

Speaking to the soul



Reliance

But you know how Timothy has proved himself. Like a son with his father, he has served with me in preaching the Good News. I hope to send him to you just as soon as I find out what is going to happen to me here.

Philippians 2:22–23

Timothy was clearly very important to Paul. Born at Lystra in Galatia (now part of Turkey) Timothy had a Jewish mother and a Greek father. Paul met him on his second missionary journey and he was a regular companion from then onwards. The letter to the Philippians was one of six letters

in which Timothy was named as the co-author with Paul, and the apostle also wrote two deeply personal and moving letters specifically to Timothy whom he referred to as his dear son. In Philippians, Paul stated that he had no one else like him. Everyone else looked after their own interests, but not Timothy. He could be relied upon as a man of faith and someone who genuinely cared.

As Paul languished in prison it must have been wonderful for him to know that he had Timothy's continual support. Paul's future was entirely uncertain and his many references to death suggest that he wasn't at all confident that he would get out alive. Paul had to rely on those who would continue his missionary work and in Timothy he had someone who had proved himself, and who would take the work forward.

Our lives are very different from Paul's, but we also need we can completely rely on. Thank God for the blessing of good friends who share our convictions and our burdens, and who are willing to walk with us whatever happens. There is a wonderful verse in Proverbs that says that "a real friend sticks closer than a brother" (Proverbs 18:24). What a gift!

QUESTION

Who are you able to rely upon and how do you look after your relationship with them? Who relies on you?

PRAYER

Lord God, thank you for the gift of friends. Help me never to take them for granted but always to be loyal in my love and support for them. Amen