

2Timothy 25-03-16a

Good morning. Welcome to the Sunday morning services at Grace and Truth Bible Church. This is the 16th of March 2025.

We are at the conclusion of Paul's second letter to Timothy chapter 4 verses 9 through 22. We've seen the content of this letter in terms of its charge to Timothy to preach the word to be ready in season and out of season and to ensure that these things are not just a part of the pastor's understanding, but those to whom he presents the Word of God. So we have endeavored to take these issues to heart ourselves.

And in this closing section, we have the final greetings and benediction. There are several people who are mentioned and it is fascinating to see how Paul's mind is working at this stage very close to the end of his career. Let's ask God's blessing on our time of fellowship and study and we'll begin.

Father, thank you for granting us another day and another time of fellowship and other opportunity to look at your word together and find the truths that the Holy Spirit can use to enable us, to motivate us, to empower us to live the life to which we've been called to represent the Lord Jesus on this earth to be a blessing to each other and by extension to all those who seek a good and growing relationship with you. We pray that as we look together at this final section of Paul's letter to Timothy that the Holy Spirit will help us to see its pertinence and application that it will be a part of the resources in our soul and that as a result, we can live our lives in a way that pleases you and glorifies the Lord Jesus. We ask it in his name.

Amen. In this final section, we have the same type of exhortation that we find in 1st Timothy where you have the imperative to be diligent. Be diligent.

The word there has an athletic connotation, a military connotation. Work hard. Make this a priority to come to me soon or come to me quickly.

For Demas has forsaken me. We saw this last time. Demas, by the way, is a shortened form of the name Demetrius.

So you have the possibility that some of the individuals named Demetrius are in view. For example, in Acts chapter 19 verse 25, this man Demetrius in Ephesus led the riot of silversmiths of metal workers. And we already have Alexander the metal worker in this same context.

And it is tempting to think that in earlier days, Demetrius was an opponent and actively incited a riot against Paul and then perhaps came to faith and for a time journeyed with Paul and was a fellow worker and then peeled off toward the end. But the progress that Demetrius makes is somewhat tragic because he is mentioned three different places in the scripture and in the first of them, he was in the same group as Luke. So in Colossians chapter 4 verse 14, Luke the beloved physician and Demas greet you.

In Philemon verse 24, he is mentioned as fellow laborer with Luke and Aristarchus and Mark. Both Mark and Luke, of course, are mentioned here as well. And you have to wonder about their presence as half of the gospel writers, whether some of the books and parchments that Luke and Mark wrote are in Paul's collection, or if those are still works in progress or yet future.

But it could well be that Paul has access to the early New Testament writings among his books because he's got both Luke and Mark with him at various points and especially here at the end. But Demas has left Paul and has essentially forsaken him, left because he fell in love with the world. This tries to do justice to the fact that this is a participle, having loved, aorist participle, and has created the present situation.

You remember the aorist participle precedes the main verb. So Demas forsook having loved, having fallen in love with, something distracted him and became more important, higher in his priorities and became an object of love. It is so important for us to be careful about what we love and how we express and manifest that love.

Everything seems right to us when our truth and falsehood and our good and bad detector tells us so. How much of the Word of God, how much of the influence of the Holy Spirit is at work in that regard? This is why in 2 Corinthians, Paul arguing with them a bit about their views of the world and their views of him and his note of correction to them. He says, you need to examine yourselves and ensure that you are in the faith.

And when it comes to the things we love, and it's an impulse, it is a natural instinct, we have to examine it with an objective standard. Things that we might greatly desire, that we have history with, and it would be very fascinating to find out that Demas is the same Demetrius who was initially a precious metals worker and a leader in the guild of those individuals in Ephesus. So many connections to Ephesus.

Timothy is pastoring in Ephesus. Tychicus is sent to Ephesus with one of Paul's letters and so on. So, the having love this present world causes him to forsake a much more important opportunity.

He was running well, but something hindered him, just like the Galatians. And this ends up leaving Paul short-handed. And so, Paul is now going to look for others to take the place of these who have departed.

Crescens has gone to Galatia or Gallia. One of the ancient manuscripts says Gallia, which is in the area that we now know as France and other territories. Gallia was the far western Roman province.

And so, we're not real sure where Crescens went. Titus to Dalmatia. Remember, Paul took Titus to Jerusalem.

And that created issues with regard to legalism and circumcision and so on. And Titus is mentioned frequently by Paul. We'll move on to Luke.

Only Luke is with me. The scriptures describe Luke. Paul describes him three different times.

In Colossians 4.14, he is called the beloved physician. This is how we come to know that Luke was a doctor. And it informs us when we look at the Gospel of Luke.

And his attention to detail in some of the healing miracles of the Lord Jesus. But we are sensitized to that because Paul calls him the beloved physician in Colossians 4.14, which is, by the way, the same verse where he mentioned Demas. There is never a hint that Luke is anything other than loyal to Paul.

