Faithful Examples

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 March 2026

Preacher: Dr. Michael Staton

[0:00] This is the First Mustang Pulpit Podcast, a podcast of the weekly preaching and teaching at First Mustang.! It's great to be home.

Jeff and Jeremy and I were in Los Angeles all this past week at the Shepherds Conference and got up at about 4 o'clock yesterday morning, flew home and lost a couple of hours, and time changed, lost another hour.
I had to stay up and make sure the thunder and Sooners won, so I was up a little later than I wanted to, but it helped me that today was Sunday. I was telling somebody earlier, if today was Monday, I'd be really tired.
With it being Sunday and being able to be with all of you makes it a joy for sure to get up this morning and to be able to be here, and just grateful to have this church family to be a part of, and I so anticipate every Sunday when we gather each Lord's Day to worship and sing and study, and what a blessing the testimony was in baptism today.
What a delight to just see the power of the gospel. The Lord has been so, so good to us. Well, we are looking this morning here in verses 19 to 30 of chapter 2 as we talk about and see what Scripture has for us related to faithful examples.
[1:44] We in chapter 2 have spent a number of weeks now seeing how this all unfolds, that at the first part of chapter 2, we have this great theological teaching on Christology, the doctrine of Christ, and we spent a number of weeks talking about what it means that Christ left heaven and took on flesh, what it means to say that He emptied Himself, and we spent some Sundays looking at the high and rich and lofty Christology that Philippians 2 has for us.

And then we spent a few weeks in verses 12 and 13 talking about how we live that out, that we are to work out what the Spirit has worked within us, that we don't work for our salvation, but we work out our salvation.
We looked for a couple of weeks what that means, and verses 14 to 18 gave us some very practical things of how we are to work out our salvation, that we're not to be grumbling and complaining, that yes, we live in a crooked and twisted generation.
That's true, just like was true in the first century. And yet, we are called by God's grace to shine as lights, to give evidence that we are, children of God, and how we can do that.
And then, so beautifully, that leads right to verses 19 to 30, and gives us two examples of how we do everything we've been talking about in chapter 2.
[3:26] So, this call for us, verse 4, to not look after ourselves, but look after the interests of others. Verse 12, to work out our salvation.

And then, all the things in verses 14 to 18 we've already covered, the thing that we need to have are some examples that would encourage and inspire us, and that's exactly what verses 19 through 30 give us.
And we're going to tackle, it's a pretty lengthy passage we're going to try to tackle here in one day. But by God's grace, I hope to get from verses 19 all the way down to verse 30 again, as we look at these examples.
Now, Christ is our ultimate example. Christ is the one who is perfect, and we want to look to Him in all things. And as chapter 2 has already told us, we are to have the mind of Christ and pursue the mind of Christ.
But it's also helpful for us to have some real life, in-person, regular common people examples of how we can do this.
[4:37] You read about the heroes of Scripture, and though they were men and women like us, sometimes we read about Abraham, and Abraham's life just feels so different than ours.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And we read about David and his faith and trust in the Lord, but David was a king. That feels so much above us. And we read about the apostles, and while they were regular men like us, these were the 12 apostles.
It feels, in some ways, just even beyond us. But here's the thing. We need some examples of just real common members of a church who love the Lord, who didn't walk on water, who weren't kings. They're just regular people who love the Lord and are striving to live out exactly what we've been studying in chapter 2. And that's the beauty of verses 19 to 30, is we're going to see here an example of two different men who can relate to us and us to them quite well, and give us a picture and a real example of what it would mean to live out the very things that we have been studying. Because if we talk about doctrine and Christology and the self-emptying of Christ and all that that means theologically, and we need to understand that, but if we study those doctrines and we don't tomorrow go to school and live like Christ, and we don't tomorrow go to work and shine as lights in a dark world, and we don't tomorrow live with our families and our homes in a way that points them to Christ, then we've missed it.
[6:31] Our theology, our precision, our doctrine is essential, but the knowledge of those things is not sufficient. We are to take what we have learned and live it out, work it out.

