

II Timothy, Sermon #35

II Timothy 4

We are quickly winding down II Timothy.

Just a couple of messages left, and then we will begin our summer series on the life of Joseph.

II Timothy 4

The last verses of Paul's last letter focuses on people, the many friends and the few foes who influenced his ministry and impacted his life.

In these closing verses, he recognizes and remembers people.

Paul did not write this section as an afterthought.

The Lord wanted the rest of His church to know about these people in Paul's life and to learn from their faithfulness or their failures.

I've entitled today's message "The People of Paul's Life, Part I"

II Timothy 4:9

Let us stand for the reading of God's Holy Word.

II Timothy 4:9-16

Let us pray.

You may be seated.

The People of Paul's Life

Paul is writing from Death Row—his crime—being a Christian.

He expected to live a few more months before his execution, because he asked Timothy to bring his coat and his books (v. 13).

He wanted to see Timothy one more time, face-to-face, before he died.

Vs. 9 – Make every effort to come to me soon

Before he ended the letter, Paul said to Timothy in verse 21 to “come before winter.”

All the ships would be in port during the winter—it would be too dangerous for sailing. So, if Timothy waited too long, he would miss his opportunity to be able to travel; and then it would be too late.

Paul longed to see Timothy with the longing of a father to see his son.

It was, therefore, imperative that Timothy **make every effort to come** to Paul **soon**. Realize the relationship between these two men.

Both I Timothy and II Timothy—Paul expressed opening remarks to Timothy as “my own son in the faith” (1:2) and in this second letter as “my dearly beloved son” (1:2).

Paul had no closer friend than Timothy.

He did not have a co-worker who was more dependable than Timothy.

He told the Corinthians,

I Corinthians 4:16-17, “Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me. For this cause have I sent unto you Timotheus, who is my beloved son, and faithful in the Lord, who shall bring you into remembrance of my ways which be in Christ, as I teach every where in every church.”

Paul wrote to the Philippians and said,

Philippians 2:19-20, *“But I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timotheus shortly unto you, that I also may be of good comfort, when I know your state. For I have no man likeminded [of the same mind, on the same page], who will naturally care for your state.”*

Many Christians have had such a spiritual relationship, like Paul had with Timothy, teaching, training, discipling, helping the young man grow in the faith.

How many of us have had such a spiritual relationship as a mentor to someone else?

There are people in this congregation and people coming that need this spiritual father/mother in their life (II Timothy 2:2, Titus 2).

All children should have this from their parents.

Paul had Timothy, Titus—he poured his life into!

Who are we helping to develop, disciple for the Lord?

Now, how many of us had a spiritual brother or sister who came alongside us to help us grow in the Lord—who was personally involved in our spiritual development?

Who is, or was, our spiritual mentor in the faith?

Who are our spiritual children today?

This is an area we should all be involved in!

Paul asked for Timothy to come soon.

Now, in verse 10, we have a flip-flop from the faithful to unfaithful.

Demas, the Deserter – vs. 10a

Demas had abandoned Paul like a husband or wife who runs out, like children who abandon their parents in their old age.

“Abandoned”—depicts one who has left his companion in the clutch of circumstances.

And, the Word of God tells us why he ran out.

Vs. 10b

Demas “loved this present world.”

Demas had, as a believer, tasted of the Word of God, preaching, ministry
But he preferred “this present evil world.”

The Bible says that Jesus “. . . *gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father*” (Galatians 1:4).

Demas returned to the world.

Demas is first mentioned in Colossians 4:14, which was written shortly after
I Timothy and some five years before II Timothy.
So, Demas had been faithful.

At that time, Demas was one of the Paul’s closest associates, along with Luke and
Epaphras.
Demas had been valuable to Paul and to the ministry in Rome.

In the book of Philemon, Paul sent greetings on behalf of Demas, one of his co-
laborers.

Philemon 24, “*Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlaborers.*”

Demas had been an active believer, active in ministry for the Lord.
But as God’s ministry continued, things became more difficult.

Paul was being persecuted for the faith and sentenced to execution for being a
Christian.

★And, any co-worker of Paul risked sharing persecution and prison with him.★

So, as the risk increased, Demas’s resolve decreased, because he **loved this present world** more than he loved the Lord, the Lord’s people, or the Lord’s work.

Whatever happened, his cowardice was greater than his commitment, and he deserted Paul.

This word “forsaken” is a strong verb that means to utterly abandon and leave someone helpless in a dire situation.

Many believers break rank when the battle gets hot—when things get hard, they desert/abandon ship.

Not too many Christians like to sacrifice; they like comforts—not sacrifice, loss of freedom.

Christianity became too high a price for Demas—easy for us to say that.

Many believers have never considered the cost of a genuine commitment to Christ, the demands and disciplines of a Christlike life—much less experienced any serious persecution.

Demas fled to Thessalonica, leaving Paul and rejoining the world.

Demas brought great disappointment to Paul.

Demas took off, but there were other faithful believers.

Vs. 10c

We know very little about **Crescens** (CressENZ).

He was sent **to Galatia**—he was a faithful and dependable servant of Christ.

