

# Disciples to Imitate

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[ 0 : 0 0 ] We're going to turn to Philippians chapter 2 now. And I'll read for us starting in verse 19. The Apostle Paul writes, I hope in the Lord Jesus 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 will be genuinely concerned for your welfare. For they all seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.

But you know Timothy's proven worth, how as a son with a father he has served with 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. I have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need.

For he has been longing for you all. And has been distressed because you heard that he was ill. Indeed, he was ill. Near to death. But God had mercy on him.

[ 1 : 0 7 ] And not only on him, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. I am the more eager to send him, therefore, that you may rejoice at seeing him again, and that I may be less anxious.

So receive him in the Lord with all joy and honor such men. For he nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me.

All right. I want to begin by playing you a recording. It's a little bit hard to hear, so you might have to sort of bend your ears, if that helps.

But who can tell me who this is? I'm hoping most of us. All right. The British Empire and the French Republic, linked together in their accord and in their need, will defend to the death of their native soil, aiding each other like good comrades to the utmost of their strength.

We shall go on to the end. We shall fight in France. We shall fight on the seas and oceans. We shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air.

[ 2 : 2 2 ] We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We shall fight on the beaches. We shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall fight in the fields and in the streets.

We shall fight in the hills. We shall never surrender. And if, which I do not for a moment believe, this island or a large part of it was subjugated and starving, then our empire beyond the seas, armed and guarded by the British Reich, would carry on the struggle until in God's good time, the new world, with all its power and might, steps forth to the rescue and the liberation of the old.

Right. Anyone? Anyone? Winston Churchill. And for extra points, the date. Anyone? Well, that's a bit tougher. But it's 1940, about a week after the evacuation from Dunkirk.

Right. Winston Churchill is giving this famous speech to Parliament to try and inspire them to mobilize for war. Right. They've just avoided a great defeat, but Winston wants them to see that they need to turn around and now start winning.

Rather than just retreating well. And it's rousing stuff. And if you haven't heard the whole thing, you know, you should. Churchill is a master of the English language. And it introduces for us the question that I want us to have a think about this morning, which is on your outline, if you've got one in front of you.

[ 3 : 57 ] The question is, who inspires you? Who inspires you? And I guess what is it about them that inspires you? Perhaps some great political leader like Winston Churchill.

I know, Abraham Lincoln or Nelson Mandela. Or some extraordinary sportsman like Michael Jordan. Just do it. Or a mountaineer like Sir Edmund Hillary.

Perhaps it's a great poet or wordsmith. I think of If by Rudyard Kipling. Does anyone know that one? Which, again, is exhausting, frankly, if you read it. It's sort of simultaneously exhausting and rousing.

If you can keep your head when all about you are losing theirs and blaming it on you. If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you, but make allowance for their doubting too. If you can wait and not be tired by waiting or being lied about, don't deal in lies.

Or being hated, don't give way to hating. And yet don't look too good nor talk too wise. And I'll skip down to the end because it is exhausting. If you can fill the unforgiving minute with 60 seconds worth of distance run, yours is the earth.

[ 5 : 04 ] And everything that's in it, and which is more, you'll be a man, my son. Oh, and how I want to be a man. You know, sometimes these great poets are so moving, you just want their words to be engraved upon your heart so that somehow you might be stirred up to a more noble life even without a coffee in the morning.

And of course, in the ancient world, in ancient Philippi, they had their fair share of heroic, inspiring stories too. At the Battle of Thermopylae in 480 BC when 300 Spartans with fantastic kicks devastated the great horde of invading Persians.

Or think of the extraordinary bravery of someone like Alexander the Great. Alexander was born only a couple of hundred kilometers away from Philippi. So he was sort of a local boy. Philippi was named after his father, Philip II.

But perhaps the most inspiring, most inspiring of all for these Roman citizens were the great exploits of someone like Julius Caesar.

His Gallic Wars, which he wrote home about, he wrote commentary so that everyone could read about how wonderful he was, how brilliant, and how he defeated the Gauls.

[ 6 : 25 ] The audacity of someone like Caesar to cross the Rubicon to defend his dignity, which ultimately sparked a civil war. Now all of this is in the background then in Philippi and in the Roman world.

