

Dr. Daniel K. Darko, Prison Epistles, Session 13, Appeal to Shine, Philippians 2:12-30

© 2024 Dan Darko and Ted Hildebrandt

This is Dr. Dan Darko in his lecture series on the Prison Epistles. This is session 13, Appeal to Shine, Philippians 2:12-30.

Welcome back to our Biblical Studies lectures on prison epistles.

I hope you've been having a good time studying with us on Philippians so far. We looked at the beginning of Philippians. I set a contest, if you recall, with the fact that Philippians was written to a city called Philippi in the first century.

This city, though Greek in its origin, had become a Roman colony. I gave you some indications about the religious climates and the political climates. I mentioned to you, if you recall, that, in fact, citizens in this particular city will have dual nationality of some sort.

If you are born a Greek, for instance, by virtue of being a Roman colony, you get Roman citizenship. Paul will use this as a very important part of his rhetorical framework to shape his conversation in Philippians. I reminded you about Paul's great virtue, which is that we often lose sight of the fact that Paul begins his letters with prayer.

He will go on to express thanksgiving to God for his reflections on the people and of the church that he cares deeply about. These traits of Paul, as he launches into Philippians, if you recall, especially the last two lectures on Philippians, I began to show you how Paul will pick this conversation up, spell out some clear things the church needs to know, and express his joy and excitement about this church, and then go on to actually set up a very important mechanism, rhetorical mechanism, Paul uses in Philippians that, if you remember, I gave you some very big word, but to try to explain that big word, using example or people who are key people in society or respectable figures as examples to draw lessons as people who are worthy of emulation. He went on to say, in our last lecture, to let the attitude of Christ, the mindset of Christ, and the phronesis of Christ be in you also.

In other words, take the example of Christ and make it yours. From then on, we get this wonderful piece. I guess I probably spoiled your show by trying to remind you that we don't have so much evidence to support the fact that it is a hymn circulating. But just forget about that a minute.

It is such a wonderful piece telling us about how Christ, being who he is, God, in obedience, took the form of human beings, came down to our level in the

incarnation, suffered on our behalf, and how, in disobedience, God exalted him higher above all and gave him the name, reputation, authority that is above every other name, that in the name of Jesus Christ, every knee should bow and every tongue confess that Jesus is Lord. This is the immediate context of the passage we look at that I call Appeal to Shine. Christ's obedience and humility have become models for the church.

Beyond that, from verse 12 of Philippians 2, Paul will go on to establish that, actually, the obedience of Christ should set the stage for a radical call for obedience. And that is where we begin to look at now, and I read, Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

Do all things without grumbling or disputing, that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God, without blemish, in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain, even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. Likewise, you also should be glad and rejoice with me. So, let me draw attention to some things I showed you at the end of the last lecture, trying to set the stage for today's discussion on Appeal to Shine.

This particular passage here, which I just read from verses 12 to 18, set the stage linking the obedience of Christ to challenge the church to live a life worthy of the gospel. Obedience of Christ resumes clearly in verse 12. Christ was obedient even to the cross, so I urge you to be obedient. Ben Witherington, a scholar in Asbury Theological Seminary, who has recently published a commentary on Philippians, actually argues that if you look at all the patterns from Philippians chapter 2 from verse 1 to 18, you'll find a pattern of Greek rhetorical framework that you probably learned at high school.

And perhaps when your high school teacher was pointing you out, you said, no, why do I need to know all this stuff? Well, I'm reminding you about this. Witherington argues that in Chapter 2, verses 1 to 4, Paul takes ethos as a very important part. The part of Greek rhetoric that says your character and what makes the speaker who the speaker is, in terms of credibility or integrity, is an essential part of people listening, hearing, and taking what the speaker says seriously.

Witherington would argue that actually, the logos in the structure of Paul's argument is chapter 2, verses 5 to 11, which we call a Christ hymn, if you remember the conversation. Logos, in Greek rhetoric, is the core, the substance, the discussion, and the main point that needs to be developed. And then Witherington argues that from

verse 12 to 18, which we are looking at this point, you'll find an element of pathos, which is the emotion.

