

The Priceless Value of a Faithful Person

Philippians 2:19-30

Introduction:

1. As Paul writes the church at Philippi, he introduces us to two men - Timothy (vs. 19) and Epaphroditus (vs. 25). They were just two ordinary saints of God. They were not apostles, nor were they mighty miracle workers.
2. Yet, the most noted apostle in the New Testament speaks of these men in glowing terms. Why did Paul have so much respect for these two men? Here is why - because they were faithful! They may not have been flashy, but they were faithful.
3. Did you know that faithfulness is what brings validity and value to everything else we do?
 - **Illustration:** L.I.F.E. Group Teacher - may be the best teacher in the church, but, if he is only in class 10 Sundays out of 52, there is very little value to that teacher. Why is this? He is not faithful. He may be flashy, but he lacks faithfulness.
 - **Illustration:** My parent's refrigerator - it may have had a bad day now and then throughout the years, but we would call it faithful.
4. These two men in our text were not perfect, but, they were faithful and that is precisely what God is looking for in our lives. **1 Corinthians 4:2**
5. Would you be considered a faithful person? Let's take a close look at these two men, scrutinize their lives, and from this text establish a profile of a faithful person.

A faithful person can be trusted. vs. 22

1. As you read verses 19-22, it is quite apparent that Paul had absolutely no reservations at all about sending Timothy to Philippi in his stead.
 - Many believe that Paul led Timothy to Christ during his First Missionary Journey and then Timothy accompanied Paul on his second Journey.
 - He was with Paul when Paul founded this church at Philippi. He had been Paul's constant co-laborer for nearly 10 years.
2. Paul says unequivocally, *"But ye know the proof of him..."*
 - The word "proof" means "trustiness." It carries the idea of somebody with proven character or tested value.
3. Timothy had established a testimony of faithfulness and therefore could be trusted. Faithful people can be trusted by God. He can trust them with His blessings.
Proverbs 28:20; Genesis 18:19
4. A faithful person can be trusted by others. The boss doesn't have to worry about the faithful person when he is gone. A faithful person doesn't require that someone constantly be peering over his shoulder.
5. A faithful person can be trusted to do what he says he is going to do. He can be trusted to be on time and to do what is expected.
6. If you had to have one person at a certain place and a certain time or it meant your life (and it couldn't be family), who would you ask? Would you be the one that somebody else would ask?

A faithful person places the cause of Christ above his/her own self-interests.

vs. 19-21

1. Verse 21 is an extremely sad verse. Remember Paul is in prison. Out of numerous believers in Rome, not one was available to make this trip to Philippi for Paul.
2. Their primary interest was no longer that of Christ, but their own. They were consumed with themselves. Paul was down to his last reliable co-worker, Timothy.
3. Timothy's primary concern was for the spiritual condition of God's people. vs. 20
4. Faithful people don't get caught up in their own little agenda, but they constantly keep the big picture in mind. The overall cause of Christ is what matters most to them. We either live in **Philippians 1:21** or **2:21**.
5. Jesus is our supreme example. One of His titles is "*Faithful and True*." Jesus never got preoccupied with His own personal agenda. It was always about the Father's will. **John 4:34; Luke 22:42**

A faithful person is not above menial tasks. vs. 25

1. Epaphroditus is a guy we can all relate to. There is no record of any outstanding work that he did. He enjoyed no public acclaim, no prominence, held no high office, was not a noted preacher, apostle, teacher, or leader. There is no record of any great talents or gifts.
2. But, he did have something going for him; he was faithful! He had the soul of a servant. He volunteered to travel all the way from Philippi to Rome to carry a love gift to the apostle Paul from the church. Paul says, "*He ministered to my wants...*"
 - The word "ministered" means "a public servant" and "wants" means "necessities."
3. So Epaphroditus arrived at Rome and simply served the apostle Paul and met his needs.
4. People like this, with a servants' hearts, are far and few between. Again, Christ is our primary example. **John 13:2-16**
 - Can you imagine, our Savior washing the feet of Judas Iscariot!

A faithful person is not consumed with his/her problems. vs. 26-28

1. This is amazing! This man was at death's door, yet he wasn't distressed about himself. He was burdened for the people in Philippi because they were worried about him.
2. Have you ever met people who only want to talk about their problems? You ask a simple question, "How are you doing?" Out comes the laundry list of problems.
3. People that love to focus on problems are seldom faithful to anything. The very concept of faithfulness is that you are doing something for someone else and they can rely on you. Self-absorbed people aren't faithful because they are absorbed with themselves. They always have a reason why they can't fulfill their responsibility.
4. On the other hand, faithful people are always concerned about **others** and how their lack of faithfulness may cause a hardship on somebody else. Their attitude is "Let me just suck it up and do it."

A faithful person does whatever it takes to get the job done. vs. 29-30

1. Paul tells the church, "You really need to hold this guy in reputation because with total disregard for his own welfare; he has continually put his life on the line for the work of Christ." This kind of person is very rare.
2. How many people do you know like this? They will even risk danger to themselves in order to get the job done. This is the kind of person I want to be and I hope you want to be.
3. Isn't Christ our example again? He didn't just risk His life; He **gave** His very life in order to pay sin's price for us so we could go to heaven. He accomplished the job God the Father gave Him to do. He said, "*It is finished.*"
4. **Psalm 31:23** says that "*...the Lord preserveth the faithful.*" God honored Epaphroditus for his faithfulness and raised him up from his sickness.
5. God also preserved the Lord Jesus Christ and honored His faithfulness by raising Him up from the dead on the third day.

In Conclusion:

1. Do you fit the profile of a faithful person? Remember, it is required in stewards that a man be found faithful.
2. When we are unfaithful, we hurt others; we damage the cause of Christ, but the people who are hurt the most when we lack faithfulness is **us**. We rob ourselves.