

II Timothy, Sermon #36

II Timothy 4—Swan Song

The great Apostle Paul is in Rome, incarcerated in that horrible Mamertine prison--where death row inmates were kept. One historian wrote, and I quote, "It was 12 feet below the ground and neglect, darkness and stench make it hideous and fearsome to behold."

A person's last words are significant—they are a window that helps us to look into his heart.

As Paul faced the executioner's sword, many people were on his mind.

There are 17 different men and women named in this chapter.

All were a part of Paul's life, and all played a role in his ministry.

In this chapter, Paul brought Timothy up to date on the spiritual condition, activities, and whereabouts of certain men and women.

I've entitled these closing messages of II Timothy "The People of Paul's Life" Part 2.

II Timothy 4:9

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

II Timothy 4:9-22

Let us pray.

You may be seated.

The People of Paul's Life

When Paul writes to Timothy, winter is on the way (vs. 21) and the prison is cold.

Vs. 13

A **cloak** was a large, heavy wool garment that served both as a coat and blanket.

- A cloak was extremely expensive.
- Books and parchments also were expensive.

The Bible tells us that Carpus was keeping these items in a town called Troas.

Troas was 150 miles north of Ephesus.

Paul asked Timothy to pick up these items on his way!

Paul had entrusted Carpus with the care of these important possessions.

Carpus was trustworthy.

We ought to be able to entrust believers with our most valuable possessions.

The cloak gave physical comfort, but the reading materials were for the mind and soul.

Bring the books/parchments.

- The books were scrolls.
- Parchments were vellum sheets, made of specially treated animal hides.
- They were used for only the most important documents.

These particular parchments may have contained copies of Paul's own letters or may have been blank sheets on which he planned to write other letters.

Paul had no plans to stop reading, or writing in his last hours.

Even with approaching death, Paul never lost interest in reading/studying.

Every believer should take notice. Books are tools of personal growth/personal development.

There are many things we can do for personal development: Sunday School, reading our Bibles

In our personal lives:

Physical exercise, read books, take classes, spiritually, educationally, skills-wise

Far too many Christians sit, sulk, and sour—rust out

We go from a trusted friend, Carpus, to an enemy.

Vs. 14

Alexander was a common name in that day, and Rome was a big city and Paul wanted Timothy to be on guard and on the lookout when he arrived in Rome (vs. 15).

Watch out for a man named Alexander who was a coppersmith.

Some people say we should never call people out by name—Paul calls Alexander out—sometimes you have to do it for the sake of the flock.

To just rant and rave, to cover up for the lack of a message—many people have made a ministry out of tearing down people and ministries.

Yet there are some people we need to be warned about and the shepherd must be willing to call him or her out.

We don't know why Alexander was so against Paul, but like "Demetrius, who was a silversmith, (in Acts 19:24), this Alexander may have been an idolmaker whose business was hurt by the conversion of people who turned away from idols unto the true and living God.

A person who speaks the truth of God's Word often has societal enemies because he denounces their livelihood—bar owners, strip joints, abortion clinics, homosexual, lesbian groups, adultery, “shacking up”

Many of these people, instead of repenting, will try to drown out the voice of God by harming His representative.

And, Alexander caused a lot of hurt to Paul and Paul responded by saying the Lord will repay him according to his deeds—Vs. 14B.

The worst thing we can do to our detractors is turn them over to our God.

We are faithful to God's Word—when we let God handle our enemies.

In Deuteronomy 32:35, God says, *“To Me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste.”*

Romans 12:19, *“Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine; I will repay,’ saith the Lord.”*

Paul left vengeance in the hands of God.

When someone opposes us for Christ's sake, or the Bible's sake, they really are opposing God.

More than an enemy of Paul, Alexander was the enemy of God.
Maybe Alexander had something to do with Paul's arrest.

When Paul was first brought to court, he said nobody stood with him.

Vs. 16

In the Roman court system, an accused person had two hearings, the first action, which would establish the charge, and the second action would determine guilt or innocence. Our justice system still operates off of this system.

Vs. 16 is referring to Paul's first defense, or answer.

- "Answer" translates *apologia*, from which we derive the English word "apology" "apologetics", which means "Defense of the Faith."
- It referred to a verbal defense and was used as a legal term referring to official testimony in court.

In his first appearance, not one of Paul's friends supported him.

- No one stood by Paul or testified on his behalf—instead the Bible says they all forsook/deserted him.

Now, the price for such a stand by Paul's friends was high.

