

February 9, 2014 by Steve Brandon



Sending Timothy

Philippians 2:19-24

1. The Plan
2. The Heart
3. The Example

In life, there are many things that appear simple, or even uninteresting, at first glance. But, after a bit of digging, it becomes more and more interesting.

I think of the game of chess as an example of this. On the surface, this seems like a simple game. There are 32 pieces, and an 8-by-8 square board. You can learn the game in a matter of minutes. But, as you dig into it a bit, you quickly realize that it is a bit deeper than you might think.

First of all, thousands and thousands of books have been written on the subject of chess. [\[1\]](#) There is opening theory and middle game theory and end game theory, each of which is filled with their own complexities. Opening theory studies the first moves that can be made in chess. Many of them have been analyzed 10-15 moves deep. They have names, like the Queen's Gambit, the King's Indian, the Sicilian, or the Ruy Lopez (to name only a few). The middle game theory involved tactics like pins, forks and sacrifices. Special attention is paid to pawn structures. Pawn majorities may be used to your advantage, while doubled pawns and isolated pawns are usually considered a liability. The end game has been studied in depth as well. For instance, there is theory for how to win (or defend) against only a pawn and king. If only rooks and pawns are on the board, it is best to keep your rooks behind the pawns. With bishops of the same color and pawns, you want to keep your pawns on the opposite color of the bishops. Bishops of the opposite color generally leads to draws.

Chess is a game that combines memory (in the opening), logic (in the middle game), and skill (in the end game). It is a game that isn't too complex (for instance, a game played on a 30-by-30 square would be hopelessly complex for people to analyze very well. Also, if it were played on a 6-by-6 square, it could be a trivial game. It seems to hit the right balance between complexity and simplicity.

People all over the world have played chess. In fact, there are rating systems to gage a player's strength. Hundreds of thousands of games between top players throughout history have been recorded for study. People make their living at the game of chess, not only playing, but also coaching or commenting on matches. So we see that it is not as simple as we may think at first glance.

Chess is but one example of something being much deeper and more complex than imagined. I imagine that bird watching and stamp collecting have similar characteristics (although I don't know much about either of these things).

Our text today is like this. On the surface, it may seem simple and straight-forward. But, as we dig a bit deeper, we see that there is more to it than we may think. Our text is in the book of Philippians, chapter 2, starting at verse 19. Let's read our text this morning, ...

Philippians 2:19-24

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.

On the surface level of this text, it is really simple and straightforward. Paul is communicating with those in Philippi of his plan to send Timothy to see them. There are some things that need to be worked through on his end. But, once they are ready, Timothy would find himself on the way to Philippi. Thus, the title of my message this morning: "Sending Timothy."

Now, as you dig into the text a bit, you will discover that there are a few more things going on in the text. There is a reason why Paul is planning to send Timothy to those in Philippi. Paul is concerned for them. He wants to see them grow in Christ. He knows that Timothy would be a help to their church, and so, he is willing to send Timothy. Verse 24 even indicates that Paul, himself, will be coming to them as well.

But, as you think about this text further, you see something else going on. You see how Timothy and Paul model well the things that Paul has just told the Philippians to do. Paul had commanded those in Philippi to seek unity (1:27; 2:2) and to walk humbly (2:3-4) and to sacrifice and serve for others (2:17-18). And we see Timothy and Paul doing all of these things, thereby becoming an example for us.

So, as we work through these verses this morning, I want to run through them three times. The first time through, I want for us to look at things on the surface level. I want to look at Paul's plan to send Timothy to Philippians. I want to think about the historical circumstances surrounding such a plan and all of the logistics that was going on. Who is Timothy? Why send him? Why the delay?

The second time through the text, I want to look at Paul and Timothy's heart for those in Philippi. After all, this is the driving force behind Paul's plan to send Timothy to Philippi. The text gives us several clues. Paul speaks of how this would encourage him (verse 19). Paul speaks of how this would help those in Philippi (verse 20).

The third time through these verses, I want to look at the example of Paul and Timothy. Particularly, I want for us to see how they modeled the things that Paul has just finished telling the Philippians to do. This ought to be an encouragement to us as Paul's instructions here aren't so high as to be unreachable.

