

"Sending Timothy" *Philippians 2:19-24*

INTRO:

We all need encouragement at times. Often, God sends His encouragement through a person. Being the person who bears God-given encouragement to another believer is a vitally important and blessed ministry. In the Bible some folks made the ministry of encouragement a priority in their lives. Joseph nicknamed Barnabas as such a person. ***"And Joseph, who was also named Barnabas by the apostles (which is translated Son of Encouragement), a Levite of the country of Cyprus, having land, sold it, and brought the money and laid it at the apostles' feet."*** (Acts 4:36–37).

Another person who made encouragement a big part of his ministry was Timothy, Paul's son in the faith. We are going to learn a little more about Timothy and the job Paul gave Him to do.

I. Sending Timothy (v. 19)

II. Why Timothy? (v. 20-24)

I. Sending Timothy (v. 19)

A. Paul told them in chapter one about his possible execution, no doubt the Apostle sensed that both he and the Philippians need some encouragement. Therefore, he thought about Timothy. **(Philippians 2:19)**

"But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state."

B. The first thing we notice here is how much Paul depended upon the providence of God in his life. Although he planned to send Timothy, he was aware that this very much dependent upon the Lord allowing it.

1. This brings to mind the admonition James wrote to the business men in **James 4:13**; ***"Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a city, spend a year there, buy and sell, and make a profit'; whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.'"***

2. The Apostle Paul knew what it was to have the Lord blue pencil his plans. For example consider his plan in **Romans 15:22-28**;

"For this reason I also have been much hindered from coming to you. But now no longer having a place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come to you, whenever I journey to Spain, I shall come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while. But now I am going to Jerusalem to minister to

the saints. For it pleased those from Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are in Jerusalem. It pleased them indeed, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister to them in material things. Therefore, when I have performed this and have sealed to them this fruit, I shall go by way of you to Spain. But I know that when I come to you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ."

As Paul stated his plan to send Timothy, he wanted to be careful not to exalt his will over the Lord's.

3. Do we see God's sovereign hand in our lives? This reality was a great comfort to the Apostle Paul. It also should be a great comfort to us. Are we aware that "**the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord and He delights in his way?**" (Psalm 37:23) If we are, we can find in this fact a great deal of encouragement.

C. Second, Paul stated clearly his motive in sending Timothy. This is not a tour of inspection, to make sure the Philippians did exactly what Paul demanded of them. Actually, the primary purpose of this trip was to encourage the Philippians and also to encourage Paul (we see this in the explanation of Timothy's character. Surely a man of this caliber would encourage this church simply by his presence in their midst.)

II. Why Timothy? (v. 20-24)

A. Why did the Apostle Paul chose to send Timothy to them? He is going to tell them by describing Timothy's outstanding character. (Philippians 2:20-21)

"For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus."

He sent timothy, first, because timothy is Paul's kindred spirit.

1. Do you remember how Paul described Philippian church unity in v.2 of this chapter? Paul wrote that one of the important elements in church unity was that they had their souls together. The Greek word translated "*like-minded*" means "*souls together.*" Paul used a word with the same root to describe Timothy and himself meaning "*of the same soul.*" Paul wrote he had no other one like Timothy with the same soul as he had.

2. Timothy had a soul, an essential life force, a heart that would naturally care about what was happening to the Philippians. In short, Timothy had a pastor's heart. He cared deeply about what happened in God's church.

B. Second, he also sent Timothy because he "***cares for the things of Christ more than his own benefit.***" We see this in the comparison statement in v.20.

"For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus."

1. Timothy stood out because he always put "spiritual things" first. Now it is true that this is a statement of comparison and it might cause us to wonder who was being

compared to Timothy. Even the Apostle Paul had those who discouraged him with their lack of commitment to the Lord, to His Word, and to serving Him no matter the cost.

2. Yet, perhaps the comparison, we his readers should make is between Timothy and us. Could someone honestly say, we desire spiritual blessings most of all? I think about something that David wrote at a low point in his life. **Psalm 142:3-4**;

“When my spirit was overwhelmed within me, Then You knew my path. In the way in which I walk they have secretly set a snare for me. Look on my right hand and see, For there is no one who acknowledges me; Refuge has failed me; No one cares for my soul.”

If Paul were to write about you and me today, would he be able to say honestly we are like Timothy? Do we put the things of God first, and ourselves second?

C. Third, he sent Timothy because they already knew Timothy’s character and usefulness ***“But you know his proven character, that as a son with his father he served with me in the gospel. Therefore I hope to send him at once, as soon as I see how it goes with me.”*** (vs.22-23)

1. Paul did not want to send someone to them they did not know. We trust someone because he or she has shown themselves trustworthy in the past. Timothy had done just that. Timothy was one who has stood the test. We don’t know from the **Acts** account of Paul’s ministry to Philippi what role Timothy played, but it seems clear that he took the adversity there well.

2. The Apostle Paul describes Timothy’s service as service of **“a son with his father.”**

D. Paul’s choice of Timothy underlines the truth, character matters. Did you notice as Paul recommended Timothy and his ministry to these people, he did not cite how many souls he led to Christ in the last year? He didn’t say Timothy was a dynamic preacher who will rivet you to your seat. Rather, Paul said Timothy had the right heart, and he had the right character. God blesses us because of who we are and not because of what we have done.

Have you ever considered the Barnabas method of church growth?

“When he came and had seen the grace of God, he was glad, and encouraged them all that with purpose of heart they should continue with the Lord. For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.” (Acts 11:23–24)

Those people didn’t just sit on their hands. Because what we are makes us do what we should, God blessed their efforts.

Are we a people who could be described as Timothy was? Do we seek the things that are Christ’s or are we more concerned with our own things? When all is said and done, which will matter most to us at the judgment seat of Christ?

***Only one life, twill soon be past.
Only what’s done for Christ will last.***