

Lesson: PASTORAL HEART OF PAUL

Paul's opening statement of our lesson txt caught my attention and began the subject of my lesson – **“But I thought it necessary.”**

What Paul is about to teach us comes from his heart felt appreciation for the Philippians sending their only spiritual mature pastor Epaphroditus to ministry to Paul during his imprisonment at Rome. This led to Paul's statement – **“But I thought it necessary.”**

What Paul will teach us about this experience will show Paul's Pastoral Heart both from the priestly ministry of Epaphroditus as well as from the Philippian Church.

Today's lesson will teach **six aspects of the Pastoral Heart of Paul**. Paul and his missionary team brought the gospel of grace salvation to Philippi and established a church and appoint Epaphroditus as pastor of the church (Acts 14:21-23/ Paul's model; 16:8-40).

1. Paul used two Greek words with his opening statement **“I thought it necessary”** (2:25a).

“I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus.” (2:25a)

The first Greek word is **hegeomai**/ “I thought.” Hegeomai refers to someone with **experience able to lead the way** out of something. Like a forest ranger sent to find and lead others out of the forest to safety.

The second Greek word, **anagkaios**/ “it necessary.” Anagkaios refers to **urgency of the need** after much thought (pros and cons) of the rescue.

2. We learn that **pastors need pastors** and **teachers need teachers**. I know this to be true in my ministry.

Epaphroditus was sent to minister to Paul's imprisonment needs but became critically ill; and now Paul had to minister to his to send him home.

3. In **2:25b**, Paul listed **five characteristics** of Epaphroditus' spiritual mature pastoral ministry between Paul and him.
 - **My** Brother (alephos) – Family of God.
 - **My** Fellow-worker (sunergos) – Ministry to U/S (Phil.1:29).
 - **My** Fellow-soldier (sustratiotes) – Spiritual warfare (A/C).
 - **Your** message (apostelos) – Epaphroditus was human letter of love.
 - **Your** minister (tes leitourgos) – Priestly sacrificial offering.

4. In **2:26**, Paul explains to the church congregation that their pastor went from **Bed-sick to Homesick** for them. This was a good sign to Paul, Epaphroditus, and Church.

2 Signs of Homesickness: “(1) **Because** (*epieide*) he **was longing** (*epipotheo/ p.a.ptc.nsm*) for you all

“(2) and **was distressed** (*ademoneo/ p.a.ptc.nsm*) **because** (*dioti*) you had heard that he was sick.”

Epaphroditus’ homesickness was a healthy sign for Paul to send him home.

5. Paul explained the seriousness of Epaphroditus’ sickness in **2:27** – “**For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow.**”

Notice how God’s mercy to undeserved suffering (U/S) ministry worked differently in lives of Epaphroditus, Paul, and church family.

Paul also shows how God’s Mercy intervened from the sorrow of U/S becoming sorrowful (Ps.145:8-9/ triple sorrow brought triple mercy).

6. In 2:28-30, Paul gives his final four doctrinal suggestions to the church at Philippi, on receiving their pastor.

“Therefore I have sent all the **more eagerly** so that when you **see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you.**” (2:28)

Note four aspects of priestly service.

1st – **Receive him then in the Lord with all joy (2:29a).**

2nd – **Hold men like him in high regard** (*entimos/ term of endearment/ 2:29b*).

3rd – He came **close to death** for the **work of Christ (2:30a).**

4th – **Risked his life** to complete what was deficient in **your service to me (2:30b).**