And as we work through these three cycles, each time there will be a bit more application for us. Let's look at my first point. I'm simply calling it, ...

1. The Plan

Paul's plan was to send Timothy to Philippi. As I'm sure you are well aware, they didn't have telephones in those days. Nor did they have email. I know it's hard for some of you children to believe. But, your parents lived in the day like Paul, when they didn't have email. You couldn't Facetime with your friends. If you wanted to check up on somebody in Paul's day, then you either sent a letter, or you sent somebody, who would come back and report to you how they were doing.

This is exactly what Paul was seeking to do. By the way (and let's not miss this), we can still do this today. Texts, emails, phone calls, and letters are all well and good. But there are some things that need a personal visit. As a pastor, there are things that I will do over emails. And there are things that I will do over a phone call. But, there are some things that I will only do with a face-to-face visit.

I remember years ago seeing a commercial on television. I looked it up and saw that it ran in 1990, more than 20 years ago. Perhaps you remember it.

It began with a tense business meeting of some corporation. The boss was walking pensively around the room, saying, "I got a phone call this morning from one of our oldest customers. He fired us. After twenty years, he fired us. He said that he didn't know us anymore. I think I know why. We used to do business with a handshake, face-to-face. Now it's a phone call and a fax. 'I'll get back to you later' (with another fax probably). Well, folks, something's got to change. That's why we are going to set out for a little face-to-face chat with every customer we have."

One of the salesmen interrupted the boss's speech and said, "But Ben, that's got to be over 200 cities."

His reply was, "I don't care!" At that moment, his secretary arrived in the meeting and handed him a bunch of travel folders, presumably filled with airline tickets for the sales force to visit these 200 cities.

And then, the announcer said, "If you are the kind of business that still believes that personal service deserves a lot more than lip service, welcome to United. That's the way that we have been doing business for over 60 years."

The commercial closes with one of the sales force asking the boss, "Ben, where are you going?" The quick response was this, "To visit that old friend who fired us this morning." [\[2\]](#)

All that to say this: in this age of communication, let us remember that face-to-face communication is still around. It is still effective. And, at times, it is needed.

Well, Paul thought that Timothy and those in Philippi needed some face-to-face time together. You can see it right there in verse 19, ...

Philippians 2:19

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.

Now this isn't at all like the commercial I described. Paul isn't sending Timothy with some big rebuke. Paul simply wants to know how things are going in Philippi. He has already received good news from Epaphroditus that things are going well (we will look at that next week). He knows enough to know that there is an issue in Philippi with unity and humility, thus the particular admonitions found in this letter. He knows enough that there are a few women in the congregation who aren't getting along, and so, he calls them out by name in chapter 4:2, "I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to live in harmony in the Lord."

But Paul would like to know a bit more of what's going on in Philippi. He would also like Timothy to serve then in whatever way possible.

The reason why Timothy is going, and not Paul, is that Paul can't go. If you remember, Paul is in prison in Rome. Actually, he is under house arrest. As such, he was given some freedom. He able to host guests at his home. He was able to be in the presence of his friends. And yet, always in the presence of a Roman soldier. At the time, he, himself, wasn't able to visit Philippi. But, he could send Timothy, who was with Paul.

This is clear in the very first verse of Philippians, "Paul and Timothy, bond-servants of Christ Jesus, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi" (Philippians 1:1).

Now, Timothy was well-known to those in Philippi, as he was there when the church began. If you remember, Paul came to Philippi on his

second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22). Early in that journey, he came to Lystra, where Timothy lived. We know a bit about his family. His father was a Greek, probably an unbeliever. His mother was a believing Jew, named Lois. His grandmother was also a believing Jew, named Eunice (2 Timothy 1:5). And from these godly women, Timothy learned the Scriptures (2 Timothy 3:15). Somehow, he had come to faith in Christ. His conversion was probably when Paul came through Lystra during his first missionary journey, preaching Christ. Timothy had known the Old Testament, which gave him the wisdom that leads to salvation through Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:15).