These are the inspiring leaders on offer. And I wonder if they inspire you, these great men, glorious, courageous, these lion-hearted men.

And in some ways, it's fine and good, I think, if they do. There are a lot of noble characteristics about them to admire. But as we've already noted in this series, it's into this world of heroes and conquerors that Paul came preaching Jesus Christ.

And Jesus was not the typical conquering hero, was he? In fact, Jesus was one of the pathetic victims of Rome, not one of her great and glorious generals.

Jesus crossing the Rubicon moment, if you like, was the moment he decided to ride into Jerusalem on a donkey. And to give himself up into the hands of his enemies.

[ 7 : 39 ] Jesus didn't march into Jerusalem to defend his dignity. He humbly rode into Jerusalem to embrace humiliation and death.

To give himself in sacrificial service. Now you see, this could not be more subversive to the Roman way of thinking.

And I would say more to all kind of thinking of the natural man, the natural person. It is so counter-cultural to everything our world is on about. So, I'm going to read you a rather long quote from Tom Holland.

He writes in his book *Dominion*, which is basically about how the cross has shaped the West. He says, command and swagger were the very essence of the cult of the Caesars.

To rule as an emperor, an imperator, was to rule as a victorious general. In every town in Galatia, so in the original context he's talking about Galatia, but I think equally this could apply equally well in Philippi.

[ 8 : 44 ] In every town in Galatia, in every square, statues of Caesar served as a reminder to his subjects that to rank as the son of a god was by definition to embody earthly greatness.

No wonder then that Paul, proclaiming to the Galatians that there was only the one son of God and that he had suffered the death of a slave, not struggling against it but submitting willingly to the lash, should have described the cross as a scandal.

The offensiveness of it was not something that Paul ever sought to palliate. That it was a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to everyone else did not inhibit him in the slightest.

Only the world turned upside down could ever have sanctioned such an unprecedented, such a revolutionary announcement. If Paul did not stint in a province adorned with monuments to Caesar in hammering home the full horror and humiliation of Jesus' death, then it was because without the crucifixion he would have had no gospel to proclaim.

Christ, and notice he starts alluding to Philippians here, Christ, by making himself nothing, by taking on the very nature of a slave, had plumbed the depths to which only the lowest, the poorest, the most persecuted and abused of mortals were confined.

[ 10 : 06 ] If Paul could not leave the sheer wonder of this alone, if he risked everything to proclaim it to strangers likely to find it disgusting or lunatic or both, then that was because he had been brought by his vision of the risen Jesus to gaze directly into what it meant for him and for all the world.

that Christ, whose participation in the divine sovereignty over space and time he seems never to have doubted, had become human and suffered death on the ultimate instrument of torture, was precisely the measure of Paul's understanding of God, that he was love.

Now, I know that's a bit of a long quote, but do you see what this atheist, Mr. Holland, is saying? He's saying that the cross of Jesus directly confronts and contradicts the Roman way of thinking about glory and greatness.

So that when someone becomes a Christian, you see, one of the things about embracing the cross is that our worldview gets sort of turned upside down. The way we evaluate other people and ourselves, we can't use worldly categories anymore, like how rich, successful, well-spoken, strong, or clever someone is, or whatever it may be.

But from now on, we must evaluate people through the lens of the cross. And we must look for role models and inspiration from those people whose lives are most cross-shaped, most cross-saturated and dominated, which brings us to our passage this morning.

[ 11 : 50 ] Paul introduces us to two of his gospel comrades, Timothy and Epaphroditus. And Paul's aim here is to highlight these two men to inspire the Philippians to imitate them.

Paul wants to highlight these two faithful gospel partners to inspire the Philippians and us to imitate them. people and I remember this is a book all about gospel partners.

It's about being co-workers, about working side-by-side together, gospel camaraderie, joint ownership, etc. Which is why at the very heart of this letter, Paul brings up these two gospel partners to inspire the Philippians to imitate them.

Just as in our society there are people inspiring people that we look to who sort of set the tone for the rest of us, how we think and act. Paul wants Timothy and Epaphroditus to set the trend for the citizens of heaven.

Okay, so the first candidate Paul puts forward is Timothy. Timothy was one of Paul's protégés. He was a very well-known leader among the Church of Ephesus and other places. He traveled with Paul quite a bit. And there are three things in particular about Timothy that are worthy of our attention and imitation.