Greek rhetoricians or rhetorical schools will teach you that if you are going to convince people of anything they need to do, it is very important to observe these three key aspects of rhetoric. Your integrity, the substance, the emotional connection, the pathos, the emotional dimension are very, very important in getting people to accept what you are doing. I am not in any way suggesting that Witherington has caught what Paul is trying to do in the framework he sets in his commentary.

No, I actually think Witherington has a point to make, but he may be stretching what is going on too much to make it fit what he thinks is going on. The key point, though, is that in this particular passage, we look at verses 12 to 18, and Paul makes a very strong appeal. In this appeal, there is that emotional oomph, and I would argue that the substance of obedience is required.

I appeal to you, brethren, and I appeal to you on three grounds. Let's look at the outline, and I'll unpack them in a minute. Paul will appeal to the church to shine in obedience and specifically state that they should work out their own salvation with fear and trembling.

Wow! What does that mean? Is Paul suggesting for a minute that salvation could be by works? Doesn't that contradict what he has said elsewhere, that salvation is by grace alone? Hold on to that thought—appeal to shine in obedience. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling, and I'll unpack it in a few minutes.

Two, shine in conduct. Be blameless and innocent. Paul makes this strong appeal in verses 12 to 18: Yes, as you work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, it does matter that in terms of how the public looks at you, you are blameless.

You are not blameworthy; you are not an object of contempt to the God you have called on and believed in. God should be proud to say, that is my child.

He was being blameless and innocent before God. Paul will appeal thirdly that they should shine by emulation. He will actually challenge them to look at the rhetorical feature I have pointed out to you in Philippians so far, and Paul is going to show them the need to use people who have done it well as good examples to follow.

So, let's begin to look at this one by one. One, shine in obedience. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling.

Maintain, Paul will argue. Maintain that sense of obedience, whether I am with you or out of your presence. In fact, verse 12 begins like this.

Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now. Not only in my presence but much more in my absence. I don't have to be physically present with you for you to impress me.

I don't have to be physically present with you to make a difference in society. In fact, my presence is not required for you to be a light in this crooked, dark world. And then, he introduces the complicated language.

Wow. Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. I would draw your attention to something here.

This is a community effort to work out. We have often heard, at least when I was growing up as a young Christian, that it almost sounded like, ooh, Paul is introducing some legalistic version of Christianity and just trying to chuck it in our throat. I wanted to live a holy life.

And yet, sometimes this verse scares me that if only I don't do what I'm supposed to do, I could lose it. It is one of those moments that I always thought, You know, if somebody is actually a Calvinist, they are a great source of encouragement because the Armenian colleagues try to get this to just scare us to death.

Well, I'm not going to go much further in that particular subject. It's actually a subject for you to argue with your friend after you listen to this lecture. What does the Calvinist say, and what does the Armenian say about salvation and losing salvation? But Paul's point is to work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.

The grammar here in Greek is noteworthy. It is plural and not singular. Paul is not calling individuals to work out their salvation.

He's calling the community to work out that salvation. And we have to be able to tease out or interpret further what that working out means. One of the things you point out quickly is that we get too far ahead of ourselves in the way we reason how salvation works.

Paul was clear to clarify in verse 13 that it is God who works, and the Greek word works is a word I like a lot. The Greek word is *enegeo*. I know, I promise you, I'm not going to be bringing the Greek a lot.

But just pardon me because, between this lecture and the next lecture, I'll throw in one or two Greek words just to clarify some things. So don't be upset with me. I'm going to try to make it simple.

I'll be a good boy. The Greek word here is *enegeo*. The word from which sometimes we presume the English word *energy* is derived from.

I want to work out in terms of empowering, equipping, empathetic, and inspiring. Paul says in verse 13, actually, For it is God who works, who energizes, who empowers in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. So it's not necessarily saying working out as a community with your own salvation and trembling means doing it without God.

It all depends on you; let's clarify that first. But that will not still make me stop asking the question that gets a lot of contention in my classroom at college.

Suddenly, I began to realize who comes from an Armenian confessional background and who comes from a Calvinist confessional background. What does it mean to work out your salvation? Could you lose your salvation if you don't work it out? Does working out your salvation help you to have a higher ranking in a salvific status with God? Work out your salvation. The subject is plural, as I mentioned earlier to you.

