

# Philippians Series

Lesson #060

January 4, 2024

Dean Bible Ministries

[www.deanbibleministries.org](http://www.deanbibleministries.org)

© 2024, Dr. Robert L. Dean, Jr.

# Epaphroditus: The Fourth Example

## Philippians 2:25–30



**Php. 1:27, “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,” [NKJV]**

**Php. 1:27, “Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel,” [NKJV]**

**συναθλέω *sunathleō***

**3 pres act ptcp masc nom pl**

**to work together with, contend/**

**struggle along with BDAG, participle**

**of means, “with one mind by working**

**together for the faith of the gospel”**

## **Review/Overview**

**Paul has challenged the Philippians to quit being self-absorbed, pursuing their own agendas, and to pursue Christlike character of humility and service to the body of Christ.**

**Example 1: Jesus Christ's humility in the incarnation.**

**Example 2: Paul himself, poured out like a drink offering.**

**Example 3: Timothy.**

**Example 4: Epaphroditus.**

**Rom. 12:1, “I implore you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, set apart to the service of God, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.”**

**Rom. 12:1, “I implore you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, set apart to the service of God, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.” [RD amplified translation]**

**θυσία *thusia***

**fem sing acc sacrifice,  
offering**

**λατρεία *latreia***

**fem sing acc  
service, worship**

**Php. 2:17, “Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.**

**Php. 2:18, “For the same reason you also be glad and rejoice with me.” [NKJV]**

**Php. 2:17, “Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all.” [NKJV]**

***θυσία thusia***

**fem sing acc sacrifice,  
offering; “the sacrifice  
which is the result of your  
faith” [genitive of source]**

***λατρεία latreia***

**fem sing acc  
service, worship**

## **The picture in Php. 2:17**

**Paul sees his life, his ministry, to be analogous to the drink offering poured out on the burnt offering, the dedication to the partnership of the Philippian believers to the gospel ministry.**

**Their dedication is the “sacrifice of service” produced by their faith.**

**He follows with two examples: Timothy and Epaphroditus**

## Who was Timothy?

**Php. 2:19, “But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, that I also may be encouraged when I know your state.” [NKJV]**

# What the Bible Teaches About

# Timothy



# What the Bible Teaches About

# Epaphroditus



## **Who Was Epaphroditus?**

- 1. A spiritual leader in the church at Philippi.**
- 2. He had been commissioned by that church to bring a financial gift to Paul and to assist and serve him in any way.**
- 3. Soon after arriving he became deathly ill.**
- 4. His friends back home in Philippi had heard about this and were distressed and concerned. He learned of their concern.**
- 5. God restored Epaphroditus' health.**
- 6. He desired to go home to set their concerns to rest.**
- 7. Paul agreed and used the opportunity to write this “thank you” letter.**

**Epaphroditus,**

**“lovely, charming, fascinating, or gracious; clearly a pagan name with the middle syllable reflecting the name of Aphrodite, the goddess of beauty and love.”**

**Php. 2:25, “Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;” [NKJV]**

**Php. 2:25, “Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;” [NKJV]**

**A fellow believer, in Christ, adopted by God the Father and in the spiritual family of the Church, the body of Christ.**

**Paul used this term more frequently in Philippians than the other prison epistles. (1:12, 14; 2:25; 3:1, 13, 17; 4:1, 8, 21).**

**~[1] Hendriksen, William, and Simon J. Kistemaker. 1953–2001. *Exposition of Philippians*. Vol. 5. *New Testament Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.**