Crescens was a dedicated leader sent to dedicated churches.

He is among the myriads of faithful men and women who, for the most part, were known in the early church but have been unknown to us.

Vs. 10d

Titus to Dalmatia—also known as Yugoslavia or modern-day Croatia/Bosnia/
Montenegro/Albania

Titus was both known and faithful.

If you flip a page forward in your Bible, you will come to Titus, but chronologically, it fits
between I and II Timothy.

Titus is mentioned nine times in II Corinthians and twice in Galatians.

Titus was a builder and equipper, a man the apostle fully trusted to preach and pastor
struggling churches.

Vs. 12

Tychicus would take Timothy's place in Ephesus (4:12) and he is on the way.
He had some other stops and this letter would beat him there.

Tychicus is a personal servant.

He had delivered other letters for Paul before.

Colossians 4:7 says he was a faithful servant, helper in the ministry.

There is no evidence that he was a teacher or pastor, but he was a valuable asset to
God and a trusted friend to Paul.

Vs. 11a

Only Luke is with me. (4:11a)

Because of Nero's brutal persecution, many believers had fled the capital, but not Luke.

Luke is mentioned by name only three times in the New Testament.

Yet he wrote the longest of the four gospels as well as the lengthy book of Acts.

Paul refers to this man as “Luke, the beloved physician” (Colossians 4:14) and as one of his “fellow workers” (Philemon 24).

Because of his literary skills, it seems probable that he acted sometimes as Paul’s amanuensis—Paul’s writing secretary.

Although **Luke** was a physician by profession, we are told nothing of his medical work, though he doubtless treated Paul and many of the believers—using his skills to help the Church.

He was used uniquely by the Holy Spirit to chronicle both the life of Christ and the early life of the Church.

He was a humble servant of the Lord and of his fellow saints, he carefully kept himself in the background.

Luke had been a longtime companion of Paul, accompanying the apostle for many years and over thousands of miles.

When we read Acts, look at his use of “we,” “us,” and “our.”

He was with Paul at Troas and Philippi during the second missionary journey, joined him again at the end of the third, and went with him to Jerusalem to face arrest and imprisonment.

He accompanied Paul on the trip to Rome, was shipwrecked with him off the shores of Malta, ministered in Rome with him during the first imprisonment, and comforted him during the second and last imprisonment.

At the writing of this letter, the apostle is not sad but glad that Luke still **is with me**. Luke had a moneymaking profession, but Christ was first in his life.

We can be all kinds of things but we should first be a follower of Christ—Christian teacher, nurse, secretary, student, mechanic—using our skills to help God’s people and further God’s ministry.

Vs. 11b

We do not know where **Mark** was at this time, but it seems evident that he lived somewhere on the route Timothy would take from Ephesus to Rome.

Mark—John Mark, was from Jerusalem, and the church met in his house (Acts 12:12). He was chosen to go with Paul and Barnabas as they set out on the first missionary journey.

But along the way, John Mark left the missions team and returned to Jerusalem” (Acts 13:13).

The Bible does not tell us why he left, but we know that Paul was extremely unhappy about it.

Later on, Paul and Barnabas set out again on the second missionary trip and Barnabas wanted John Mark to come along, but Paul thought it not good to take him with them (Acts 15:36-40).

From all New Testament accounts, Barnabas fully lived up to his name, which means “Son of Encouragement.”

Whenever and however the change in Mark occurred, Barnabas must have been involved.

All those years later, this young man had proved himself to Paul.

Paul told Colossae to welcome the now-faithful Mark if he visited them (Colossians 4:10) and counted him among the fellow workers (Philemon 24).

Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark as was given him through Peter (I Peter 5:13)

In many ways and to many people, he had become a faithful and valued leader in the church, and Paul asked Timothy to bring Mark—he is profitable.

Two things:

#1 – Just because we failed or disappointed God, unfaithful—does not mean
God is done with us and

#2 – we need men and women like Barnabas who will come alongside.

We need to learn from Barnabas about how to encourage fellow Christians.

(OREL)

How good it is to know that one failure in Christian service need not make one's whole
life a failure.

Paul had been wrong about Mark, and now he was able to say that Mark was profitable
to him in his ministry—and I am glad he said that here as some of his last words.

The People of Paul's Life

Let us stand for closing invitation.

Even Paul could not effectively minister alone—folks, we are all in this together.

Paul did not presume to work for the Lord independent of other believers or try to meet every need and accomplish every task himself.

He had teams of fellow workers, fellow servants, fellow preachers and teachers in whom he placed great trust for mutual ministry.

Faithful co-laborers

We need to see ourselves as a part of the ministry—supplying our part so that the whole functions well.

Are we a profitable Christian like Mark?

Are we using our skills like Dr. Luke to help God's people?

Are we a faithful Christian—unknown like Cress-enz?

Are we a faithful Christian—known like Titus?

Are we a servant of the Lord and His people like Tike-ih-kus?

Or, are we a Demas—we have forsaken Christ and His Church for our own selfish living—for love of the world?

Join the team, join the church—meet our leader, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel