

[Welcome](#)

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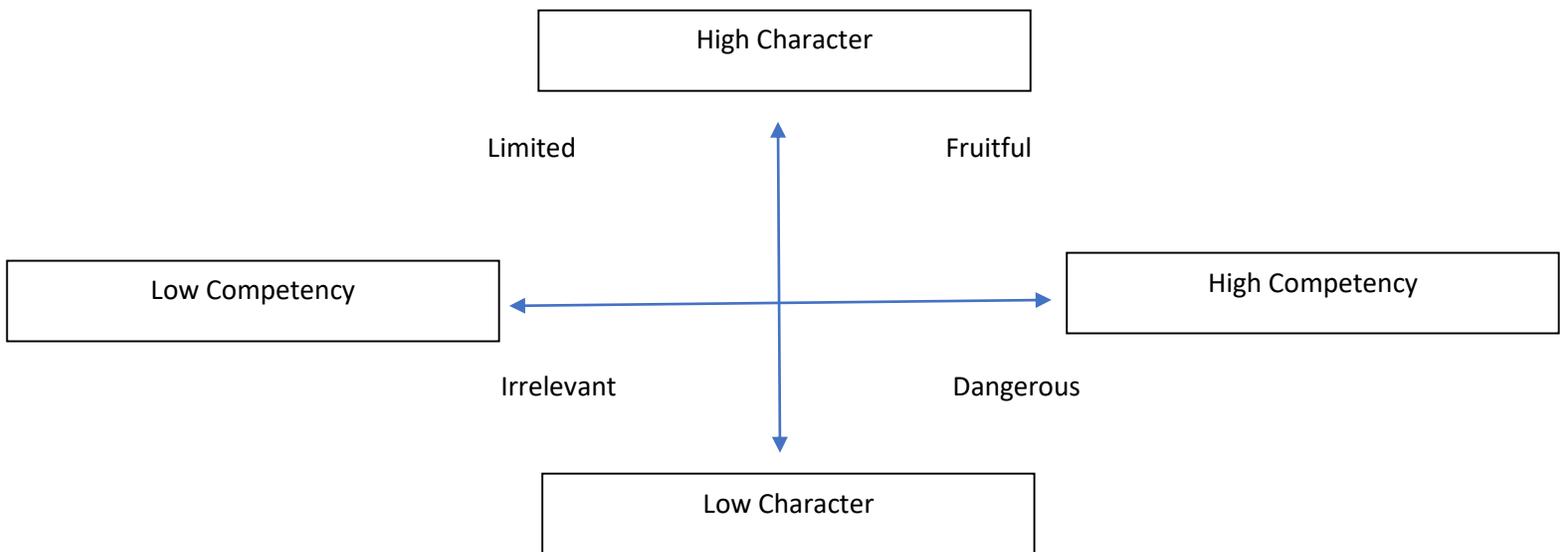
Philippians 2:5-30

**Opening**..... What does heroic leadership in the world look like? Around the time of Jesus there seemed to be growing consensus about what it meant to be a heroic leader. Caesar August (and even before him—Alexander the Great) fit the description. He put an end to the long running Roman civil war bringing peace to all of the known world at the time. Powerful military might and great organizational skills were seen as August’s key attributes. It didn’t take too long for people to call August “divine.”

What about today? What are people saying are key attributes of political candidates?

[Read Philippians 2:5-11.](#)

Most of the people in Paul’s world, thinking that people like Alexander and Augustus were fantastic leaders, were shocked beyond belief at the idea that the one true God might be known at last in the person of a crucified Jew. Many people in our world find it very difficult as well, and we might like to ask the reason why. Could it be that we, too, have allowed ourselves to slide into pagan views of what deity or divinity consist of—views that would then make it difficult to fit Jesus into them? If so, isn’t it about time we did what the New Testament writers urge us to do (vs. 5): rethink our whole picture of what it means to be a leader?



[Read Philippians 2:12-18.](#)

Paul is looking forward once more to the Day of the Messiah—the day in which God will bring the whole world to justice and peace, through the return of Jesus. He doesn’t know whether he will live to see that

day. But he has designed a “building” that, if the builders keep working at it the way he’s showed them, will stand out as the one thing of beauty in a world of ugliness.

How can we be signs of life in a world that only knows the way to death?

### **Read Philippians 2:19-24**

It is interesting that Paul doesn’t say “Timothy is a wonderful teacher”, or even “Timothy is a very devout and holy man”, but, “Timothy will genuinely care for you.” The definition Paul seems to be adopting for a good pastor—and the implication is that he himself was like this—has more to do with sheer unselfish love than anything to do with the person themselves. Indeed, Paul contrasts Timothy favorably with others (whom he doesn’t name; but it’s a rather bleak picture of the other Christians working in Ephesus at the time): the others, he says, are all looking after their own interests, rather than those of Jesus; but Timothy is different.

How is Timothy (and for that matter, Epaphroditus in vs. 25-30) a model of what Paul was desiring in 2:1-4 and of how Jesus is described in 2:5-11?

### [Closing](#)