**Php. 2:25, “Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;” [NKJV]**

**συνεργός *sunergos*  
masc sing acc helper, fellow-  
worker**

**Php. 2:25, “Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;” [NKJV]**

**συνεργός *sunergos*  
masc sing acc helper, fellow-  
worker**

**συστρατιώτης  
*sustratiōtēs*  
masc sing acc  
fellow-soldier**

**Php. 2:25, “Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need;” [NKJV]**

**συνεργός *sunergos*  
masc sing acc helper, fellow-  
worker**

**συστρατιώτης  
*sustratiōtēs*  
masc sing acc  
fellow-soldier**

**Philem. 2, “to the beloved Apphia, Archippus our fellow soldier, and to the church in your house:”**

## **Timothy is described as Paul's:**

- **“Fellow worker” (Rom. 16:21; 1 Thess. 3:2)**
- **“Brother” (2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 1 Thess. 3:2)**
- **“Bond-servant” (Php. 1:1)**
- **“Beloved and faithful child in the Lord” (1 Cor. 4:17)**
- **“Son” (1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2)**
- **Coequal in the Lord's work (1 Cor. 16:10; 1 Thess. 3:2)**

# Apostle

- 1. Two categories: those 11 commissioned by the Lord Jesus Christ; and those commissioned by the local churches.**
- 2. The spiritual gift applied only to the original 11 plus the Apostle Paul commissioned directly by the Lord Jesus Christ.**

**1 Cor. 12:28, “And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.”**

**3. Those who call themselves apostles today are false apostles.**

## **The reasons for the return of Epaphroditus.**

- 1. Epaphroditus is longing for them and is distressed because he is worried that they are worried about his health. Php. 2:26–27**
- 2. That they might rejoice at having him back with them. Php. 2:28a**
- 3. That Paul might be less sorrowful. Php. 2:28b**

**Php. 2:26, “since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.**

**Php. 2:27, “For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.” [NKJV]**

**Php. 2:26, “since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.**

**Php. 2:27, “For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.” [NKJV]**

**Php. 2:8, “And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.”**

**What about healing?**

**Why did Paul not heal him?**

# What the Bible Teaches About Healing



- 1. Does God heal today?**
- 2. Does God want you healthy and well?**
- 3. Why did Jesus and the Apostles heal?**
- 4. Was Faith necessary to be healed?**

# **I. Does God Heal Today?**

**A. God has healed historically through different means.**

**1. First, we realize that God has healed indirectly or mediate; through an agent**

**Two categories: Supernatural, and natural:**

**a. Supernatural, miraculous.**

**b. Natural: This is not to be defined as miraculous.**

**2. God has also healed directly.**

**B. The issue is not Does God Heal Today? He does.**

**The issue is: How has God revealed that He heals today?**

**And:**

**Has God revealed that we should expect His intervention in our illnesses, diseases, and deformities as a normal experience in the Christian life?**

## **II. Why did Jesus and the Apostles heal? And was faith and/or salvation a prerequisite for healing?**

### **A. Jesus: To present the Messianic Credentials**

**Isa. 42:7, “To open blind eyes, to bring out prisoners from the dungeon, and those who dwell in darkness from the prison.”**

**Isa. 29:18, “And on that day the deaf shall hear words of a book, and out of their gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall see.”**

**Isa. 35:4, “Say to those with anxious heart, ‘Take courage, fear not. Behold, your God will come with vengeance; The recompense of God will come, but He will save you.’”**

**Isa. 35:5, “Then the eyes of the blind will be opened, and the ears of the deaf will be unstopped.”**

**Isa. 35:6, “Then the lame will leap like a deer, and the tongue of the dumb will shout for joy. For waters will break forth in the wilderness and streams in the Arabah.”**

**1. Healings were never performed merely for their physical benefit.**

**a. Matt. 8:17; Foreshadowed Messianic fulfillment of Isa. 53.**

**b. Matt. 9:6 (Mark 2:10; Luke 5:24); To demonstrate authority to forgive sins.**

**c. Matt. 11:2–19 (Luke 7:18–23); To confirm His identity to John the Baptist when he was in prison.**

**d. Matt. 12:15–21; Foreshadowed fulfillment of Isaiah 42:1–4.**

- e. John 9:3; To demonstrate the reality of Christ as light of the world. Only Jesus healed the blind. No one else did. It was a specific Messianic sign.**
- f. John 11:4; To demonstrate the glory of God.**
- g. John 20:30–31; To demonstrate through miraculous evidences the veracity of Jesus' Messianic claims.**
- h. Acts 2:22; God the Father authenticates Jesus' claims.**