Timothy's reputation was stellar. "He was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium" (Acts 16:2). Paul discerned Timothy's integrity and wanted him to join the journey. Arrangements were made and Timothy joined Paul and Silas on their quest to spread the gospel beyond the scope of their first missionary journey.

From Lystra, they headed west, across Asia Minor with the Holy Spirit guiding them as they went (Acts 16:6-10). When they arrived in Philippi, Timothy was among them when they went to that place of prayer down by the river, where the Lord opened Lydia's heart to the word that they were preaching (Acts 16:14). Timothy surely witnessed Paul casting the demon out of the slave-girl. Timothy was probably at the Philippian jailor's home with Paul and Silas after the jailor was converted (Acts 16:31-34).

Timothy was known by those in Philippi. So, if Paul wanted to send someone to care for those in Philippi, Timothy was the man! He was there with Paul and ready and willing to go. Furthermore, look at how Paul describes Timothy in verse 20, ...

Philippians 2:20

For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.

Paul knows of the character of Timothy. He would genuinely care for those in Philippi. The language in verse 20 is strong enough that you might well say, "to send Timothy is to send myself." He says that they are of a "kindred spirit." Literally, the Greek text reads, we are *isopsuchon*. This word comes from two separate words. First, *iso*, which means "equal" as in an isosceles triangle (a triangle with two equal sides). The second word is *psuchon*, which means, "soul," as in psychology. Literally, Paul is saying that Timothy and he are "equal souls." You might say that they are like-minded. Or, have the same passions. "To send Timothy is to send myself."

On another occasion, when Paul sent Timothy to those in Corinth, he said, "I have sent to you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful child in the Lord, and he will remind you of my ways which are in Christ, just as I teach everywhere in every church" (1 Corinthians 4:17). Timothy would be a great ambassador for Paul. He would be a great representative of Paul. That's the crux of verse 22, ...

Philippians 2:22

But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father.

Timothy was a faithful man, a servant of God, a servant of Paul, kindred spirits. So, why not send him right away? Verse 23 gives us some insight.

Philippians 2:23

Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me;

Now, we don't know exactly what Paul is talking about here. But, there are some circumstances that are prohibiting Timothy from leaving at the moment. It must have something to do with his imprisonment.

In those days, imprisonment was a bit different than in our day. In our days, those in prison really don't have a care in the world. They are provided with food, clothes and shelter. Now, it's not that they are the nicest accommodations. It's not that prisoners don't have problems. The fact that they are in prison indicates that they have many problems in their lives to worry about. But their every physical need is all provided for.

In Paul's days, such was not the case. If you wanted food, you needed someone on the outside who could bring it to you. If you needed some extra clothes or extra padding for your pillow, you needed to have someone bring it to you.

Remember at the end of 2 Timothy, when Paul was in prison? He urged Timothy to come back and help him. He said, "Make every effort to come to me soon" (2 Timothy 4:9). He said, "When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments" (2 Timothy 4:13). He's cold and he wants something more to read.

Back to Paul's situation in writing this letter, I believe that Timothy is Paul's primary caretaker here. Without Timothy, Paul would be in trouble, as Timothy was serving him and helping him with his every need.

But, circumstances may change. Someone else may come who can perform Timothy's function. It needs to be someone dependable and utterly committed. These sorts of people don't come around very often. But, perhaps one will show up to help Paul, thereby freeing Timothy.

Or perhaps Paul will be released from prison. In that case, he could come. At least, that's his hope. Verse 24, ...

Philippians 2:24

and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly.

Though the court's decision was still up in the air, Paul had confidence, that he would be released. We saw this already back in chapter 1, when Paul wrote about his struggle in living or dying. In verse 21, he says, "To live is Christ and to die is gain." And he went back and forth -- dying and being with Christ is far better (verse 23), yet living in the flesh is necessary for you, Philippians (verse 24). So, chapter 1, and verse 25 brings him to say, "Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all."

So, there's the plan. As soon as things are set, Timothy will go and find out how the Philippians are doing. Let's move on to my second point, ...

2. The Heart

This is the heart behind the plan. Why put yourself at risk? Why send away your most faithful and loyal companion? Verse 19 answers the question, ...

