**Growth Group Bible Study**

Shining Like Stars: Living with Joy in a Dark World - Series

*Dent Makers*

May 23, 2021

**Reading** Philippians 2:19-30

**Opening Questions**

1. What is something you learned in last weekend’s message?

2. How did the message challenge you?

**Read Phil. 2:19-24**

Pray and answer the following questions:

Think back about that grade school teacher who praised your writing, that Sunday school teacher who prompted you to read the Bible on your own, that coach who gave you confidence in your athletic ability. Each of us have been shaped and influenced by the examples of teachers, coaches, friends, pastors and mentors. When the Philippians heard that Paul was in prison, they sent one of their members, a man named Epaphroditus to Paul with a gift of money. It was his job to help Paul in any way necessary. Epaphroditus returned home carrying the letter to the Philippians. In this section, Paul outlines his future plans and explains why he is sending Epaphroditus back. This passage gives several beautiful examples of Christian service as displayed in the lives of Timothy, Epaphroditus, Paul and the Philippians.

1. How was Timothy an example of the kind of Christian life Paul has been describing?

2. What disappointment did Paul voice in verse 21? How have you seen this in your own experience?

3. In the following verses, how does Timothy show the behavior Paul wants the Philippians to have?

 a. Verse 20 \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

 b. Verse 21

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 c. Verse 22

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4. What attitude must a person have if he is to put up with the kind of proving Paul describes in 2:22?

5. Why is this kind of preparation so often needed for those in leadership?

**Note the following godly traits of Epaphroditus:**

 a. He was a man of humility. He was willing to put his life in Philippi on hold in order to visit Paul. He was willing to serve in whatever way would be helpful.

 b. His church family was very important to him. While he might have preferred to stay with Paul, he was returning to Philippi because he knew his friends were worried about his health.

 c. Epaphroditus must have had a personality that reflected Christ. Paul knew that the Christians of Philippi would be anxious for Epaphroditus to return home.

**Read Phil. 2:25-30.** Pray and answer the following questions:

Probably a leader in the Philippian church, Epaphroditus was well known to the members of the church in Philippi. As with Timothy, the circumstances of Paul’s relationship with Epaphroditus speaks highly of his Christian character and models a great example of Christian humility in action.

1. What do “fellow worker” and “fellow soldier” mean in verse 25?

2. How did Paul want the Philippians to receive Epaphroditus? What does this say about how we should receive Christian workers among us?

3. Why could Paul count on Timothy and Epaphroditus?

4. What risks are you willing to take on behalf of other Christians?

5. How can you be a model of humility and service to other Christians this week?