That's been this extended time that we've been talking about here in chapter 2. And this morning, we get two examples, one from Timothy, one from a man named Epaphroditus, of what it means to live faithful lives.
It's been well said before that the most powerful form of discipleship is a faithful example. And I think that's well said.
The most powerful form of discipleship is a faithful example. While we're teaching the Bible and leading someone to memorize Scripture, teach them how to pray, teach them how to be a godly wife and how to be a godly husband, all of these things that are so important, the most powerful thing we can give to them as we teach them the Word is a faithful example of how that Word actually gets believed and then lived out.
We don't want to just simply be people with knowledge and become puffed up. We want to be genuine believers who are transformed by the doctrine we're learning and then we leave behind, by God's grace, a powerful example of someone who really believed these things and with all of our heart tried to live these things.
[8:06] And so we might look at it this way. The first part of chapter 2 is telling us what to do. The second part of chapter 2 is showing us practically how to do it.

Two real examples of how to do this. So we're going to look at two men. First is Timothy, a son in the faith. Number two, Epaphroditus, a servant in the family.
Timothy, a son in the faith. Epaphroditus, a servant in the family. Let's look at verse 19.
I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon so that I too may be cheered by news of you. For I have no one like him who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.
For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father, he has served with me in the gospel.
[9:09] I hope therefore to send him just as soon as I see how it will go with me. And I trust in the Lord that shortly I myself will come also. Let's start with Timothy, a son in the faith.

Timothy gives us in this passage an example for us to follow. Make note of two things. He's an example in compassion. And he's an example in character.
Let's look first at how he's an example for us in compassion. Let's go back to verse 19. I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon so that I too may be cheered by news of you.
But Paul would love to be in person with the church at Philippi. I remember he writes this under house arrest in Rome. So he has some freedoms in the sense of he can't have visitors come and talk to them.
But he's certainly not free to leave. And he spends his days chained to a guard. He longs to be with the church. He wishes he could go and visit them and see them and spend time with them.
[10:16] But because of his condition, he's not able to do that. And so he hopes to send Timothy to them. And notice what he says. That I want to send Timothy to you.

And Timothy's going to be able to check on you and see how you're doing. He says that I may be cheered by news of you. In other words, Paul says, when I send Timothy to you, I'm going to learn from him what's going on in the church.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

And Paul just fully anticipates being encouraged by the report he's going to receive. I resonate with that. Because from time to time when my life and ministry has me away or out of town doing something or speaking somewhere, I can't wait to get back home with you.
And when I get back home with you, I know that what I'm going to hear is going to encourage me. I know that when I'm gone, whichever one of our pastors stands here and preaches the word, that you're going to hear from a man who loves Christ and loves you.
I know that you're going to be well served. I know that you're well led. I know that every single week we've got so many faithful servants and leaders in our church who are using their spiritual gifts to glorify Christ and to serve you.
[11:38] And while our church is imperfect, completely imperfect, this is a sweet, sweet place filled with people who love Christ and care for each other.

And while I never like to be away, one of the things I enjoy about being away is returning home and being able to hear reports of the good things that God has done and how he's using you to do his work.
I understand exactly what Paul says when he writes there that I want to send Timothy and I want to hear a report of how you're doing. And I can't wait to be cheered by the news, encouraged by the report that I receive.
He says in verse 20, I have no one like him who will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. When we think of the compassion that we see here in Timothy's life, it's expressed through the genuine concern he has for others.
That's exactly what verse 20 tells us. Timothy was a native of Lystra there in the province of Galatia. His mother is Eunice. She was a Jewish lady.
[12:46] His father was Greek. And he's trustworthy. And he has concern for other people. He has genuine compassion for people.

Paul says again, I have no one else like him who will be genuinely concerned for you. He is like-minded with Paul.
He has the same heart, the same convictions, the same affections. And Paul looks at Timothy's life and he says he is an example of genuine compassion and he shares my very heart I have for you as the church.
Now think of this as it relates to the teammates I get to serve with here on our church staff. You heard me say before, every Monday we gather at 835, we read the Bible out loud, we do Bible study together, and then we work through the needs of the church for that week.
And every week as I look around that room when we're in there as a staff, I'm just so thankful to see men and women a part of our church staff that have the same affections and the same convictions.
[14:05] Not always the same opinions, nor should they. But when we work through things and solve problems as best we can by God's grace together, it is a team of people who have the same love for Christ, the same trust in His Word, the same affection for you as our dear church family.