Salvation as a word could mean here well-being and carry a sense of social connotation. But it could also have a scatological connotation in terms of how one day we all will be saved. I mean those of us who believe in Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

It does not imply salvation by works. Because lest we get confused, let me just remind you about a great book that I will tell you about later on. It is a great book. Ephesians chapter 2. Ephesians chapter 2, verses 8 to 10, says For by grace you have been saved through faith.

And this is not your own doing, and it is the gift of God. Note verse 9. Not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we should walk in them.

So, Paul is not here contradicting some of his theological analysis that we find, whether in Corinthians, Romans, Galatians, or Ephesians, that salvation is by faith in Christ. It is grace alone as Luther's mantra will go *sola gratia, sola fide*. It is faith, and it is by grace alone that we have been saved.

It is not that we can do a whole lot. We can actually buy our salvation with any effort or with any amount of money. So, working out your salvation with fear and trembling is not, excuse me, working out your way into being admitted into the kingdom of God.

Note that this is an instruction directed towards people who are already Christians. They did not need to work out their salvation to become Christians. They are already Christians, needing to shine in this crooked world.

The word here, as I understand it, may carry the sense of mutual support in sanctification and trying to live a life worthy of the gospel so that that may impact their individual life and individual work from now to the end until Christ comes. But that mutual support within the community in the face of all forms of challenges whether by virtue of living in a Roman colony or the tendency of some false teachers coming in if they can work out their own salvation collectively by supporting each other, picking each other up when one falls encouraging and actually enabling each other, one form or the other to be able to be the Christians that God wants them to be. And if they do that with a sense of awe, not terror or fear, there is no sense of terror that God is like this wicked grandfather with a crooked stick. Oh, you dare not do the wrong thing because he will kick you on the head with that crooked stick.

No, with a sense of awe that the God whom we have come to belong to and whom we call our father is a gracious and holy God is a status we cherish and revere. We want to maintain in that community, and we want to honor him in how we live our lives. That sense of awe, that sense of trembling that says I don't want to let God down, and I don't want to let my brother or sister in Christ let God down.

I will do all I can to provide the support they need. I will go as far as to say it makes more sense if we understand working out in plural our salvation with fear and trembling with this sense of connotation. But let me also tell you what others have to say because I would like you to just be left with what I think.

I want you to know what others have to say about this. One scholar still writes While Philippians are meant to work out their salvation they are not to work for it. Indeed, the congregation's outworking of salvation is predicated upon and enabled by divine in-working.

God, Paul maintains, grants them the motivation, which is called energy or energizing component, and the empowerment to live obediently. A colleague I have come to know that I really respect, Frank, explains it this way: When Paul says in Philippians 2:12 that believers must work out their salvation, he does not mean they should work for salvation on the final day. He means instead that they should conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ as they await the final affirmation of their right standing before God on the day of Christ.

And I should perhaps remind you that Frank comes from more Calvinist roots, but as a biblical studies scholar, he tries to be as neutral as possible. But I thought I should give you that disclaimer. Let me show you what Ben Witherington says about that.

I also have to give another disclaimer here. Ben Witherington comes from more of an Arminian point of view. Look at the subtle nuances in the way they explain this.

Ben says Paul does indeed believe that the behavior of Christians subsequent to conversion affects both the current process of sanctification and, if something drastic as apostasy happens, their final salvation as well. This is an Arminian scholar who is trying to combine a theological framework that says you can lose your salvation and trying to explain this test that says the way the community works together in their sanctification may have some ramifications on their final salvation. That brings me to the second appeal.

Remember, the first appeal is to shine in obedience. The second appeal, as we look at verses 12 to 18, is an appeal to shine in conduct. Appeal to shine in conduct.

To be blameless. To be innocent. And I should remind you that Paul was quick to say that being blameless is not something that is coming out of somewhere.

In fact, from verse 15, he will go on to say, which for me is a very important verse in this passage, that you may be blameless and innocent, and he will not leave it there. He will actually go as far as to say children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation among whom you shine as lights in the world. Wow! Be innocent and blameless.

And part of why this is important is because you are the children of a holy God. Think about the kinship concept I have tried to discuss with you in this lecture series. As children of God in a society where the honor of the household is tied to how members of the household conduct themselves.

