

Philippians 2:20

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state.

Analysis

For I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state (οὐδένα γὰρ ἔχω ἰσόψυχον ὅστις γνησίως τὰ περὶ ὑμῶν μεριμνήσει, *oudena gar echō isopsychon hostis gnēsiōs ta peri hymōn merimnēsei*)—*Oudena...isopsychon* ("no one like-souled") is striking. *Isopsychon* (hapax legomenon: *isos*, "equal," + *psychē*, "soul") means sharing Paul's mindset/spirit. Only Timothy matches Paul's pastoral concern. *Gnēsiōs* ("genuinely, sincerely") contrasts superficial concern. *Merimnēsei* (future, "will care for") comes from *merimnaō* ("be anxious, care for")—earnest concern.

This verse reveals Timothy's exceptional character: he genuinely cares for others' welfare, not his own interests (v. 21). Paul's comment implies others in Rome (even believers) lacked this other-centeredness. Timothy exemplifies 2:3-4 (esteem others, look to their interests). He embodies the Christ-hymn's self-giving pattern. Paul commends Timothy not abstractly but relationally—proven care for Philippians.

Historical Context

Paul's Roman companions included many (Col 4:7-14), yet only Timothy merited this commendation. This suggests widespread self-interest even among Christian workers—a sobering reality. Timothy's proven track record (Acts 16-20; 1 Cor 16:10; Phil 2:22) earned Paul's trust. Ancient patronage culture bred self-promotion; Timothy's genuine care was countercultural Christlikeness.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. Who in your life is 'like-souled' (isopsychon)—sharing your deepest values and concerns?
2. How can you cultivate 'genuine' (gnēsiōs) care for others versus superficial or self-serving concern?
3. What would others say about your concern for their 'state' (ta peri hymōn)—is it earnest or casual?

Interlinear Text

οὐδένα	γὰρ	ἔχω	ἰσόψυχον	ὅστις	γνησίως	τὰ	περὶ
no man	For	I have	likeminded	who	will naturally	G3588	state
G3762	G1063	G2192	G2473	G3748	G1104		G4012
ὑμῶν	μεριμνήσει·						
for your	care						
G5216	G3309						

Additional Cross-References

Philippians 2:2 (Parallel theme): Fulfil ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.

Philippians 2:22 (Parallel theme): But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel.

1 Corinthians 16:10 (Parallel theme): Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord, as I also do.

John 12:6 (Parallel theme): This he said, not that he cared for the poor; but because he was a thief, and had the bag, and bare what was put therein.

John 10:13 (Parallel theme): The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.

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