And it is such an unbelievable blessing to be able to work together with people who are like-minded. He says, I have no one else like Him who is genuinely concerned for your welfare.
And I just love the gift God has given to me to be one part of a team where everybody on that team has genuine compassion and genuine concern for our church.
Notice that he also understands that real ministry always involves partnership. I mean, the Apostle Paul is used by the Holy Spirit to write so much of our New Testament, and yet, even he does not do anything by himself.
We read so often of how he is traveling with someone and serving with someone and working with other people and planting churches and doing missionary work. And even here, we see the very clear example that while he himself cannot physically go, he's excited to lean on Timothy and Epaphroditus because they are partners in ministry, which is a wonderful reminder for us that we don't do ministry alone.
[15:47] We're partners together. Nobody does the work by themselves. And while I want to strive and labor with all of my heart every week to give you everything I've got, and I want to pour out my life in service to you, I am encouraged every week as I am reminded that while I will labor as hard as I can, I never do that by myself.

We're all together a partnership. This is all of us doing what God's called us to do. It's an unbelievable encouragement to me to know that we've got so many people a part of our church who

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

love Christ and love you and care for each other all with the same heart, with genuine concern for each other.
And that is exactly how we are to live. And that's what Timothy shows us. We're to be people with true compassion. 1 Corinthians 12, 26 says, If one member suffers, all suffer together.
If one member is honored, all rejoice together. And can we just understand this morning that we can't live that out without relationships.
We can't bear each other's burdens if we don't know each other. And we can't rejoice with each other if we don't know each other. This is a reminder that part of the example that we're given of what it means to have genuine compassion is to have real relationships with each other.
[17:27] So when someone in our church grieves, let's grieve with them. Let's hurt with them. Let's be present with them as they walk through that journey.

And when somebody rejoices, let's rejoice with them. Let's not be jealous and envious of the blessing they've received. Instead, let's just find one more reason to give thanks to God for His goodness and for His faithfulness.
Timothy shows us how to have compassion through his genuine concern. He also shows us his compassion in his godly interest. Look at verse 21. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.
That's how the rest of the world does it. Timothy, though, is an example of what it means to have the interests of other people at heart. How many churches have been pulled apart at the seams by pastors who are more concerned with their own career or their own agenda than serving the people?
How many churches have been pulled apart by church members who don't love Christ, but are just seeking to hold on to power of some kind? It just destroys congregations.
[18:52] When you have leadership in the church that's more concerned with their resume than the sheep, the church gets destroyed. And when you have church members who are more interested in accumulating power and position than serving each other, the church is just completely undermined.

And here Paul gives us the example of Timothy who lives life with true compassion, with genuine concern and godly interests, not selfish.
Second, we see the example Timothy is not just in compassion, but we see his example in his character. This is such an encouraging reality as we look at his life.
And we see three aspects of his character that I want to point out to you. Verse 22, But you know Timothy's proven worth. Write down that he's tested.
Timothy's character has been tested. His proven worth. The language here, the wording here refers to a pure metal, something that was clean. He's proven.
[20:01] He's tested. The church needs examples of people who have been tested. Our church is filled, filled with people who have been tested.

You've been through suffering and you trusted Christ through it. You've experienced real heartache and you held on to your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.
People who are tested are such a gift to the body of Christ. There's people in our church who have buried spouses, who have buried children, who have experienced all kinds of heartache.
and through it all, they trusted the Lord. Never underestimate the power and the value of a tested example to the body of Christ.
Paul says of Timothy, he has proven worth. He's been tested. Not only is his character tested, his character is shown to be teachable.
[21:39] He says, you know, Timothy's proven worth, look back at your text here, how as a son with a father he has served with me. He was teachable.

He says, he's my spiritual son. This isn't just, this isn't just a transactional relationship. This is a deep personal relationship.
This isn't student, teacher, this isn't boss, employee, this is father, son. Not, not in a, in a literal biological sense, but in a spiritual sense.
Paul says, this is my son in the faith. This is someone I love. This is someone I care for. His, his character, has been tested. And like a son, learning from his father, he says, his character, he is teachable.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

Like a father might do with his child, teaching him how to be a young man, teaching him what it means to take care of a household, teaching him what it means to be a godly husband and a godly father.
[22:52] So, Paul says in the spiritual realm, I have taken Timothy as my son in the faith and he's been tested and he's teachable. And thirdly, from his character, we see he is trustworthy.