Philippians 2:19

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.

Paul is looking for encouragement. He believes that when he hears about how things are going with the Philippians, he will be encouraged. We have already seen some of his encouragement come through in chapter 1. "I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always offering prayer with joy in my every prayer for you all," (Philippians 1:3-4). "... I have you in my heart. For God is my witness, how I long for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus" (Philippians 1:7-8). When we get to chapter 4, we'll see it in verse 1, "Therefore, my beloved brethren whom I long to see, my joy and crown."

In fact, if you recall, Philippians is a "Thank You" note. While Paul was in prison, he received a visit from Epaphroditus, one of the members of the church in Philippi. He came with a financial gift to help Paul in his circumstances (4:18). Chapter 4 and verse 10 describes Paul's attitude toward this gift, "But I rejoiced in the Lord greatly, that now at last you have revived your concern for me; indeed, you were concerned before, but you lacked opportunity." Verse 17 describes Paul's genuine motive, "Not that I seek the gift itself, but I seek for the profit which increases to your account" (Philippians 4:17).

In other words, yes, indeed, Paul was thankful to God for the gift that he had received from the Philippians, but their giving heart was much more of an encouragement to Paul than the gift itself. And so, Paul sensed that the Lord was doing wonderful things in Philippi. And he wanted to hear more of what's taking place. And so, he was willing to send Timothy to them.

Here's a great point to pause a bit for some application. When you hear of God's work taking place in someone's life or church. Now, it may be here in Rockford. It may be in some city, where a friend of yours lives. It may be overseas. When you hear of God's work taking place, are you thrilled in your soul with such a work? Is there something in you that wants to hear more?

Every month at the Brandon home, we receive a handful of letters from missionaries that we know. I love reading these letters. Here's one that came this past December from a good friend of mine, Tim, who is on staff with Leadership Resources in Palos Heights. He is actively engaged in the TNT program (Training National Teachers), which I have joined with in going to Nepal and India, training pastors in how to preach and expecting that they would pass the training on to others.

Here's what Tim writes in his most recent letter:

One of the greatest blessings of my ministry is meeting godly men whose greatest desire is to lead and care for Christ's church. They are not in it for money, power, fame or a following. They simply want to see the gospel's transforming power where they live.

I met Robert this past August in Ashura, a small city in Tanzania near Mount Kilimanjaro. He is a quiet man with a warm smile and even warmer heart. He pastors a church in a remote village high in the hills above the city where they grow bananas and coffee, and asked if I would be willing to preach there on Sunday. We set out early on the main road towards Kilimanjaro, but soon turned off onto a side street that eventually became nothing but a trail through the jungle. "I like a small church," Robert said as we drove up the hillside. "Many men want a big church, but God made me for a small church where it's like family."

"How many are there in your church," I asked.

"We have 35 members he said with a smile. When I arrived a few years ago, there were only 7, but we have added 28 who have all come to Christ. And most of the children of the village attend."

My time of worship with the believers on that mountain was wonderful. I wish you could have heard their voices sing to the beat of a single drum band. I wish you could have seen the joyful expressions on their faces as they listened to God's word. I wish you could have heard the testimonies of how Christ is at work in their lives. And I wish you could have watched Robert with the children.

He greeted them one by one as they arrived, stood with them to sing during the fellowship time, and sat surrounded by them before they headed home. "I give them all a treat," he confessed. "I hope you don't think that is bad, but they tell their friends, and bring their friends to hear the gospel."

At a time when the celebrity pastor has become common in our land, it is encouraging to know that there are still pastors

like Robert who care first for Christ's sheep.

I love reading such letters. There's nothing particularly special about this letter that I just read. It's not that some miraculous work is taking place with thousands of new converts and a thriving ministry going on in the world. No. This letter contains a report about a faithful pastor, loving people, and the Lord growing the church.