- Only a few years earlier, Nero had set Rome ablaze, blaming it on the Christians.
- While still alive, some Christians were sewn into the skins of freshly killed animals and released into the arena among wild dogs that tore them to pieces.
- Others were coated with pitch/tar and set afire to light Nero's garden parties.

This is the atmosphere of Paul's day.

The Apostle Paul had a supremely forgiving spirit.

- During a time of personal need, he said, "All men forsook me."
- Paul was not bitter or resentful; he prayed for his friends that their failures might "not be counted against them" (v. 16).

He forgave those who made his situation more difficult (4:16).

Sometimes Christians or churches do not do what we expect them to do—therefore causing our hardship to be worse—what did Paul say? (Vs. 16e)
"lay it not to their charge."

Paul tells us something—Christians will let us down! We will disappoint each other.

- How should we respond? Forgiveness.
- People will fail, but Jesus Christ will not fail us.

Vs. 17a

“The Lord stood with me and enabled me.”—God empowered Paul; He made Paul strong.

. . . for his body . . . for his mind . . . for his spirit . . .

All of us, whether in or out of prison, have needs in these three areas.

It is wonderful to be able to say, “The Lord is with me.”

Paul experienced the strengthening presence of the Lord, who had promised He’d never leave us, nor forsake us (Heb. 13:5). And it was the Lord who helped Paul fulfill his mission and purpose in life..

Vs. 17b

Paul was the unique and divinely appointed apostle to the Gentiles (Rom. 11:13), and it was above all for their salvation and for the Lord’s glory that the apostle himself ministered (Acts 9:15; 22:21; 26:17).

Paul did not fear physical danger.

- Many times he had faced death, and at least once was left for dead (Acts 14:19).
- For Paul, as for every believer, “to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (Philippians 1:21).

Vs. 17e

The lion is a symbol of Satan (I Peter 5:8).

- Paul was referring to some scheme of the devil to defeat him and hinder the work of the Gospel.

- To be “saved from the lion’s mouth” was a proverbial saying which meant “to be delivered from mortal danger” (Ps. 22:21; 35:17).

Paul often had been delivered out of the lion’s mouth.

For that and for everything the Lord had done, was doing, and was yet to do, Paul cried out, “To God be the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

Paul did not fail to remember old friends (**vs. 19a**).

- He had met Prisca and Aquila at Corinth on his second missionary journey.
- Because they were tentmakers like Paul, Paul stayed at their home while working in Corinth.
- When Paul left Corinth, he took along this couple and left them to work in Ephesus.

Couple—husband and wife team! In the ministry – serving God together

Vs. 19b

Letter—Paul expressed appreciation for the household of Onesiphorus (On ee sif ohrus) who “often refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chains” (1:16).

Because the household is mentioned in both places

Such a household would have included not only family members but also servants who lived with Onesiphorus.

Here is a home with the same purpose in life.

The Erastus (ih ras tus)

Trophimus (Trof ih muss) was a native of the province of Asia, specifically the city of Ephesus, and had accompanied Paul from Greece to Troas (Acts 20:1-6). On his trip to Rome, Paul sadly had to leave him sick at Miletus.

Why did Paul not heal him?

Apparently not every sick person is supposed to be miraculously healed.

It is important to note that Paul made no effort himself to heal Trophimus.

- The sign gifts were coming to an end.
- There is no evidence that any of the apostles, including Paul, performed miracles of any sort during their latter years.
- As more and more of the New Testament was revealed, God's Word no longer needed the verification of miracles.

Vs. 21b

Final greetings are extended on behalf of Eubulus (You Byou lus), Pudens (Poo Denz), Linus, and a woman named Claudia.

All three names were Latin, perhaps indicating that the men were from Italy.

And, finally the benediction (4:22)

- All the people Paul mentions in this passage were part of the network in which he was involved.
- In one way or another, they all affected the ministry and outreach of the early church.

The Bible does not record the final days of Paul.

- Secular church history tells us that Paul was beheaded on the Ostian Road just outside of Rome.

The People of Paul's Life

Let us stand for closing invitation.

- It is interesting that Paul expressed no regrets as he came to the end of his Christian life.
- Though his own days were numbered, Paul thought of others.
- “The Lord stood with me, and strengthened me,” he affirmed . . . (vv.17-18).

When Christian people forsake us, when people harm us—the Lord shall deliver us.

Paul preached that all the Gentiles might hear.

What did he preach?

Jesus Christ crucified and risen again.

The Savior of the world.

Is He your Savior? Have you received Him?

Jesus gave His life for the sins of the world.

We are sinners indeed and we need to be saved from our sins.