Philippians 2:19-30

*“The Genuine Deal!”*

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

**Memory Verse:** *“For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state.”*

 Philippians 2:20

**Lesson Focus:** To be genuine in serving others.

**Activities and Craft:** 1st & 2nd Grade: Coloring sheet and Craft: “Friends Serve one another Cats”

3rd-5th: Student Work Page (to be done after the large group teaching)

**Introduction:** Walking in Someone Shoes: Bring in a pile of shoes from home. Show the kids the pile of shoes. Tell them that there is an old saying “that you don’t know how someone else feels until you walk a mile in their shoes.” The phrase “walking in their shoes” means that you experience their life and what they are going through.

 Call several kids up and have them put on the shoes and walk in them.

 Ask them: “was it easy to walk in someone else’s shoes? Why or why not?

We can’t go around walking in someone’s shoes – but we can come along side of them and help them in their life. Today we are going to see two men who helped Paul out while he was in prison. These two men loved Jesus and went out of their way to serve Paul. They both are the “genuine” deal!

**Bible Study:**

 Review: Paul writes the book of Philippians to challenge the church and all of us

to “let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ.” (Philippians 1:27) He tells the Philippian church how to live worthy by striving to be of one spirit and mind as they serve Jesus. He also tells them to not be afraid of the way the world is treating them. Paul then tells them how to live a life “worthy” in the church by thinking of others needs as more important than their own. He shares with them the ultimate example of Jesus Christ who lived out His life in complete humility – even dying on the cross for us.

Paul is now going to give the church flesh & blood examples of living people who lived their lives worthy of the gospel.

 **Philippians 2:19-23: *“Timothy”***

 √ Who did Paul want to send to the Philippian people? (Timothy)

Notice how Paul says that he “trust’s in the Lord” to send Timothy. Paul wanted to do this – but he was waiting to see God’s will in this. He did not make his own plans without seeking what God wanted to do?

 √ Why did Paul want to send Timothy to them? (Paul wanted to know the

“state” of the local church…that means that Paul wanted to know how the church at Philippi was doing. Paul cared so much for them that he wanted to be encouraged by what God was doing.) You have to remember that there were no phones or internet to quickly find out news…Paul wanted Timothy to go so that they could find out how the church was doing.

 √ How does Paul describe Timothy in Philippians 2:20? (Likeminded)

 √ What does “likeminded” mean? (To be of one mind… to have the same

purpose. The word means literally “I have no one equal in soul”.) Paul and Timothy were a team for the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Paul also knew that Timothy cared for the church at Philippi. Timothy was sincere in who he was – he was genuine. Paul could trust Timothy.

 √ In Philippians 2:21 – how did Paul describe other people’s motives?

1. They seek their own
2. They do not seek the things of Christ

Paul is looking at the church in Rome and seeing that they do not seek the things of Christ. These people were self-centered – they cared how they looked and how people saw them. People can claim to be Christians – but they just want people to look up to them and to “think” that they are spiritual.

The bible warns us many times to please God rather than man.

*“And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.”* Colossians 3:17

*“But as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, even so we speak, not as pleasing men, but god who tests our hearts.”* 1 Thessalonians 2:4

√ Do you seek to please God with your life or do you care more about what people think of you?

√ Do you think if we lived to please God we would live differently? Explain.

√ How does Paul describe Timothy to them?

1. He has a proven character.

√ What is character? Why does it matter?

Paul knows that the Philippian church knows Timothy and knows Timothy’s character. In Acts 16, Paul and Timothy came to the river by the town of Philippi and that is where they met Lydia and the women who became the first converts to believe in Jesus. Timothy served with Paul on several of his missionary journeys in the book of Acts.

1. He serves him like his own son (they had a very special relationship)

Timothy was devoted to Paul.

1. Paul knows that Timothy’s faith was genuine (2 Timothy 1:5)
2. Paul knew that Timothy was taught about faith in Jesus from his grandmother and mother. (2 Timothy 1:5)
3. Paul encouraged Timothy to use the gifts that God had given to him (2 Timothy 1:6)
4. Paul encouraged Timothy to “rightly divide the word of truth.”

(2 Timothy 2:15)

1. Paul encouraged Timothy to not let “any one despise His youth, but to be an example to the believers in word, conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, and in purity.” 1 Timothy 4:12
2. Paul knew that from childhood, Timothy had been taught the Word of God and he tells him to “preach the Word.” 2 Timothy 3:15-4:1

Paul saw Timothy and what God could do through this young man.

 √ Could God use you? Does it matter that you are young?

√ Would you like other people to describe you in the way Paul described Timothy?

Paul wanted to send Timothy but Paul himself would have liked to come to them.

 **Philippians 2:25-30; *“Epaphroditus”***

 Paul sent another servant named Epaphroditus.

 √ Who was Epaphroditus?

1. A brother in the Lord (they both belonged to Jesus)
2. A fellow servant (they both served together for the Gospel)
3. A soldier for the cause of Christ (they both fought the “good fight” and the evil that was around them.)
4. A messenger from the Philippians

(Epaphroditus was sent from the Philippian Church to bring money and care for Paul. During Paul’s stay in the Roman jail they had to pay for his food and care. No care or food was provided.

1. A person who ministered to Paul’s needs

Epaphroditus evidently was very sick while he was helping Paul. As a matter of fact Paul says that he almost died. But Paul says that God had mercy on Epaphroditus and on Paul that he did not die. So Paul wants to send him back to the Philippi people so that they can see that he is ok.

√ How does Paul tell them to treat Epaphroditus?

1. Receive him with gladness
2. Hold such men in high esteem
3. He was serving Paul and came close to death in doing what the people of Philippi did not do.

Epaphroditus is only mentioned here in the Bible. He wasn’t a “pastor/teacher” like Timothy. He wasn’t a leader in the church as far as we know. He was just someone who loved Jesus and was willing to serve others. He was willing to take time out of his life to travel the long journey to Rome to help Paul. Paul is saying that people like him should be honored. He was a true servant.

Philippians 2 is a chapter in the Bible that urges us all to think of others more important than ourselves. Timothy and Epaphroditus are two living examples that served rather than be served. They had the “mind of Jesus.”

 **Conclusion:** Timothy and Epaphroditus are two young men who served others. They

are great examples of Philippians 2 of “let each of you look out not only for your own interests but also for the interest of others.”

They were genuine in their faith in their walk.

Are you a true servant? Who does God want you to serve?