Paul edges them. Paul has called them my beloved. He will refer to them as my brothers and sisters.

Here, he says you want to be innocent and blameless because you are children of God. Your identity is rooted in a holy God. A God who is a great God.

A God who is a holy God who needs to be revered and respected in society. And his honor is reflected in how you live your life. By the way, Paul will clarify if you don't understand the world you live in.

It's a crooked and twisted world out there. He challenges them in verse 15 to say that it is because of this that they are urged to shine. Shine like light.

It's not as if he is saying pick up a flashlight and then pointing to that dark spot. No, that is not what Paul is saying. Imagine a very dark environment.

What Paul's imagery is trying to project is a world where the light that the average household would use is equivalent to our modern-day refrigerator light. And it could be this light with some twig and some oil next to it. And imagine a very thick, dark environment.

And you set up that small light. It is not like a flashlight, excuse me, shedding light on a very small, narrow spot. But it's a light, small or great as it is, throwing light to conquer the darkness around it within range.

Paul then appeals to them. Be blameless and innocent and shine. Shine in effect by your conduct.

Let God be known in this world by the way you live your life. Wow. Wow.

Wow. As we think about these things about Paul, it is not only the identity that matters, but integrity is crucial because other people in the world are looking at how the children of God behave.

In the Roman colony, the people who would not say curious Caesar, Caesar is Lord, but people who would say curious Jesus, people who ascribe this lordship to Christ, are looking at how these people live their lives. And integrity in the world matters. It is for this reason I may clarify that it is so unhelpful for us as Christians sometimes to say, oh, I'm living my Christian life.

It's my private life. Let people not bother me. To a large degree, that is true.

But it's also important in the context of this particular passage to realize that we are one another's keepers in the church. And how we live as a community of faith speaks to the world, whether positively or negatively. Paul, dwelling on the positive, says, Shine.

Throw the light out. Let the light that you bring, let the moral integrity you bring shine enough to conquer the darkness. Growing up in an African village without electricity, I know what darkness is.

And it's amazing, the moonlight we see in the United States, and we say, oh, wonderful moon. And how little we appreciate the light that the moon brings. In my village, the full moon is like the best electricity around.

The darker the space, the brighter the light, how small it is. Paul challenges the Christians in Philippi as perhaps he's challenging you and me, who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior, to shine in conduct, to be blameless and innocent. In a world that is crooked, we don't live to impress the world, but we live to set a good example for the world.

And Paul, in his own non-compromising position, will say he is hoping. Well, he's already conquering them. He's actually saying, I expect you to live as such, and I'm actually counting on actually receiving some crowns for how you live your lives on the day of Christ.

In other words, how we live our lives here today brings glory to God and has eschatological repercussions. In this context, for Paul, it is actually on the day of Christ that will be good news. But it also reminds us that the life we live here is not the end of it all.

There is something else ahead. In verse 16, he goes on to say, and I read, holding fast to the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. The expression holding forth, in some translations is translated as holding fast.

Holding forth or holding fast or holding firm is very important to understand that Paul is expecting the word of God, the gospel, to be kept firm and strong. And it can be understood. You can say it is holding fast and standing firm in it or holding forth in terms of having an evangelistic outlook that we are going out, and we are going to reach out to the world.

Either way, yes, some commentators like to make this difference. But I'm one of those who say, you know what, there is evangelistic and mission component anyway. So, how I live my life can bring my neighbor to Christ.

And I can also carry the gospel to my neighbor. Do you know that expression, I don't know what the source is, that preaches the gospel by all means and, if necessary, by words? If you live your life in a way that is worthy of Christ, by shining forth, you are showing Christ to the world.

By the way, that is why you will see holding firm in some translation and holding fast. I just want to suggest to you that if you are not interested in outreach, if you are not interested in evangelism, then you say, oh, I am going to take holding fast because that works for me. I am just trying to urge you that both have evangelistic and missiological components to them.

Shining in a crooked world is a missiological activity, and we want to take it seriously. That brings me to my next appeal, appeal for emulation. I once had a poster.

