



Date: **February 11, 2018**

Scripture: **Philippians 2:19-30**

Last week we were challenged from Philippians 2:12-18 to “work out our salvation” and “shine as lights in the world” amidst our suffering. This is for the encouragement of our local body and the spread of the gospel in our community.

This week our attention is turned towards two examples Paul gives us who have servant-centered lives that reflect the servant-centered nature of Christ that was displayed in the incarnation (see Phil. 2:1-11).

Getting Started: Go around the room and have people share about someone in their life who was/is an example of a servant-centered Christian.

- What was the context of their ministry? (pastor, mentor, friend, co-worker etc.)
- In what ways did they serve others? (local community outreaches, church ministries, etc.)
- How did their service affect others? How did it impact you?
- How did they share the gospel in their service?
- Have you had anyone mentor you in your life? Have you mentored someone else? How did it work?
- How important is it for us personally and the church at large to have mentorship relationships?

The Example of Christ:

- What do we see in the incarnation of Christ that provides the basis for servant-centered ministry?
- What are some examples in the life of Christ where we see this lived out?

The Example of Timothy:

- What do we know from this passage and other parts of Scripture about Paul & Timothy’s relationship?¹
- How did that relationship provide the grounds to train Timothy for ministry?
- What character traits do we see in Timothy that made him effective for servant-centered ministry?
 - Any others from other passages where Paul talks about Timothy?

¹ See especially Acts. 16, 1 Cor. 4:17, and 1 Tim. 1:2



The Example of Epaphroditus:²

- What five things does Paul call Epaphroditus in vs 25?
- What do these things tell us about the character of Epaphroditus?
- How do these character traits equip Epaphroditus for servant-centered ministry?

Action/thought for this week:

- **Personally:** Pray that the Holy Spirit would show you ways in which you can be more servant-centered in your life (parenting, marriage, ministry at church, friendship to neighbors and co-workers).
- **As a church:**
 - Do you receive the Connect? - the brief, visually oriented, news-letter e-mailed from Midland Free. This publication may be quickly scanned for information pertinent to your life here in the local church. It keeps you in the know and helps you connect along with providing various opportunities to serve. <https://mailchi.mp/mefchurch/midland-free-weekly-e-newsletter-1074185?e=572b97b582>
 - Pray that the Holy Spirit would show our church ways in we can be more servant-centered towards each other for the building up of the body of Christ and our community for the advancement of the gospel.

² Bonus...Ἐπαφρόδιτος - Epaphroditus. – Favorite of Aphrodite

, meaning one devoted to Aphrodite, **the goddess of love and beauty.**

Spiros Zodhiates, *The Complete Word Study Dictionary : New Testament*, electronic ed. (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 2000).

The name is derived from *Aphrodite* (Venus), and means **charming.**

Marvin Richardson Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc., 2002), Php 2:25.

Aphrodite (Venus) was also the goddess of gamblers. When a pagan Greek threw the dice he would cry out “epaphroditos!” meaning “favorite of Aphrodite.” Epaphroditus’ name may have connections with this custom. If so, Paul may have written that Epaphroditus “risked [gambled] his life” as a play on his friend’s name. Tom Constable, *Tom Constable’s Expository Notes on the Bible* (Galaxie Software, 2003; 2003), Php 2:30.