I brought a few more of these sorts of letters that I could read for you this morning. They are very similar to what I just read. They are filled with the work that God is doing in other places across this world. Nothing out of the ordinary, just God doing His work. Some of the favorite letters that I receive comes from some missionaries that we know in Ireland. They have been ministering in that hard place for well over a decade. Our friend has a heart for evangelism and goes door to door talking with people twice each week. He hands out much literature. Their church is about 30 people (and recently purchased a building). I'm really encouraged by his letters, because he's a faithful laborer in a hard place, doing a good work.

And on top of the letters that I receive (that's so old fashioned), I also get a handful of missionary letters each month via email, updating me on the ministry that's taking place. And I love reading such email. Do you? Do you even get such letters? Do you even get such emails? If you don't, I would encourage you to start supporting some missionaries. If you support someone, they will send you information about their ministry.

So start investing your treasure in the heaven, where moth and rust will not destroy (Matthew 6:20). Where the thief will not come in and steal (Matthew 6:20). And when you begin to invest your treasure in this way, God will give you a heart for these ministries. That's the point of Jesus' words, "For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Matthew 6:21). You start placing your treasure into the ministry of others, and you will have a heart for their ministry. You will receive such letters and be encouraged from them.

When Paul sent Timothy to Philippi, he was hoping for a similar experience. He was looking for encouragement.

Philippians 2:19

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.

Fundamentally, I believe that this encouragement would come as the gospel was having its effect upon those in Philippi. We have seen the theme of Philippians being this, "Rejoice in the Gospel." And this is what Paul was seeking to do. As the gospel was working itself out in the lives of the Philippians, Paul would rejoice; he would be encouraged. As those in Philippi were conducting themselves "in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, ... standing firm in one spirit, striving together for the faith of the gospel" (1:27), Paul would rejoice; he would be encouraged.

But, it wasn't merely Paul's encouragement that urged him to part with Timothy. It was also his love for those in Philippi. He knew of how Timothy would be able to help them. Look at verse 20, ...

Philippians 2:20

For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.

Genuinely, deep from the heart, would be Timothy's concern for those in Philippi. Paul knew the help that he would bring. Those in Philippi knew the help that he would bring. Verse 22, ...

Philippians 2:22

But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father.

Timothy had a "proven worth" to those in Philippi. It wasn't only Paul who knew the help that Timothy would bring. The Philippians also knew how valuable his visit would be to them. He would be a help to them.

You say, "What kind of help?" The help that comes with pastoral care. He would be able to teach them. He would be able to counsel them and guide them and serve them. He would be able to give the encouragement and comfort as needed. He would be able to remind them of the glories of the gospel. Timothy had seen Paul's ministry up close and personal. He was capable of imitating that ministry in the lives of others, helping others with their exact need.

When Paul left Philippi for the first time, he came to Thessalonica. Listen to what Paul wrote in 1 Thessalonians, chapter 2, describing his ministry among them.

1 Thessalonians 2:7-12

But we proved to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother tenderly cares for her own children. Having so fond an affection for you, we were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us.

For you recall, brethren, our labor and hardship, how working night and day so as not to be a burden to any of you, we proclaimed to you the gospel of God. You are witnesses, and so is God, how devoutly and uprightly and blamelessly we behaved toward you believers; just as you know how we were exhorting and encouraging and imploring each one of you as

a father would his own children, so that you would walk in a manner worthy of the God who calls you into His own kingdom and glory.

And Timothy saw how Paul ministered in this way. Surely, while among those in Philippi, Timothy would be engaged in similar activities. This is what a pastor does. This is what Paul did. This is what Timothy would do among them.

Such was Timothy's heart. He would come in and give himself in selfless service to others. Such was Paul's heart. He was willing to give up Timothy for the help of those in Philippi.

Philippians 2:23-24

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.

And when the time came for Paul to come to Philippi again, he would give of himself to serve them.

Let's move on to our last point this morning. We have seen the plan--Timothy would visit those in Philippi as soon as possible. We have seen the heart--Paul was looking for encouragement and Timothy was looking to serve. Both of them were giving up their own personal interests to serve others. This leads nicely to my third point, ...

3. The Example

Now, this last time through these six verses, I simply want to point out how Paul and Timothy are living lives consistent with Paul's exhortation in chapter 2. In this way, they become living illustrations of Paul's teaching.

