

"Ye Know The Proof Of Him ..."

"But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you, that I may be of good comfort when I know your state. For I have no man like-minded, who will care truly for your state. For they all seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. But ye know the proof of him, that as a child serveth a father, so he served with me in furtherance of the gospel. Him therefore I hope to send forthwith, so soon as I shall see how it will go with me: but I trust in the Lord that I also shall come shortly" (Phil. 2:19-21).

Paul hoped to send Timothy shortly to the Philippians. Paul hoped, by sending Timothy to them, to learn how the Philippians fared, but at the same time Paul hope he would know shortly "how it would go" with him; and whatever that decision, Timothy could convey that news on to the brethren.

When Paul wrote, *"Ye know the proof of him,"* he shows clearly Philippian brethren already knew Timothy. Not only were they acquainted with him personally, they were aware of the disposition Timothy had to "serve Paul" as a son would aid a father.

It is true Luke does not mention specifically Timothy's presence in Philippi when Paul was there (Acts 16), but there is no doubt that he had been in the midst of them. As Paul passed through Lystra and Derbe and became acquainted with Timothy, he desired that he should travel with him for *"him would Paul have to go forth with him"* (Acts 16:2). It was on this journey sometimes later that Paul's company, which included Silas, came to Troas and there received the "Macedonian Call." At Troas another was added to this company for Luke began to travel with them. After Paul left Philippi and was driven from Thessalonica and Berea, and when he was brought to Athens by brethren, he instructed that Timothy and Silas should come to him with all haste (Acts 17:15f). Timothy was Paul's companion before he arrived in Philippi; he was Paul's companion in Berea and it is apparent he had been with him in Philippi (for Philippi lays between these two cities) and there he had demonstrated the respect and care for Paul so that brethren could and had discerned *"the proof of him."*

"I have no man likeminded ... who will care truly for your state." Paul urged quarreling Corinthians to be *"perfected together in the same mind and in the same judgment;"* in short, to be likeminded (1 Cor. 1:12). It is because they were of different minds from each other that divisions and party spirits existed in Corinth. Unity could only be secured and restored when brethren were likeminded or "on the same page" as a younger generation might say. When Paul speaks of the "likemindedness" of Timothy, he does not therein

compare Timothy with the Philippians (although doubtlessly they were). Timothy was likeminded with Paul. Both desired to know how the Philippian brethren were doing and both would be comforted when they came to know how the brethren there fared.

Not all shared the same solicitation concerned the brethren at Philippi. Others "*seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ.*" These words remind us of the Lord's parable of the great supper when at the time of the invitation it was announced "All things are ready' the guests with one accord "*began to make excuse*" (Lk. 14:17-18). We do not know what the brethren had done which showed Paul where their heart was (some conjecture that none were willing to travel from Rome to Philippi to find out for Paul the condition of the brethren); but what ever it was, it brought Paul's censure of them -- they seek their own, not the things of Jesus Christ. We should make an inventory of the things which consume our time and look ourselves in the face and ask, "Where, by our concern would Paul place us -- as Timothy, likeminded with Paul, or as the rest who sought their own?"

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