- 2. Jesus' miracles were not performed randomly or indiscriminately. He did not always heal those who needed healing or perform on demand, but to fulfill the plan of God (John 5:3–5; Matt 12:38–40).**
- 3. Healing was immediate or within minutes.**
- 4. There were an abundance of healings (Matt. 5:31).**
- 5. Jesus healed by touch (Matt. 8:15); command (John 5:8–9); the touch of His cloak (Matt. 9:20-22); spit (Mark 8:22–26).**
- 6. Not all who were healed expressed faith or were saved (John 5; Luke 17:11–19).**

**B. The Apostles' Apostolic healing also established the credentials of the Apostles.**

**2 Cor. 12:12, “The signs of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.”**

**Acts 3, 4, Peter and John healed the lame man to gain a hearing for the gospel.**

**Acts 5:12, “And at the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were taking place among the people; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's portico.”**

**Where faith of the recipient was not present at the time of the healing:**

- a. The nobleman's son (John 4:46–54), afterwards he became a believer.**
- b. The cripple at Bethesda (John 5:1–9). Not a believer.**
- c. The demon-possessed man in Capernaum on the Sabbath (Mark 1:23–28).**
- d. The paralyzed man healed—his friends had faith, not him (Matt. 9:2–8; Mark 2:3–12; Luke 5:18–26).**
- e. The centurion's servant, the centurion had faith not the servant (Matt. 8:5–13; Luke 7:1–10).**

- f. The blind and mute man (Matt. 12:22; Luke 11:14).**
- g. The Gadarene demoniacs (Matt. 8:28–34; Mark 5:1–20; Luke 8:26–39).**
- h. The Deaf-mute demon-possessed man (Matt. 9:32–33).**
- i. Feeding the five thousand (Matt. 14:14–21; Mark 6:34–44; Luke 9:12–17; John 6:5–13).**
- j. Feeding the four thousand (Matt. 15:29–31; Mark 8:1–9).**
- k. Healing the Canaanite woman's daughter—the mother had faith, not the daughter (Matt. 15:21–28; Mark 7:24–30).**

- l. The deaf-mute in Decapolis (Mark 7:31–37).**
- m. The demon-possessed boy (Matt. 17:14–18; Mark 9:14–29; Luke 9:38–42).**
- n. Restoring Malchus' ear (Luke 22:49–51; John 18:10).**
- o. Two blind men (Matt. 9:27–31).**
- p. Nine of the ten lepers did not respond in faith (Luke 17:11–19).**

## **Miracles where faith was present in the recipient:**

- a. Healing the leper (Matt. 8:2–4; Mark 1:40–45; Luke 5:12–16).**
- b. Healing the crippled hand (Matt. 12:9–13; Mark 3:1–5; Luke 6:6–10).**
- c. Peter walking on water (Matt. 14:24–33).**
- d. The man born blind (John 9:1–7).**
- e. Restoring sight to blind Bartemaus (Matt. 20:29–34; Mark 10:46–52; Luke 18:35–43).**

- f. The woman with the hemorrhage (Matt. 9:20–22; Mark 5:25–34; Luke 18:35–43).**
- g. One of the ten lepers responded in faith (Luke 17:11–19).**
- h. First miraculous catch of fish (Luke 5:1–11).**
- i. Second miraculous catch of fish (John 21:1–11).**

**Php. 2:26, “since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick.**

**Php. 2:27, “For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.” [NKJV]**

**Php. 2:28, “Therefore I sent him the more eagerly, that when you see him again you may rejoice, and I may be less sorrowful.” [NKJV]**

**Php. 2:29, “Receive him therefore in the Lord with all gladness, and hold such men in esteem;**

**Php. 2:30, “because for the work of Christ he came close to death, not regarding his life, to supply what was lacking in your service toward me.” [NKJV]**