How is a son with a father? Look at your next phrase. He has served with me in the gospel. Now understand that, that Paul traveled with other people, did minister with other people, but some of them abandoned him.
Second Timothy, we read about a man named Demas and it says of Demas, having loved this present world, Demas has forsaken me. Paul understood what it was like to invest in someone, to love someone, to care for someone, and to have them completely bail on him.
You probably have too. And it hurts when there's someone you love and someone you trust and someone you've invested in, someone you've discipled, and they wander away.
Many of you have been through that pain. And it shows us how sweet it is to have an example of someone who is tested and teachable and trustworthy.
[24:10] Someone who can be counted on. Timothy, this young man, leader, Paul's son in the faith, and Paul says, as you strive to live out what God's called you to do, as you strive to work out your salvation, to use the language of verse 12, he says, let me give you the example of Timothy.

He has compassion and he has character. And this becomes for us a great example and reminder of how we are to live.
As a child, as a teenager, as a college student, as an adult, as a widow, as a married person, whatever life stage you may be in, never underestimate the power and the value of a trusted example given to God's people of how to live in such a way that people see your compassion for people and your character, that it's been tested, that you're teachable, and that you're trustworthy, and you are able to say to other people what Paul said in 1 Corinthians, imitate me as I imitate Christ.
This is the beautiful thing about having examples in your life. The best examples are not the ones who simply say, look at me, as if your attention should terminate on them.
The best examples say, imitate me, because as you imitate me, you're going to see what it's like to follow Christ because I'm imitating Christ. Imitate me as I imitate Christ.
[25:57] And one of the things this church is so blessed with are so many people of all ages and all life stages who truly by their life and their example are living out what 1 Corinthians says, imitate me as I imitate Christ.

Timothy, for us, is an example of a son in the faith. Then in verses 25 to 30, he gives us a second example, Epaphroditus. Epaphroditus, for us, is an example of a servant in the family.
You'll see in the text exactly those words. He's a servant in the family. Now, if I were to ask you today what do you know about David from the Old Testament, you'd likely be able to tell me some of his mistakes because the Bible records them.
You'd be able to share with me some of his victories. You might say he's the one that wrote Psalm 23, the Lord is my shepherd. If I were to ask you what you know about Ruth from the Old Testament, you'd probably have some things you know about how the Lord used Ruth, how she was faithful to her mother-in-law, how she was a faithful example of working hard.
If I asked you to give me an example from the Bible of someone who is strong and faithful, you probably could come up with several different examples and names. However, if I gave you a card and said, tell me everything you know about Epaphroditus, the conversation would probably be short.
[27:36] Here's why. We don't know much about him. We get Philippians 2, we get Philippians 4, and that's it.

this is not a guy that's famous in that sense. Don't know much about him. Which is why I think it's such a beautiful thing that Paul used him as an example.
He's a common man who loves Jesus. He's other than Philippians 2 and 4, he's an unknown man who is just a servant in the family of God.
And maybe today you feel like you don't have a lot in common with kings in the Old Testament or prophets in the Old Testament or apostles in the New Testament, but let me tell you, you can connect and relate with Epaphroditus.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

You may feel like you're just a relatively unknown person, you're just a regular, normal, common person. I give you Epaphroditus as an example of a servant in the family.
[28:45] two specific things we see as an example from Epaphroditus. One is the ministry he had and two, the motives with which he served. Let me show them to you all here from the text.

Let's look first at the ministry of Epaphroditus. There's five specific terms, I want to show them to you in your own text here so you can see with your own eyes, five terms he uses to describe the ministry of Epaphroditus.
Verse 25, I have thought it necessary to send you Epaphroditus, here's the terms, my brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, your messenger, and minister.
Let's take a minute and look at these five terms as we look at the ministry of Epaphroditus. First he says, he is my brother. This speaks to the devotion Epaphroditus had.
He's not just a connection. He's not just someone that's out there. This is a true brother for him. Paul sees Epaphroditus as his brother in the Lord.
[29:53] Now, watch this. Paul was raised as a Jewish Pharisee. In so doing, he would have lived his life separated from the Gentiles.

