



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

“LAST WORDS!”- 2 TIMOTHY 4:9-10

COLORADO

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Could you say you have kept the faith regardless of the cost? That's a life of no regrets. That's a life of purpose. That's a journey of serving and pleasing God. He has a plan, a purpose and a course for your life. Fight the good fight for it is a noble one worth contending for. Finish the course, though hard and painful. Finish the race God has planned for you. Finish well. That's what this study is about. It's about Paul, his words and his life so that you too may be able to say, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith" when God calls you home!

I. “LAST WORDS!”- 2 TIMOTHY 4:9-10

(9) “Make every effort to come to me soon; (10) for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia; Titus to Dalmatia.” 2 Timothy 4:9-10

Paul labored for more than 30 year proclaiming the good news of salvation found in Jesus Christ alone and bore the brand marks of a servant of Christ. (Galatians 6:17) As he sat in a cold Roman dungeon, waiting for his execution, Paul's thoughts and prayers were directed to his son in the faith, Timothy and the church Timothy pastored in Ephesus. Paul left Timothy there to carry on the work of ministry, but Timothy was heavy on Paul's heart. Paul had one last letter to write his disciple reminding him of crucial matters in ministry. There is urgency to Paul's message that while others quit, you must remain faithful to fulfill the ministry that God has given you. Paul was concerned for Timothy in this difficult time with some challenging issues in the church. You, Timothy must be faithful in spite of hardship, to guard the treasure of the Gospel you have been entrusted with and faithfully live, preach and proclaim it to a lost and dying world. So he pens this last letter from his cold dark cell.

A. “MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO COME”- 2 TIMOTHY 4:9

Timothy was dearly loved by Paul as a son. Nearly five years had passed since Paul left him in Ephesus. There is such intimacy expressed in Paul's words. Though Paul was under urgent orders, sent by Jesus Christ, to give Timothy this second letter, yet clearly he had such a concern and devotion to Timothy. Concern because Paul was passing the baton to Timothy to carry out the work of ministry to a new generation and he knew what lay ahead for him. Also, Paul saw that Timothy was being pressed with hardship, persecution, and difficulties in the church and Timothy was young. He didn't want to see Timothy have any cause to shrink back from fulfilling the ministry to which he was called. So, Paul expresses the love and affection he has for Timothy throughout this letter and now in his closing words.

Timothy was so dear to him. Yes, Paul wanted to see his Savior, but he also wanted to see his son in the faith before dying. He longed for the companionship of Timothy and so urges him to come quickly. Paul says “*make every effort*”, make haste, and exert every energy to come quickly. The journey that was required of Timothy could take 4-6 months with many inherent dangers over land and sea before arriving in Rome. Clearly it was so important to Paul that he see Timothy one last time, not just to dispense matters of ministry and the church, but because of his love for Timothy. Such friendships, such close bonds are the loving provision of God our gracious Father.

B. “FOR DEMAS...HAS DESERTED ME”- 2 TIMOTHY 4:10A

Paul then writes to Timothy that his fellow worker and co-laborer in the faith, Demas, had deserted him.

“*deserted*” Greek “*enkataleipo*” a strong verb meaning to utterly abandon and leave someone helpless in a dire situation, to be left in the lurch.¹

This is a form of betrayal and turning one's back on someone when they are in need of help and support. And Demas not only deserted Paul, but the Lord Jesus Christ and His gospel.

The details are not given except to say that “*Demas; having loved this present world*”, left Paul and went to Thessalonica. Instead of loving “*His appearing*” from 2 Timothy 4:8, Demas loved this present world instead. Think about it. Demas would have hung out with Paul, listened to his teachings, and involved himself with the ministry. He hung out with a guy who wrote part of the Bible.²

Paul trusted Demas. He is mentioned by Paul in Colossians 4:14 together with Luke and then again in Philemon 24 as his fellow worker. Demas was with Paul during his first imprisonment where he was under house arrest. We can easily assume that Demas was one of Paul's closest companions. Paul would have invested much time in Demas. We can be assured that any of Paul's friends would suffer persecution and prison. As the risk increased during Paul's second imprisonment within the Mamartine Prison in Rome, clearly Demas' resolve decreased because he came to love this present world more than the Lord, the Lord's work or Paul. We don't know what happened but we know Demas deserted him in a time of great need and this brought tremendous disappointment and anguish to Paul.³