[ 13 : 11 ] Verse 19. Paul says, I hope in the Lord Jesus 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 will be genuinely concerned for your welfare.

So that's the first thing. Timothy was a profoundly other person-centered man. It's sort of sad, isn't it, that Paul says he has no one else like Timothy.

Timothy. So Timothy was in some sense unique among Paul's co-workers in just how selfless he was. The word concern there could equally be translated anxious.

It's actually the same word Paul used in chapter 4 verse 6 when he tells us not to be anxious, don't be anxious. But I think, you know, we'll come to that when we get there. I think here it's probably just worth noting that not all anxiety in and of itself is a bad thing.

Here, it's actually quite an admirable quality about Timothy that he really cares about the Philippians, doesn't he? He is anxious for them.

[ 14 : 21 ] He didn't adopt a sort of out of sight, out of mind attitude towards them. Sometimes it is helpful just to sort of forget and move on from people in order to focus on people in front of you.

I suspect some of us need to hear that and in our hyper-connected age we sort of need to remember that we should love the people in front of us but without sort of wanting to overreact either we need to remember that real, genuine, sincere love often looks like anxiety, worry, concern when your loved ones are far away.

And of course that's why Paul was eager to send Timothy back to Philippi in the first place because Paul also had been anxious about their welfare and he's eager to hear good news about how they're going.

Now the word for like there in verse 20 is literally the word like-minded or like-souled like sold and it could be that Paul is talking about no one being like-minded with Timothy which is what the ESV suggests but I wonder actually if Paul is talking about himself here and saying that no one except for Timothy is like-minded with him.

No one except for Timothy shares his mind for the Philippians and in other words Paul wants to send somebody who will be equally concerned for the Philippians as he himself is.

[ 15 : 50 ] Right? A kind of like-minded brother, a kindred spirit. And I think going back through the context then we're starting to see a picture develop. Right at the beginning of the chapter Paul was urging the Philippians to be of the same mind to have the same love to be in full accord and of one mind and then in verse 5 remember the mind we are to have specifically is the mind of Christ.

Now then here at the end of the chapter Paul is commending Timothy to us as someone who indeed has that mind who thinks like Christ and thinks like Paul.

Timothy was not a man who looked only to his own interests and he also looked to the interests of others genuinely concerned for the welfare of others.

Alright, so secondly notice how in verse 21 Paul links the idea of being other person centred with the idea of being Christ centred.

You notice the for in verse 21 how it links the two ideas together. Paul says I have no one like him who would be genuinely concerned for your welfare for they all seek their own interests not those of Jesus Christ.

[ 17 : 13 ] Now this is really important isn't it because actually the Christian life is not about putting others first. The Christian life is not about putting others first.

It's about putting Christ first and then others and then yourself last. I was brought up on the acronym joy. You heard this one?

Jesus others and then yourself. This is the way to find joy in the Christian life. You put Jesus first in others than yourself. Love God love your neighbor and in that you'll find your own joy and happiness.

That's the logic in these verses. Paul is saying that many of his friends and associates and even co-workers because they don't put the interests of Jesus Christ first and at the top of their priority list well then actually they aren't that concerned about others either.

They seek their own interests. So we need to make sure that we get this right don't we? Selfishness you know putting yourself first that's just like a social cancer I'm sure we all get that.

[ 18 : 27 ] It destroys relationships families communities but even humanism where we put other people first in the end that's just another sort of idolatry and it's destructive to society.

we need to remember like Timothy I am not the most important person in the world so I'll put others before myself and on top of that you are not the most important person in the world the Lord Jesus is ahead of all of us he is the supreme ruler and then the good news is that finally when you put Christ first in your life all of a sudden everything else falls into place as soon as you put the interests of Christ at the top of your list that in turn motivates love for others and even in the end you find a reason to care for yourself knowing that you're so cherished by Christ notice thirdly one more thing about Timothy Paul says he was gospel centered so in verse 22 but you know Timothy's proven worth how as a son with a father he has served with me in the gospel now I suspect this will sound tediously obvious to many of us but I think it's worth saying obvious things you can't be other person centered or Christ centered without being gospel centered right because if you are genuinely concerned for the welfare of other people then of course your top priority will be to share the life giving gospel with them