Paul was no hypocrite. He practiced what he preached. Timothy was a model example of Paul's teaching. And particularly, I'm thinking humility. Do you remember back in chapter 2 and verses 3 and 4?

Philippians 2:3-4

Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others.

As we have seen in months past, humility is the key to unity. You show me a congregation of humble people, and I will show you a unified congregation. As each one isn't in it for themselves, rather they are in it for others. They aren't in the body to push their own agenda. They are in the body to see others prosper.

A few weeks ago, we looked at this matter of grumbling and complaining (2:14). Again, humility is the key to not complaining. We complain when we think that we are owed something. We complain when we think that some right of ours has been violated. But, when you are humble, you aren't looking to your own, rights and privileges, which can be upset. Rather, you are willing to take the injustice for the sake of others.

What is humility? As chapter 2, verse 3 says, it is, "Regarding one another as more important than yourself." As chapter 2, verse 4 says, it is not, "Looking out for your own personal interests." As chapter 2, verse 4 continues, it is looking out, "For the interests of others."

Humility is an attitude of mind that is focused upon others and their needs, rather than your own. And when we look at our text this morning, we see humility in practically every verse. So, let's begin again here in verse 19, ...

Philippians 2:19

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.

Again, as I have mentioned several times, Paul isn't looking after his own interests. His best interest would be to keep Timothy close and tight, so that he might minister to him and his needs. But, Paul willingly gave him up. He willingly let him go to Philippi. It was his humble attitude that fostered this spirit in Paul. Now, look at Timothy in verse 20.

Philippians 2:20

For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.

In other words, as Timothy would come to those in Philippi, he wouldn't be self-seeking. He wouldn't be seeking his own good. He wouldn't be propping himself up. He would come looking after your interests, and not his own. And Timothy's heart is unique.

Philippians 2:20

For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.

That's a pretty big slam on all who are around Paul at this time. "No one else of kindred spirit." "No one else of humble spirit." Verse 21 is

speaking about this problem.

Philippians 2:21

For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus.

Again, there's a contrast between Timothy and everyone else around Paul. Everybody is in it for their own good. This is really a remarkable statement, especially in light of how Paul is surrounded by believers. At the end of this letter, he will write, "All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household" (Philippians 4:22). When he wrote to those in Rome, he filled his final chapter by mentioning more than 25 people by name!

So, Paul has many believers surrounding him, and yet, he says, "they all seek after their own interests" (Philippians 2:21). One would think that more of those near him would seek after the interests of Christ. And yet, they are few and far between. Certainly, this comes to us by way of a challenge--that this might not be the case among us.

Back in chapter 1, we got a glimpse of some of these people.

Philippians 1:15-17

Some, to be sure, are preaching Christ even from envy and strife, but some also from good will; the latter do it out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel; the former proclaim Christ out of selfish ambition rather than from pure motives, thinking to cause me distress in my imprisonment.

But, Paul was above it all.

Philippians 1:18

What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is proclaimed; and in this I rejoice.

Paul could rejoice when the gospel was being preached, even if it was being preached from self-centered motives. That's all well and good for others, but when it came to his own needs, he was vulnerable in prison. Paul needed help. He needed someone who could go outside and gather the provisions that he would need. Paul needed someone who would focus on his needs. And all of these preachers preaching from their own motives and for their own kingdom would be of no help. Timothy was the man. He was the one who would seek after the interests of Christ. Timothy was the one who would follow the counsel of Jesus, who said, "You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matthew 20:25-28).

What a man Timothy was! And Paul was willing to give him up!

Philippians 2:23-24

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.

Such is true humility. Such was the heart of Timothy. Thereby, he was an example of Paul's teaching. It was obvious to all.

Philippians 2:22

But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father.

And so, it comes back to you. What sort of example are you setting? Are you one who is like a child serving his father? Are you a Timothy?

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on February 9, 2014 by Steve Brandon.

For more information see www.rvbc.cc.

[1] For instance, the Cleveland Public Library has a collection of more than 32,000 books on chess, including more than 6,000 bounded chess periodicals. (See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chess_theory).

[2] <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mU2rpcAABbA>