

Observations from Philippians 2:19-24

By Dr. David DeWitt

But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father. Therefore, I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly (Philippians 2:19-24).

There are several interesting observations here which we should not overlook:

- Paul has no intention of the Philippians becoming an independent, self sufficient, indigenous church. He intends to maintain contact with them, send Timothy to them, be encouraged by them, and come to them himself. *But I hope to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I may be encouraged when I learn of your condition* (Verse 19).
- It is crucial to have a friend and fellow worker like Timothy who is a *kindred spirit*. The word means “the same soul.” Partners in ministry you can trust are indispensable. *For I have no one else of kindred spirit* (Verse 20).
- Missionaries should be interested in two things: first, the interests of Christ, and second, the welfare of the people they are going to see. *Who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare* (Verse 20).
- Most people involved in ministry are focused on their own interests, some on the interests of other people, but few on the interests of Christ. *For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus* (Verse 21).
- Most significant relationships will involve submission—like a father and a son. Co-equality is actually unhelpful in most areas of ministry. For example, Timothy was of the same soul but submissive to Paul. *But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father* (Verse 22).
- An effective team is effective individuals functioning together. The “team” as a collective entity is irrelevant. *Therefore, I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me* (Verse 23).
- Paul and Timothy were a team because of each of their individual contributions. *And I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly* (Verse 24).

APPLICATION

It is extremely valuable, but rare, to have a kindred spirit in ministry (verses 19-24).