John Piper has a great quote he's an American preacher if you don't know him he says Christians care about all suffering especially eternal suffering Christians care about all suffering especially eternal suffering and I think it's just worth unpacking both halves of that statement on the one hand our brother is reminding us that we must love people right now not just in words but in actions right he goes on to mention sort of loving people going through disease malnutrition disability mental illness injury abuse assault loneliness rejection calamity these are all sorts of things in our world today that need the balm of Christian love and compassion right now and no doubt Paul's intention in this book is to stir up the brotherhood to abound in this kind of love for one another he wants a church of co-workers who care for one another and more and more you remember his prayer in chapter one nevertheless

Christians care about all suffering but especially eternal suffering and so again just a quote from the great man himself John Piper he says the second half of the sentence is intended to call out the unbelief of professing Christians who don't believe there is such a thing as eternal suffering and they're too modern for that hell doesn't exist it's an old-fashioned concept that we should be done with all this talk about eternal suffering is passé and it's not real I'm calling you out and saying that Christians don't talk that way because they believe Jesus that's unbelief and he says that's what's become of many Christians today they're out in the name of Jesus telling nobody about the fact that there is eternal suffering so it's a warning to us isn't it now I don't know which of those sort of statements might hit home for you this morning

I guess we need to make sure that we hear the one that we don't usually hear Christians care about all suffering especially eternal suffering so if we aren't chiefly concerned for the welfare of others then we will be gospel centered people if we aren't chiefly concerned about seeking the interests of Jesus Christ then again our top priority will be to share to publish far and wide the gospel of Jesus Christ the gospel of his death and resurrection and heavenly enthronement Jesus deserves to be honored doesn't he evangelism mission exists not just for the good of people in fact not primarily for the good of people but for the hallowing of God's name for the glory of the Lord Jesus the reason we go out on mission together the first reason is because the Lord Jesus is not worshipped as he should be

[ 23:17 ] I can't help but think again of the Olympic ceremony and how the organizers saw fit to mock and ridicule the Lord Jesus on the world stage targeting especially the night that he was betrayed it's outrageous and brothers and sisters I know it's easy to become dejected and discouraged by that kind of thing but on the contrary this is what should fire us up for gospeling our precious Lord Jesus deserves to be honoured deserves to be worshipped he loved us and gave himself for us and now he reigns above so these three things go together Paul wants to inspire us with our brother Timothy so that we too might be other person centred Christ centred and gospel centred people alright but let's move on to Paul's second inspiring role model for us

Epaphroditus in verses 25 to 30 now we don't know very much about Epaphroditus apart from what Paul mentions here so I think contrary to some scholars we should be cautious about constructing a backstory an elaborate backstory but right off the bat notice Paul lists five things about him that he wants us to know so in verse 25 you see number one Paul says Epaphroditus is my brother now obviously Paul has already used father son language with Timothy here he uses brother language the point is that Paul sees the Christian community as one big family it's a term of affection and love and even if that's not how you might feel about your brother I don't know but it's about a special bond which cannot be broken brothers can be friends or enemies but they're still brothers you can't divorce your siblings so that's the first thing Epaphroditus is a brother number two Epaphroditus is a fellow worker Paul uses this word fairly frequently to describe those men and women engaged in gospel work and on the gospel team as it were those who are doing the work of evangelism or edification the preachers of the gospel or those directly supporting that work they are co-laborers co-workers in the business of the gospel co-workers in the kingdom third

Epaphroditus is a fellow soldier now Paul very rarely uses this word in fact it's only used one other time in the New Testament apart from the one here but obviously the idea is fairly straightforward Paul sees himself as engaged in a war with Epaphroditus they're both soldiers in the Lord's army they're fighting together and suffering together they're taking their orders from the same captain our Lord Jesus Christ and I think we should just dwell on this title for a moment because it's so integral to the whole thrust of the book and because it's so rare remember back in chapter 1 verse 27 the key verses of the whole letter Paul says he wants the Philippians to stand firm in one spirit striving side by side for the faith of the gospel not frightened by their opponents and then verse 29 for it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that