I don't know whether it came through Standard Publishing House or somewhere. And I found something interesting about this particular poster. The poster had this image I am trying to put here, an older man and a young man.

And in that particular poster, the older man is holding the young man's hand. And then this inscription is put underneath. Whether you know it or not, someone is following you.

Be a good leader. I can tell you I was a young leader. I was a young preacher.

I was trying to do my best, but I made several mistakes. I always tried praying and working hard to try to be the best leader I could be. Why should I come across this particular poster? I mean, this poster is even asking me for more things because I was almost the age of most of the people I was leading as a director in Youth for Christ.

Wow! But the point is that, whether you know it or not, someone is following you. Paul appeals to shine by emulation—verse 17.

Even if I am poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad that you rejoice. Likewise, you also should be glad and rejoice. Look at what Paul is doing and let that reflect your attitude.

The guy in jail is the one; if you remember, at the beginning of the lectures on Philippians, I said underline, rejoice, joy. This is a guy in jail. That is not the theme of your song when you are in jail.

I say learn from me so that you can do that as well. That is not going to be the end of Paul's story for emulation because he would actually go on to begin to set how specific people, including him, have to be good examples for this church. But this is just a schesis.

Let me just draw your attention to a particular line in verse 14. When the Bible says, do all things without grumbling and disputing, if you pick up any commentary on Philippians, you will see that between three and five pages in most cases are devoted to discussing this particular passage. And some say, oh, this is an allusion to this Old Testament passages.

I'll show you the passages in a minute. And they will say, let's try to answer how it relates to all these passages in John. But I don't want to be so dismissive.

So, I want to show you these passages. When they came to Marah, they could not drink the water of Marah because it was bitter—reading from Exodus 15:23, 25.

Therefore, it was named Marah. And the people grumbled against Moses, saying, what shall we drink? He cried to the Lord, and the Lord showed him a log. He threw it into the water, and the water became sweet.

The key thing here is that the commentators are very interested in the people grumbling because verse 14 talks about grumbling. And so, they want to be very quick to say, grumbling or disputing is Old Testament. Let's make some connections there.

You can also see that connection from Exodus 16, verse 2. Where we find this text, And the whole congregation of the people of Israel grumbled against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. Still, it is understood that this is an allusion. Some would argue that even a stronger allusion is found in Exodus 16, verses 7-9.

And in the morning, you shall see the glory of the Lord because he has heard your grumbling against the Lord. For what are we that you grumbled against us? And Moses said when the Lord gives you in the evening meat to eat and in the morning bread to the full because the Lord has heard your grumbling that you grumble against him. What are we? Your grumbling is not against us but against the Lord.

Then Moses said to Aaron, say to the whole congregation of the people of Israel, Come near before the Lord, for he has heard your grumbling. So you see the grumbling thing going on. So, that is quite a genuine connection.

That's a New Testament reference to grumbling, as we find in John's chapter 6. So, the Jews grumbled against him because he said, I am the bread that came down from heaven. Grumbled. I like the word grumble.

I think Americans like the word grumble more. You know, I spent quite some time in England, and one of the interesting things about the English way of looking at this is that sometimes they use the word mourning. Mourning is almost depressing just to hear it.

You know, it's mourning. I mean, it's complaining. No, it's not complaining.

It's mourning. And so, let's say, you know, you can make the connection. You can see this theme about how people grumble and how it recurs in salvation history with the people of Israel.

And then, even when you come to 1 Corinthians 10:10, you can see the language of grumbling showing up. And so, they make the connection to say this could be an allusion for Paul to strengthen the case here and call for obedience instead of grumbling and calling for total obedience to what God is doing and stop complaining and disputing. I have asked the question though, will Gentile readers, as far as we know, there was no large Jewish population in Philippi for them to even have a synagogue.

Would they know this? Or is it just a mere coincidence? Or is Paul's Jewish background helping him to make this connection? You make that decision for yourself. But the point was that God had always intervened. God had always come through to address and to straighten things up when people grumble.

It's also interesting that as I show you this passage, one of the things that occurs to me is that whether it's Old Testament or New Testament, it seems like in the community of God's people, people like grumbling. Do you like grumbling? Just write on a sheet of paper in front of you what you like grumbling about. And let us begin to realize that we are being challenged to appeal to, and Paul appeals to us to shine in obedience, to shine in conduct, and to shine in emulation.