Epaphroditus. He was raised Epaphroditus is raised in a pagan family. He's named after a pagan god.
And yet, this Jewish Pharisee and this man raised in a pagan family because of God's grace have been made brothers.
That's what the gospel does. You may look around the sanctuary and assume that you don't have much in common with people because after all, you know, maybe somebody wasn't, you were born in a state different than most people here or you have a background different than most people or maybe you feel like your hobbies or interests are different than most other people and it's easy to feel like you're separate and disconnected from people but this is what grace does.
Grace takes people of very different backgrounds, of very different interests, of very different personalities and it brings us together and makes us one family in Christ.
[31:25] This is the beauty of being a part of the church. This is what he says. This is Epaphroditus. This is my brother.

Then he says a second term. He is my fellow worker. My fellow worker. This speaks of the diligence of Epaphroditus. He's not just a brother.
He's a worker. He's doing the work a servant does. He's laboring beside Paul as a diligent worker.
Third, he says he's a fellow soldier.
This speaks of his discipline. A soldier has to live in discipline, has to carry out what he's been taught and trained to do. And when Paul calls Epaphroditus a fellow soldier, this is a great example and reminder to every one of us that the Christian life is not expected to be easy.
It's not expected to be conflict free. So when you go to your school tomorrow, when you go to your elementary school, when you go to your university tomorrow, when you go to your office tomorrow, wherever your calendar and schedule takes you, just know that you've got to have the mindset of you are going to be a faithful soldier in the battle.
[32:52] Soldiers expect opposition. Soldiers expect battles. soldiers expect it to be difficult. So don't be surprised when it's hard to live for Christ in your office when nobody else does.

And don't be surprised when you're at school tomorrow and you get mocked for your faith. Don't be surprised when the challenges add up and you've got to steady your heart and steady your mind to say like Epaphroditus I'm going to live my life with devotion and diligence and discipline.
I'm going to be a brother to those who are in Christ. I'm going to be a worker in the gospel and I'm going to be a spiritual soldier in the battle doing what God has called me to do.
And Epaphroditus is a man that most of us would not even know his name much less how to spell it. And here he is as an example to us of what it means to live life as a soldier for Christ.
Be encouraged by his faithful example. Then fourth he calls him a messenger. He is your messenger. This speaks of his duty.
[34:11] This is the task he was given. Epaphroditus isn't an elder in his church but he ministers.

The word here actually is the word of an apostle. He's not one of the twelve apostles but he's one who has been sent out by the church to carry out his duty.
Not only is a messenger fifth he says he is a minister to my need. The idea behind being a minister is to give an act of service. This speaks to his delight.

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

He delights to serve. So what's the ministry of Epaphroditus? He's a brother that's his devotion. He's a fellow worker that's his diligence. He's a fellow soldier that's his discipline. He's a messenger that's his duty.
[35:16] and he's a minister that's his delight. Church this is how we're to live.

This ought to describe every single one of us in this congregation. We're not just a bunch of people who show up at the same address at the same time but we truly are servants in the family.
And that you would live your life as a faithful example of what ministry truly is supposed to be. It doesn't matter if people know our name.
It doesn't matter if we're recognized. It doesn't matter so much what the world thinks of us. The great gift we can give to each other is to be a faithful example.
Someone who is a brother a worker a soldier a messenger a minister you don't need a title you don't need recognition you don't need a paycheck you just need to be faithful to the Lord and to be an example to his people tell you something else you don't need for that to happen you don't need to be old I'll tell you why that's good news because while it is a wonderful thing for a church to have older saints and I'm grateful that we do you don't have to wait until you're old to be a faithful example if you are a second grader you ought to in our church have fourth and fifth graders who are faithful examples to you and if you're a freshman you ought to have juniors and seniors who you're looking up to and imitating their faith and if you're a senior in high school you ought to have college students in our church that you know and you're watching them and you're learning from them what it means to stand strong in your faith and it's wonderful to have seasoned saints and older people in our church that are examples we need that every church needs that but you don't have to wait until you're old to be a faithful example to those around you if you are a believer in the
[37:55] Lord Jesus Christ you ought to live your life on purpose in such a way to say whoever is watching me and learning from me if they follow my example they'll become more like Christ because they imitate me and I'm imitating Christ Epaphrodite is an example to us in ministry he's also an example to us of the motives we should have as we minister together I want to show you I think these are really obvious here in the text I want you to see them in scripture of the motives we should have as we serve I see three motives here the first one I see in verse 26 he says for he has been longing for you all and has been distressed because you heard he was ill the first motive!