When persecution, sacrifice, imprisonment became factors that were too much, and more than Demas had signed on for, did he cave in to fear? Did he quit because following Christ was more than he

BIBLE STUDIES

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bargained for? What about you? Have you counted the cost in following Jesus Christ? Yes, salvation is freely given by God in Christ. Yet it will cost you everything, surrendering your life to Christ. When you become a Christian, your life is no longer yours, but Christ’s. You have been bought with a price. (1 Corinthians 6:20) Are you all in?

Did Demas love comfort more than Christ? He may not have denied Christ completely, and this doesn’t mean he went to pursue a life of ungodliness, but rather that he cared more for his own safety and convenience than Paul’s life.⁴ Did he love the easier way more than he loved the way which first led to the cross? Do I love comfort more than Christ? Could I possibly be like Demas?

Demas was seduced from his love for Jesus Christ and having broken with Paul, he went on to Thessalonica. His desertion should serve as a warning to us.¹ 1 Corinthians 10:12 reminds us that, “Therefore, let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”⁵

C. “CRESCENS HAS GONE TO GALATIA”- 2 TIMOTHY 4:10B

This is the only place Crescens’ name is mentioned in the Bible. It appears he had Paul’s blessing in leaving and was sent on a mission to Galatia and not a desertion. Galatia was across the Aegean Sea. Though Crescens and Titus had gone out for the sake of the gospel from Paul in Rome, their absence was seriously felt by him in these last, difficult days of his life.

We may not know much of anything about Crescens’ life, but this we do know: there are many unknown people whose lives of faithfulness to the Lord are unknown to the world...*but known to Christ!*

D. “TITUS TO DALMATIA”- 2 TIMOTHY 4:10C

Titus is a name we have seen before and is no stranger. We find Paul leaving Titus in Crete on his way to Rome while under guard. (Acts 27:12) In Paul’s letter to Titus we discover that he was placed in Crete to set right what was left undone. “For this reason I left you in Crete, that you might set in order what remains, and appoint elders in every city as I directed you.” (Titus 1:5)

In Paul’s letter to Titus we see how close Paul was to him. He writes this in Titus 1:4, “to Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.” Paul calls Titus his true son, speaking of him as an exemplary friend and gospel partner. This letter was written several years after 1 Timothy and a year or so before 2 Timothy. Titus is also mentioned 9 times in 2 Corinthians and twice in Galatians. Here we see Paul sent Titus to Dalmatia mentioned in Romans 15:19, located north of Macedonia directly east across the Adriatic Sea from Italy. This area is known

today as modern Yugoslavia. No doubt Titus was sent to strengthen and build the church there as he had done in Crete.⁶

In 2 Corinthians 7:5-7, Paul wrote: “For even when we came into Macedonia our flesh had no rest, but we were afflicted on every side: conflicts without, fears within. But God, who comforts the depressed, comforted us by the coming of Titus...” These words Paul wrote reveal the great comfort brought by Titus to Paul previously. In fact Paul’s joy was greater than ever because of the encouragement brought by Titus in the middle of such tremendous discouragement. Each of us would do well to consider these words written and kind actions demonstrated by the faithful life of Titus. May we too be mindful of those hurting lives that cross our path so we might bring this cheerful encouragement each day to the lives of those around us. And may we purposefully go out of our way to intersect the paths of those who are hurting in order to hearten and bring such cheer.

¹MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.206.

²Platte, David; Akin, Daniel L.; Merida, Tony, *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*. B&H Publishing Group: Nashville, Tennessee, 2013. Pg.218.

³MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.206.

⁴Calvin, John, 1509-1564. *The Crossway Classic Commentaries; 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*. Crossway: Wheaton, Illinois, 1998. Pg.165.

⁵Platte, David; Akin, Daniel L.; Merida, Tony, *Christ-Centered Exposition Commentary: Exalting Jesus in 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus*. B&H Publishing Group: Nashville, Tennessee, 2013. Pg.218.

⁶MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.208.