, Paul meant that of all the people around him, Timothy shared most deeply Paul's love and concern for the Philippian Christians.

To whom did Paul refer with the inclusive term all (v. 21)? Did he mean that everyone around him was self-centered, consumed with their own interests? In 1:14-16, he had mentioned courageous believers in Rome who preached the gospel with love, the right motive. One interpretation is that Paul's statement was an aside, a sad reflection on the self-seeking of people in general. Thus Timothy was a rare person who could be entrusted with—and who would accept—the important mission of representing Paul to the Philippian believers. Timothy's interests were the interests of Jesus Christ—the welfare of His people.

The Philippian Christians had observed Timothy in action during the missionary party's stay in Philippi (v. 22; see Acts 16). They had firsthand knowledge of his proven character (literally, "the proof of him"). That is, he had been tested and found to be genuine. Paul's friends knew that Timothy had served (literally, "slaved") with Paul in his missionary endeavors. In 2:7, Paul pointed out that Christ chose to be a servant ("slave"); Timothy was following his Lord's example. Paul viewed Timothy as his spiritual son, whom the apostle mentored in the gospel ministry—the work of spreading the gospel.

Paul was awaiting trial before the emperor (vv. 23-24). When the verdict was in, he would send Timothy to Philippi. If Paul were found guilty, Timothy would represent him ably. Yet Paul was convinced in the Lord that he would be acquitted. When that happened, he quickly would arrange to visit the church.

2 Timothy 1:8-18

Verse 8: Paul exhorts Timothy not to be ashamed of: The testimony about our Lord (the gospel), and Paul himself, a prisoner for the sake of Christ. In the ancient world, imprisonment—especially for a criminal charge—was a source of deep shame. Paul's chains could tempt others to distance themselves from him and his message. Paul therefore urges Timothy to be willing to "share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God." Faithful ministry is not sustained by human strength but by divine enablement.

Verses 9–10: Paul anchors this call to endurance in theology. The gospel Timothy serves is rooted in: God's initiative: Salvation comes from God, not human works. God's eternal purpose: Grace was given "before the beginning of time." Christ's victory: Jesus Christ abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Suffering for the gospel is therefore not meaningless; it participates in God's eternal saving plan and rests on Christ's triumph over death.

Verse 11: Paul reminds Timothy that he was appointed as a preacher, apostle, and teacher of the gospel—roles that required public proclamation and doctrinal instruction. His imprisonment is not accidental but a consequence of obedience to this calling.

Verse 12: Paul explains why he is not ashamed: He knows whom he has believed (a deeply personal trust in Christ). He is convinced that Christ is able to guard what Paul has entrusted to Him until "that day" (the day of final judgment and salvation). Paul's confidence rests not in his own endurance but in Christ's faithfulness. This assurance allows Paul to suffer without shame.

Verse 13: Timothy is commanded to “hold on to the pattern of sound teaching” he received from Paul. The phrase suggests a standard or model of healthy doctrine. Christian faithfulness is not innovative reinvention but faithful preservation of apostolic truth, lived out in faith and love in Christ Jesus.

Verse 14: Timothy is also instructed to “guard the good deposit”—the gospel and the truth entrusted to him. Importantly, this task is not undertaken alone but “through the Holy Spirit who lives in us.” The Spirit enables believers both to preserve doctrinal integrity and to live out the faith faithfully.

Verse 15: Paul soberly reports that believers in the province of Asia have turned away from him, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. This highlights the painful reality that fear, shame, and self-preservation can lead even professing believers to abandon faithful leaders during times of persecution.

Verses 16–18: In contrast, Paul commends Onesiphorus, who: Frequently refreshed Paul. Was not ashamed of Paul’s chains. Diligently searched for Paul in Rome and helped him. Had previously served the saints faithfully in Ephesus.

Paul prays for mercy upon Onesiphorus and his household, expressing hope that he will be rewarded by the Lord “on that day.” This testimony reinforces Paul’s message: loyalty to Christ and His servants reflects true gospel courage and compassion.