And then now, towards the end of this lecture, I will show you how he selects two people, but I'll focus on one, and I'll start on the second one in our next lecture, who has walked through that walk of obedience, shining as light. He shows the examples of Timothy and Epaphroditus. Big name, mouthful pronunciation, Epaphroditus.

Paul uses this occasion to present these familiar examples as people who have lived through what he is asking of the church. He expresses his intention for connection, to have Timothy go back to them. He expresses the desire and what Epaphroditus's coming means to them, what Epaphroditus has done on their behalf, and what he, Paul's own desire to connect with this congregation.

As usual, Paul will show his true qualities. I like this. I would like to point out to my students that whether I'm in the United States, Europe, or Africa, let us learn from Paul.

The people who work with me have outstanding qualities. Let's look for those qualities. When it matters most, let's let others know, and let us let them know that we have observed these great qualities among them.

And Paul is going to do just that. Talking about Timothy as an example, he says, Timothy, you want to know something about Timothy. Timothy is commended for being like-minded with Paul.

He has been like-minded. He has not been the one who Paul says, let's do this. He says, oh, I have something against that.

Oh, I have a contrary viewpoint on this. In fact, the word, the Greek word that is used there is sometimes problematic because the word can literally translate as a soulmate. And as I would draw your attention when we get to Philemon, as discussion, you know, if you look at that lecture, I would draw your attention about how some scholars say, oh, actually, Paul is having some homosexual activity over there.

Please, this particular word that can be translated as soulmate should not be misread as Paul talking about a homosexual relationship with Timothy. It's good that no scholar has come out boldly to say anything in that direction yet, but I just want to caution anyone following this lecture series. That is not the point here.

To be like-minded, to be a soulmate, is to have some intimate emotional connectedness and the mindset that makes you agree to work and do things together. Timothy was like that to Paul. The good thing is that Paul wanted the church to know that Timothy possessed this team spirit.

He exhibits genuine concern. In fact, the word translated concern here is anxiety. Marim now, the word we translate in the New Testament often as anxiety, pastoral anxiety.

He has been genuinely anxious for the church because he's one of those who think about others more than himself. Do you remember Philippians chapter 2, verse 4? Consider other people's interests more than yourself. Timothy has lived out to that example.

And three, Paul says, he's like a son. In fact, he served me as he would serve his father, and I'm proud to talk about him like a son. Kinship, again.

Paul is introducing a familiar concept by saying, and I just want you to know, this is the kind of son if he was with me here with you and we are all in front of a gathering, I would like to pat him on the back and tell you guys, look, this is my son. I am proud of him. And I want you to know that I'm proud of him.

When was the last time you commended someone you worked with on the true qualities you observed? Specifically in regard to their work with God. Paul would take time to show that Timothy is a good example for the church in Philippi. They should learn from him.

He has proven, in fact, the word, the Greek word is translated, that character here carries the sense that his Christian life has been tested and proven to be pure. He has stood the test of time, remained constant, and maintained his integrity as a Christian. That is the quality that you should know about Timothy.

Fifth, Paul hopes to send him to Philippi so that they may find a model in him. Wow, I like this. I know, or perhaps I should say, I don't know how many people are going to sit back and say, I would not be happy if somebody just stood up or my boss just picked up a pen and paper or sat on his computer or picked up an iPad.

What comes to mind is to write a list of my outstanding qualities to tell others what a good example I have been in the company as one worthy of emulation. To read Paul's exact words on the qualities of Timothy. Let me read 19 to 24.

This is how Paul explains that. I hope in the Lord 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 would be genuinely concerned for your welfare.

For they all seek their own interest, not those of Jesus Christ. Timothy is an exemption. But you know Timothy's proven worth.

How, as a son with a father, he has said this to me in the gospel. 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.

Wow. This is how one scholar tries to explain that complicated word. I would like to refresh your mind as we get to the end of this particular lecture about Paul's relationship with Timothy.

Paul says that he is the Greek word for like-minded with Timothy. The term refers to a relationship involving equality and sameness of character. Paul and Timothy shared the same deep-seated love and concern for the Philippians.