I still have right this whole book is about gospel conflict alongside gospel co-workers fellow soldiers and Paul is obviously highlighting the fact that Epaphroditus has been a faithful fellow soldier engaged in that gospel conflict and for the Philippians citizenship and military service would have gone hand in hand perhaps that's not a huge part of our culture but again think of I don't know Sparta or Singapore I don't know citizenship and military service go hand in hand not least because the reason Philippi was a Roman colony was because Caesar Augustus had settled veteran soldiers there after a great battle that had happened nearby so many of the citizens of Philippi would have been descendants of veterans they were in kind of military families but of course even without that direct connection a lot of the sort of pride and glory in ancient Rome was centered around their military victories their conquests so Paul is picking up on that here right and he's not rubbishing Roman citizenship exactly but he is inviting us to see ourselves first and foremost as soldiers of Christ rather than soldiers of Rome and marching under the banner of grace and peace rather than the banner of SPQR so who would you charge over the trenches for who would you jump in front of a bullet for who would you stick your head above the parapet for what cause are you fighting for what country see that's the question and to some degree our earthly citizenship and our heavenly citizenship can coexist happily because

Christ's kingdom is not of this world so he encourages his followers to give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar to be good citizens and there's a certain amount of patriotism that is right and good and healthy it's part of honoring your parents to appreciate the heritage that they built and left you but whenever there is a clash between these two identities we're in these two realms Paul wants us to know which one to choose we need to choose our heavenly citizenship over our earthly one it's as if we all have two passports but we need to know which one is the most important now it reminds me actually of an old hymn which is one of my favorites it's basically a British patriotic hymn which I'm going to subject you all to although Catherine I tried to sing this a couple of nights ago at home and we've just butchered it it was brutal so I'm not going to sing it to you which you will be very thankful for some of you will know it

[ 29 : 49 ] I hope it's called I vow to thee my country anyone yeah good fabulous brothers and sisters anyway it's often sung in military contexts so I think that's why it comes to mind just listen to I'll read the whole thing for you the first verse is about great Britain or whatever earthly country that you come from insert your country here I vow to thee my country all earthly things above entire and whole and perfect the service of my love the love that asks no questions the love that stands the test that lays upon the altar the dearest and the best the love that never falters the love that pays the price the love that makes undaunted the final sacrifice then listen to the second verse and there's another country

I've heard of long ago most dear to them that love her most great to them that know we may not count her armies we may not see her king her fortress is a faithful heart her pride is suffering and soul by soul and silently her shining bounds increase and her ways are ways of gentleness and all her paths are peace I think that last line is a quote from Proverbs chapter 3 it's a beautiful hymn isn't it and you see what's being said there these two countries are being put side by side as it were not because they're of equal importance quite the contrary but because our commitment to both of them is alike we know to some extent and again I worry that we might have perhaps a too weak an idea of what citizenship really is but we know to some extent what being a citizen of a country is like or a society just as we know what it's like to belong to a family but if you're a citizen of heaven first and foremost your family is the

Christian family brother your occupation is the gospel fellow soldier sorry fellow worker your army is the Lord's army fellow soldier right our kingdom is not the kingdom of this world but the kingdom of the Lord Jesus that is who we are fighting for and suffering for and sacrificing for and now Paul has two more labels for Epaphroditus this time they're related more to the Philippians than to Paul so first he says Epaphroditus is your messenger and literally the word is apostle right he's your sent one or he's your ambassador it's not that Epaphroditus is one of the twelve apostles of the Lord Jesus he's the one apostle from the Philippians the man that they sent to Paul to represent them and then the last label Paul uses in verse 25 is minister so this is what the

Philippians sent Epaphroditus to do for Paul they sent him to serve and this word has a few interesting connotations it's not the usual word for servant or minister it's quite rare again it's basically used for three different kinds of service the first kind is what you might associate with government like public service a minister in that sense then it's also associated with priestly service like making offerings kind of cultic service and then finally it's used sometimes to talk about personal assistance or personal aids now of course words don't sort of mean every different thing that they could possibly mean in every context they don't always carry every possible meaning with them wherever they go but I think Paul is quite deliberately using this word probably because it carries all of these connotations and they all apply to Epaphroditus but Epaphroditus has been behaving as an upstanding public spirited kind of citizen a good servant at his service has been a sacrifice pleasing to

