

## QUESTION 5

- a) Did Paul suspect that some of the Philippians might feel that Epaphroditus had not been the right man to have been sent on this mission?
- b) Had he failed?
- c) Had they prayed enough? Had the church leaders made the correct decision?
- d) Did Paul fear for Epaphroditus' good reputation and the future acceptance of his ministry in Philippi?
  
- e) Paul could not commend this man enough. He had been a great blessing to him and the church should rejoice in what he had been able to do on their behalf.
- f) For Paul, it was no exaggeration that Epaphroditus nearly died for the work of the gospel.
- g) He had risked his life to do something that the church back in Philippi were unable to carry out.
- h) The church should honour such people. Not putting them on a pedestal, but giving thanks to God for them.

## QUESTION 6

- a) We are to have a wide view of the gospel work beyond our own local situation.
- b) Be prepared to invest in people who can encourage and minister on behalf of the local church.
- c) Have a love and concern for those in the fellowship.
- d) Be prepared to encourage and support others who are involved in different ministries. We cannot always do what they do; but can back them up with practical help that will release them to serve.
- e) Demonstrate a commitment to the work of the gospel, despite our circumstances.

## GROUP LEADER'S NOTES – STUDY 10

### QUESTION 1

- a) The church at Philippi had been committed to supporting Paul on his missionary travels (see **2 Cor 8:1-2**).
- b) When the Philippians heard that Paul was in prison, they were moved to action. Not only did they pray for him (see **1:19**); they also sent practical help to him.
- c) What they could not personally do, because distance prevented them; they delegated to Epaphroditus on their behalf.
- d) The journey from Philippi to Rome wouldn't have been easy. It was an 800-mile journey by boat across the Mediterranean Sea.
- e) Epaphroditus had been entrusted with this task but had evidently become more than simply a delivery man.
- f) It had been the intention that he would stay indefinitely as a companion to Paul. To be a gift as well as well as to bring a gift.

## QUESTION 2

Here we find 5 titles for Epaphroditus in just one verse.

- Brother – representing fellowship. Being united in Christ. Part of the same family. Paul appreciated having this brother with him.
- Fellow worker – indicating a concern to reach the lost. He's united with Paul in working for the gospel. It is important to see here that Paul did not consider himself superior to Epaphroditus in ministry. They were fellow-workers.
- Fellow soldier – standing by Paul in the spiritual battle. Gospel living and working, is being involved in warfare against the enemy of souls.
- Messenger – Epaphroditus is entrusted to go on behalf of the church. He is clearly well thought of by others in the church.
- Minister – Not only was Epaphroditus sent with the gifts from the church, but also cared for Paul's needs while he was imprisoned. This demonstrates the servant heart.

## QUESTION 3

- a) The fact that Epaphroditus was entrusted with this task tells us something about him.
- b) The church wouldn't have sent just anyone.
- c) Like Timothy, Epaphroditus was concerned about others. This is evident in our passage.
- d) At great cost he had ministered to Paul on behalf of the church in Philippi and had been extremely ill. Indeed, he had nearly died.
- e) We have already seen in verse 25 how Paul writes affectionately about Epaphroditus and the value he placed on his friendship and fellowship. He demonstrates this when he writes about Epaphroditus recovering and saving Paul from what he calls 'sorrow upon sorrow'.
- f) Epaphroditus was concerned that the church was worried about him during his illness. He wanted them to know he was well again; and longed for their fellowship.

## QUESTION 4

- a) It would have been a wrench for Paul to lose Epaphroditus.
- b) However, sending him home would bring great joy to the church; even though sorrow for himself.
- c) But he was also aware of the concern of the church for the man they had sent.
- d) Now that he was well again, Paul wanted the church to see first-hand; knowing that they had been as anxious as he had been.
- e) He also wants to respond to Epaphroditus' wish to see them.
- f) It is also interesting to see, that hard as it would be to see him go; Epaphroditus being back in the church would be one less thing for Paul to be anxious about.
- g) It is also quite likely that this was an opportunity, and that Epaphroditus took Paul's letter to the church with him.