Perhaps in part because Timothy has something to do with their conversion. But I don't want to get you, you know, off-sighted about Paul's relationship with Timothy. Paul is not saying all these things to Timothy; it is simply flattery.

He knows Timothy. And let me remind you that elsewhere, we find Paul talking about this man called Timothy. We know from Acts 16, verses 1 and 2, that Paul actually came into contact with this man in Lystra.

He was a good man of reputation. We also know in the same Acts 16 that Timothy was half Jew and half Gentile, and actually, Paul circumcised him. He was so committed to his work with God that Paul was not sure about how Timothy was going to deal with the pressure of Judaizers, who are always going to insist that one needs to be circumcised in order to be a good Christian.

So, Paul circumcised him. In another discussion on Timothy, students have asked why he is a half-Jew and not circumcised. Well, it's his father. If his father was Greek, the father would determine how these things happen.

One thing we know for sure is Paul circumcised him. In 2 Timothy, we are reminded in 2 Timothy 1 verse 5 that his mother, Eunice, and his grandmother, Lois, were very

God-fearing people. In fact, they passed on a tradition that Paul found commendable.

In other words, Timothy's upbringing was godly upbringing. He was known in Lystra as a man of good reputation. When Paul saw him, Paul found someone with whom he could associate.

We know that in many cases, Paul traveled with Timothy. In many of Paul's letters, he introduced himself as someone who was writing with Timothy. That is to say, what Paul had to say about Timothy in Philippians that we have seen is not something that Paul is just using some kind of flattery language somewhere.

He is saying with all sincerity that he knows this guy. He is a man of integrity. He is someone we could count on.

He genuinely cares about people. As a matter of fact, he is a good example for the church to follow. So far, thinking about the discussion we will be having in this particular lecture, Philippians chapter 2 begins with Let this sense of unity if there is any comfort and consolation, any encouragement and a strong sense of unity that should be built in the church.

And then he said, verse 4, let the mind of Christ be in you and go on to show Christ's mindset that will make him walk the hard road of obedience and how, as a result, God exalted him and gave him a name that is above every other name. On the basis of that Paul challenges the church to also walk in obedience and appeal to them to shine. He appealed to them to shine in obedience.

He appealed to them to shine in conduct. He appealed to them to shine by emulation. He then shows one example of obedience.

Timothy. Timothy is a very good example of obedience to follow. What he is saying, in effect, is that a walk with Christ is not an abstract concept.

In fact, all the instruction he is giving about how Christians should shine in the world is doable. He has one person to show first who has done it. He also has a second person to show before chapter 2 ends, and that person has done it, too.

And let me just get your brain going before you actually finish this particular lecture. Paul is going to tell the church that Timothy is such a good example and the other guy, Epaphroditus, is such a good example, too. And so, when we come back, I will actually draw your attention to the fact that for Paul, he will show one good example called Epaphroditus.

The guy who served as a comrade with Paul. The guy who actually demonstrated clear, true character to the point that he was ready to risk his life for others all in the walk of obedience to Christ. And the guy who actually wished that as he returned to Philippi, they would receive him with these wide arms.

I don't know if you know someone whom you could say is actually a good example of how Christians should live their lives. But I don't want to move away from the central issue here. For us to shine, we must shine in obedience.

If you find someone who is a good example of obedience that you want to emulate, that's fine. But if not, Christ himself is a good example. We can walk that walk of obedience.

In closing this particular lecture, let me remind you of one particular line of a hymn that you probably have sung but have not taught about the richness of obedience. And the first stanza goes like this. Trust and obey.

For there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey. For us to live in unity in the body of Christ. For us to live a life full of joy and peace and grace.

There is no other way to be happy in Jesus. But to trust and obey. Thank you very much for your continuing studies with us in this Biblical Studies Lecture Series.

I hope you are enjoying this and I hope you are picking up a wealth of material from the Apostle Paul. Please continue to learn and grow with us. And I just hope and pray that together we will all glorify God in the way we live our lives.

Thank you.

This is Dr. Dan Darko in his lecture series on the Prison Epistles. This is session 13, Appeal to Shine, Philippians 2:12-30.