that drives Epaphroditus that we he says he's longing Epaphroditus has a longing he has something in his heart that is burning within his heart because he is distressed it says to be distressed means to be in anguish in fact that same term to be distressed is used by the gospel writers to describe Jesus in the garden of Gethsemane when he's praying the night before he is crucified he says of Epaphroditus he is in distress now why is he distressed go back to verse 26 he has been longing for you all and has been distressed here's why because you heard that he was ill he's not distressed because of what's happened to him he loves the church so much here's what he knows he's had this problem that's come to him this illness this weakness and he knows the church has heard about it and because they love him they're going to be concerned for him and Epaphroditus says knowing how much you love me my heart breaks over the concern you have for my condition this is the total opposite of how most people live today most people are so consumed with themselves Epaphroditus says the only concern I have is I know that you're so concerned for me that your heart grieves!
for me and knowing your heart grieves for me makes my heart grief because I want you to be well this is the motive of how we're supposed to minister with the well-being of somebody else chief on our mind and just so you can see the connection this is not just a random example this is an example given to you to show you how to live out the commands go back to verse 4 chapter 2 let each of you look not only to his own interest but also to the interest of others this is exactly what Epaphrodites is an example of here this is why Paul says of Epaphroditus this is my brother he's in the family he cares about you so much he's actually facing distress knowing you'll be concerned about him and this is why
I just beg of you I beg of you if you're a member of our church to be a part of the life of our church because these kinds of relationships are so meaningful this is what it means to have a spiritual brother and sister in Christ is to have your family grow and it's more people who love you and more people that you can love and there's nobody in this sanctuary that would not benefit from having somebody else who loves you and somebody else who you can serve I mean this is the beauty of the testimony of those who are baptized you heard a beautiful testimony this morning of conversion

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

and we praise God for his work of salvation but we also rejoice because this is a new sister in Christ we have part of our family!
[43:28] our family grew and it's the best I've said all the time the best thing of raising two sons is getting two daughters in law I love it I love seeing how God adds to our family it's such a blessing and that's true in a earthly sense that's true in a spiritual sense every time someone is baptized every time someone believes every time someone joins our church this is God gifting us with new brothers and sisters this is an amazing gift and we are to enjoy it by caring for the well being of others it's an amazing example Epaphroditus gives us he's not in anguish about his condition he's in anguish knowing there are people who love him so much they will grieve over his condition and that makes him grieve for them how different that is from a selfish man centered way of living your life he says in verse 27 indeed he was ill near to death but

