



## Transcendent Joy: Learning How to Rejoice No Matter What

Message #12: **A Model Servant Worthy Imitating** (Philippians 2:19-24) – February 19, 2023 - Pastor Jeff

- We all need good healthy role models in our life who help us see how to live a life that pleases the Lord in ministry. Paul highlights two of his co-laborers (Timothy and Epaphroditus) as great models to emulate in the faith.
- Paul has a deep affection for God's people as he longs to be with the church in person (1:8, 25; 2:24; 4:1). Though he is under house arrest, he is confident in commending key servants to carry on his gospel ministry.
- Timothy had a godly upbringing (2 Tim. 1:5) and became one of Paul's most useful partners in ministry. In his recognition and appreciation of Timothy's ministry, we can see 7 characteristics of a model servant. The word S.E.R.V.A.N.T. can spell out these qualities we should strive to emulate.

### ❶ **S = The special carbon copy of a servant** (2:20a: *"I have no one else of kindred spirit"*)

- Timothy is viewed as a carbon copy of Paul and this makes him very useful in the gospel ministry.
  - *"for I have no one else"*: Timothy is one of a kind among Paul's many fellow workers. He stood out as unique.
  - *"of kindred spirit"*: Timothy is like minded with Paul. He's one in spirit, thinking, feeling, and character with Paul (Matt. 10:25). Paul was always asking believers to follow his example as he followed the Lord (1 Cor. 4:16; 11: Phil. 4:9)

### ❷ **E = The earnest concern of a servant** (2:20b: *"who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare"*)

- Timothy displayed a genuine concern for the welfare of other believers.
  - *"genuinely"*: Timothy was sincere, authentic and didn't hide behind a mask in serving the gospel ministry with others.
  - *"concerned"*: Timothy had a heart-felt burden and care for *"the welfare"* of God's people as we all should (1 Cor. 12:25).

### ❸ **R = The rare commitment of a servant** (2:21)

- One of the challenges in ministry is to avoid self-interest which undermines and ignores the point of all ministry.
  - *"for they all seek after their own interests"*: Timothy had a commitment that was rare among those serving in Paul's circle of gospel ministry. He wasn't serving his own interests as others were continually (present tense) doing. It is sad and detrimental to seek your own agenda since it undermines God's work and ignores God's design of teamwork for ministry accomplishment.
  - *"not those of Christ Jesus"*: This was Paul's heart (v. 19, 21, 24) and Timothy's as well. He had a consuming single mindedness about serving Christ and we are regularly reminded to keep Christ in

the priority position (Matt. 22:38-39; Matt. 6:33; Col. 1:18; Heb. 12:3; Phil. 3:14). Maintain a 1:21 mindset and stay away from a 2:21 mindset.

**④ V = The validated contribution of a servant (2:22a: “but you know of his proven worth”)**

- Paul appeals to what they “*know*” (by observation and experience) to be true about Timothy’s heart and ministry. He had a solid track record.
  - “*proven*”: Timothy had passed the test in his ministry and proved himself faithful.
  - “*worth*”: His ministry was validated as acceptable and beneficial on behalf of God (1 Cor. 15:58)

**⑤ A = The admirable compliance of a servant (2:22b: “that he served with me”; v. 22d: “like a child serving his father”)**

- There are two prongs to Timothy’s service:
  - He was compliant in his ministry (“*he served with me*”). The word “*served*” describes his submission to Paul and service with Paul. He knew he was called to be a “*slave of Jesus Christ*”
  - He had an admirable respect for his leader (“*like a child serving his father*”). Timothy’s ministry wasn’t forced or competitive, but driven by a respect for Paul, his father in the faith.

**⑥ N = The noble cause of a servant (2:22c: “in the furtherance of the gospel”)**

- The object of all this service was the advancement of the gospel and this drove Paul’s life and Timothy’s as well. Isaiah 32:8 says: *But the noble man devises noble plans and by noble plans he stands*”. The word noble is that which is honorable, majestic, or prominent.
  - A noble gospel cause demands noble people (credible witnesses – 2 Tim. 2:20-21: some to honor and some to dishonor...useful to the Master)
  - A noble gospel cause demands noble passion (1 Cor 9:16; Ezek. 18:23, 32; 33:11)
  - A noble gospel cause demands noble plans (the Great Commission of disciplemaking, not the great omission)

**④ T = The trustworthy co-laboring of a servant (2:22a: “But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you”; v. 23: “Therefore I hope to send him immediately”)**

- Timothy was so reliable that Paul didn’t hesitate to send him as a faithful servant of Jesus Christ.
- Timothy was available, ready, willing, useful, and reliable as a servant in whom Paul was confident of his ministry (1 Tim. 4:12).