

The Friends We Make

Philippians 2:19-30

Paul & Timothy: A **FOREVER** friendship.

Philippians 2:19–24 (NIV84) “I hope in the Lord Jesus to send **Timothy** to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. ²⁰ I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. ²¹ For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ. ²² But you know that Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel. ²³ I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. ²⁴ And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.”

1. Their friendship was **rare**.

Philippians 2:19–21 (NIV84) “I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, that I also may be cheered when I receive news about you. ²⁰ I have no one else like him, who takes a genuine interest in your welfare. ²¹ For everyone looks out for his own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.”

1 Samuel 18:1 (ESV) “...the soul of Jonathan was knit to the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.”

2. Their friendship was **tested**.

Philippians 2:20–22 (NIV84) “...Timothy has proved himself, because as a son with his father he has served with me in the work of the gospel.”

3. Their friendship was **essential**.

Philippians 2:23–24 (NIV84) “I hope, therefore, to send him as soon as I see how things go with me. ²⁴ And I am confident in the Lord that I myself will come soon.”

Paul & Epaphroditus: A **SEASONAL** friendship.

Philippians 2:25–30 (NIV84) “But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs. ²⁶ For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety. ²⁹ Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him, ³⁰ because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me.”

1. Their friendship was **circumstantial**.

Philippians 2:25 (NIV84) “But I think it is necessary to send back to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger, whom you sent to take care of my needs.”

Matthew 25:36–40 (NIV84) “I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.” ³⁷ “Then the righteous will answer Him, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink?’ ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you?’ ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?’ ⁴⁰ “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.’”

Proverbs 17:17 (NIV84) “A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.”

2. Their friendship was **seasonal**.

Philippians 2:26–28 (NIV84) “For he longs for all of you and is distressed because you heard he was ill. ²⁷ Indeed he was ill, and almost died. But God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, to spare me sorrow upon sorrow. ²⁸ Therefore I am all the more eager to send him, so that when you see him again you may be glad and I may have less anxiety.”

Colossians 4:14 (NIV84) “Our dear friend Luke, the doctor, and Demas send greetings.”

2 Timothy 4:9–10a (NIV84) “Do your best to come to me quickly, ¹⁰ for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica.”

3. Their friendship was **honorable**.

Philippians 2:28–30 (NIV84) “Welcome him in the Lord with great joy, and honor men like him, ³⁰ because he almost died for the work of Christ, risking his life to make up for the help you could not give me.”

Digging Deeper: What is the difference between a seasonal friend and a fair-weather friend? Can you give examples of each? What would be Paul’s definition of a “soulmate”? Can you name someone who has encouraged you in your faith? What is their name, and why do you mention them? Describe someone who was only in your life for a short time but had a big IMPACT. What kind of friend does Jesus want us to be?