God had mercy on him and not only on him but on me also lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow Paul says if something would have happened to Epaphroditus I would have experienced pain upon pain and grief upon grief wave of wave of sorrow well there's a second motive Epaphroditus shows us not only to live for the well-being of others but to have the motive of the work of Christ verse 28 I am the more eager to send him therefore that you may rejoice at seeing him again and that I may be less anxious Paul says I'm going to send him to you because he has a heart for the work of Christ that Epaphroditus is willing to travel from the church to see Paul and from Paul back to the church his whole life is lived out in selfless love and selfless grace because he cares about the work of Christ some people do ministry with the motive of recognition and some people do motive just that
Christ would be magnified be the kind of person who just loves to see Christ magnified don't be the person that's out there looking for recognition looking for attention just make it your aim that if you serve Christ and you can serve each other as long as Christ is glorified it is well with your soul and there's a third motive and that's that he is willing to die for the cause of Christ verse 29 receive him in the Lord with all joy and honor such men just a quick note here we only praise God but it's fitting for us to honor faithful servants here's the catch if you're doing things for the sake of being honored you're not being faithful faithful so it's never our job individually to seek out honor or recognition but it is fitting for the church to honor faithful servants but your motive has to be for the glory of Christ not yourself but it's fitting for the church then to show love and honor to those who are faithful but let me show you his motive here verse 30 for he nearly died for the work of Christ risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me they are sending Epaphroditus to minister to Paul the whole church can't go they're sending him to carry this message and to carry these gifts to Paul and he says he has nearly died for the work of Christ most take this to be a reference to physical sickness some can take this as weakness and illness so some take this to mean a physical illness a few might take this to mean not that he was physically sick but that he was risking his life after all Paul is in prison and if you are a friend and sympathetic to a prisoner it may not go well for you either however you take that either way this much is clear he physical sickness he almost lost his life to do the work
Christ had given him to do in verse 30 risking his life the word risking here is actually it's translated from a word it's actually a gambler's term we might say in our vernacular today someone who throws the dice it's a gambler's term he's saying I'm risking I'm gambling my life so to speak for the cause of Christ in other words I'm going to entrust myself to Christ I'm going to give up control of my life that whatever Christ calls me to do however Christ calls me to live I will entrust myself to him and if I live I live and if I die I die but whether I live or die I am with the Lord this is the way he lives and this is not some person far removed from you this is a common member of the church just like you who has just simply said
[49:40] I want to do ministry how God has called me to do it and with the motives that brings him glory he was willing to risk it all we need faithful servants that are examples I hope every one of us would look to Timothy and Epaphroditus today as examples to follow and I hope our response to that is that we would live our lives as examples for somebody else to follow and I don't intend to be snarky with this I really don't but in a world where so many people will stop speaking for Christ just because somebody called them a name or in a world where so many people go to church only when it's convenient and will stay home because it's cold or rainy or keep their mouth shut for their faith because somebody might disagree with them in the face of that reality that exists our world needs examples of real people who will follow

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host

Christ no matter what and if I were to say to you can you tell me everything you know about Epaphroditus 45 minutes ago you may have said I don't know anything 45 minutes later that's about all we know and by God's grace that's sufficient isn't it because we have been challenged by his life to make sure our ministry is faithful fueled by motives that make much of Christ never underestimate the power of a faithful example for some you're a faithful example of what it means of how to handle success you've been blessed financially you've been blessed in business you've been blessed with your family be a faithful example of how to handle that others of you you've painfully lost a spouse!
you've lost a and you've chosen for yourself be a faithful example of how to trust Jesus in your hardest day some of you have lost a child nobody wants to be an example in that but some have been through that and people in our church have been able to see your faith and watch how even through your grief and struggle you refuse to let go of your trust in God you'll never know how much God has used your example this side of heaven it will be greater than you've ever imagined we need examples of how to endure through persecution how to endure through seasons of ministry and there are people in this church you've been serving the Lord through this church for decades our church needs that example of people who don't tap out don't check out people who say if the Lord gives me life and the Lord gives me the ability I will continue to serve however he calls me to serve because I got to tell you I love these teenagers with all my heart I love them
I love them and I'm thankful for everything you do to serve the Lord and honor the Lord and to make a difference and you do make a difference and I'm thankful for every example you give but you don't most of you don't!
[54:55] physically every day and that's not your fault you're just young that's not a flaw it's just a fact but you look around the room and you see people who limp and who hurt and who have to summon up strength and courage just to get here on Sunday and they're still here and they're still singing and they're still serving and they're still rejoicing we need those people for examples for us and there's so many of you in this church and you are examples of faithfulness and tenacity and courage and boldness and you may never even dream how your life is being used by the Lord but trust me like Timothy and like Epaphroditus there is nothing as powerful as a faithful example to God's people of how to trust in the

Lord no matter what and so let's live like this let's trust like this let's take the deep rich doctrine we have labored over in Philippians 2 these number of months and let's take it and live it out as faithful example so that anyone who sees us could rightly say I'm going to imitate you because you imitate Christ and as you notice people watching your example you think in your heart what John the Baptist said of Jesus I must decrease that Christ may increase and that's the family of God working together faithful examples for the glory of Christ Lord your word for us today is so rich and so sweet helping us to know how to live and how to respond
I pray Lord for the sake of the glory of your son that even this week we would live faithful lives being faithful examples to all who would see us not just when it's convenient but even when it's costly because our greatest desire is not that people would be impressed by us but they would be moved to see the God who has saved us make that so for the glory of your son we pray amen to!
to! to to to! to to to to! to who do do do fathers get going to come to her That could let who would know were even out but they would see

Downloaded from https://yetanothersermon.host