God and of course he's been personally attending to Paul's needs so Epaphroditus has been a great brother a fellow worker a fellow soldier to Paul he's been a faithful ambassador and a servant on behalf of the Philippians and that's why he's being held up here as an exemplary role model for us now the rest of the paragraph is basically about why Paul thought it necessary to send Epaphroditus back to Philippi and it all has to do with his illness and in fact Paul says Epaphroditus was so ill that he was near to death which again I think ought to remind us that Epaphroditus is behaving in a Christ-like way remember we just read earlier in the chapter that Christ humbled himself to the point of death even death on a cross well Epaphroditus Paul wants to stress has behaved in a Christ-like manner notice it's not just that he got ill right in verse 30 he risked his life to make up what was lacking in your service to me see whatever his illness was and again we don't know the details but whatever it was and whenever and however it happened without thought to himself

[ 35 : 22 ] Epaphroditus pressed on in service in humble service to Paul he didn't look to his own interests but to the interests of others Christ-like and of course even in verse 26 notice why Epaphroditus was in distress Epaphroditus was in distress not because he was ill but because you heard that he was ill right what worried Epaphroditus was how the Philippians might be worrying about him this is not how I behave in illness anyway Epaphroditus is concerned about Paul and the Philippians he wants to serve others and then again in verse 30 notice he nearly died for the work of Christ now again perhaps you've already picked up the pattern we've seen the same three things that we saw with Timothy Epaphroditus was an other person centered man concerned about the Philippians being concerned about him he's a



Christ centered man and a gospel centered man he nearly died for the work of Christ he cared about Paul and the Philippians and the work of Christ and he was so fanatically committed to loving and serving people that ultimately he was willing to risk his life to complete his mission alright so as we close let's return to the big picture remember Paul wants to highlight these two faithful gospel partners to inspire the Philippians and us to imitate them and that's because in their own ways they both exhibit the mind of Christ the key thing from earlier in the chapter they're living as humble other person centered sacrificial servants of the Lord Jesus and his gospel and others and just as we close I want you to think about how interesting it is that we are told to imitate people and specifically that the Bible doesn't just tell us to imitate Christ right so we're told to imitate followers of Jesus

Christ or imitate people who are imitating Christ I mean we are told to imitate Christ directly ourselves the Bible does say that but actually in God's kindness he's given us even more than that hasn't he he's given us other examples of brothers and sisters who aren't perfect people but are still nonetheless worthy of our imitation I think of Timothy and Epaphroditus as like little stepping stones on the way to the Lord Jesus us and we might add to these men other great servants of God down through the ages I'm thinking of people like Corrie ten Boom CT stud Jim and Elizabeth Elliott you know these people champions of the faith I've been learning a little bit about Amy Carmichael this year she's such a wonderful evangelical woman with the church missionary society she served in India around the turn of the 20th century and it was I was reading a book she wrote it was so exciting to hear over a century later her love for the lost her passion for the poor and for serving Jesus just sort of it's still just bouncing off the pages when you read what she's written and you see in some ways what's helpful about these people is that they're not perfect they're not the Messiah they were striving to be like Christ just like us and so in that way that they are they're not unattainable goals if you know what

I mean it's not over realized eschatology to imagine that you could be an Amy Carmichael or a CT stud or something in this life they sort of put flesh on the bones of what it could really look like for you to be a faithful disciple of the Lord Jesus even in this age while we're waiting to be perfected so we can put our shoulders to the wheel now strap on the armor of God fight bravely for Christ on the beaches or wherever on the landing ground at the school gate or I don't know new growth group proclaiming his kingdom loving and serving the family of believers loving the lost so one more time other person centered Christ centered gospel centered let's pray loving father we thank you for these inspiring brothers who were not rich and famous or successful or in the world's eyes but who lived cross shaped servant hearted lives do help us to imitate them to follow the example of other brothers and sisters who you've given us who have behaved in an exemplary way by faith by your Holy Spirit's power at work within them help us to imitate people as they imitate Christ so that we too might bring you glory and that we might not be ashamed of the gospel but wholeheartedly loving people with the gospel and adorning the gospel with loving good works as well we pray in Jesus name

Amen