The we sections in Acts where the author Luke uses the first person plural. This is Acts chapter 16 verses 10 through 17. Acts chapter 20 verse 6 through 16.

And again in verse 21. Chapter 21, I should say. Chapter 27 and chapter 28.

So chapter 16, chapter 20, chapter 21, 27, and 28. You find these areas where Luke uses that we to describe his first person adventures with Paul. He accompanied Paul on the second missionary journey at Troas and at Philippi.

And evidently in Acts chapter 16, where that we section ends. He stays as Paul continues. I've often wondered if Luke stayed behind for Lydia, the seller of purple.

And we'll find that out someday. But he seems to have joined Paul again in the third missionary journey. This is Acts chapter 20 verse.

Toward the end of that chapter and accompanied him to Jerusalem where the arrest that results in his journey to Rome takes place. He is with Paul again in the sea journey with the shipwreck and so on in Acts chapter 27. And he is with Paul during both his first and second Roman imprisonments.

Why is this important? Why do we have these individuals mentioned? Think about Paul's situation. He is not under house arrest. That was his first Roman imprisonment.

This imprisonment. He is in prison. He is in a dank dark drafty and perhaps wet cell and it is extremely confining.

It is extremely limiting. This is a man who has journeyed to distant parts of the Roman Empire sharing the gospel of the Lord. Jesus fellowshiping with Believers and now he is in a Roman prison cell.

But he is thinking literally outside that box. He is thinking about the people who are in his immediate periphery. Are they helpful or are they not and those that are not helpful have departed those others that he has detailed to places like Galia or Galatia to Dalmatia and he has kept Luke with him.

We wonder perhaps Paul's physical condition. We know that he had trouble with his eyes. We

know that he had been stoned and evidently had other physical ailments and perhaps Luke with his skills is able to provide palliative care for Paul to ease his physical burden.

This would be a gift from the Lord that that a wonderfully skilled physician is there to care for Paul and to meet his physical needs when it comes to those previous injuries. Then he says get Mark and bring him with you. This is the Mark who lived in Jerusalem.

And we find this out in Acts chapter 12 verse 12. It is at that home where Mark's mother Mary is hosting a fellowship of Believers who are praying for the Apostle Peter. And you remember the Rhoda story where the angel releases Peter with an earthquake and the bars open and he has to kick Peter awake and he comes out.

The house that he goes to and the door that he knocks on is John Mark's house and his mother Mary is the hostess there and there are many gathered praying. So on the first missionary journey John Mark accompanies Paul and Barnabas and left him, deserted him. And so when Barnabas wants to bring Mark on the second missionary journey Paul objects and this causes a rift between Paul and Barnabas in Acts chapter 15 verses 36 through 41.

Paul said to Barnabas, let's go back and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord. See how they're doing. Barnabas was determined to take with them John called Mark.

Paul insisted they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. The issue of the work is foremost in this closing letter, closing section of the letter in 2nd Timothy. Paul has endeavored to ensure that the work continues in the hands of those that have been his fellow workers and that he has detailed out.

And John Mark started with them in the work, departed and that departure seems to be echoed in the departure of Demas. And this has to be a great disappointment to have someone with you who is a fellow worker and then they gradually lose interest or get distracted or fall in love with something and depart. And for whatever reason this happened to John Mark.

We don't know that Demas ever recovered, but evidently Mark did. And he goes back and accompanies Barnabas. So that in Acts chapter 15, the contention is so sharp that Paul and Barnabas part from one another.

So Barnabas took Mark and sailed to Cyprus. Paul took Silas and departed and went through Syria and Cilicia, strengthening the churches. And you could imagine that God works things together for good.

And by splitting the single team of three individuals into two teams of two individuals, their personal relationship suffered. But the work of the Lord seems to have been amplified. There is more coverage.

Two teams go in two different directions instead of a single, slightly larger team going in one direction. And of course, immediately after this in chapter 16 of Acts, when Paul comes to Derbe and Lystra, that's where he meets Timothy. It is possible that our letters to Timothy, the career of Timothy, might have taken a completely different tack if John Mark had been with Paul and Barnabas and they had come to Ephesus or Derbe and Lystra and meeting the family and Timothy becoming Paul's son in the faith.

So Paul wanted Timothy to accompany them. There is sort of an opening on the team here and where John Mark is elsewhere, Timothy fills in. So it's fascinating that at the beginning of Timothy's association with Paul, John Mark is a factor.

And at the end, Timothy is asked to collect John Mark and bring him to Paul. And the way that God works our relationships, the journey through life, whether it is geographical or circumstantial, is best left in the Lord's hands. And to trust that he knows what he's doing, even when sometimes that path is dictated by the way relationships go.

And whether we are placed in the company of other believers, whether we are suddenly divided by one issue or another, to ensure that we ourselves are asking and seeking and knocking, that we are examining ourselves, asking God to try us and see if there be any wicked way in us. Try to ensure that our thinking, our path is good before the Lord. And if relationships come and go, leave it in God's hands.

He will work it together for good. We may have heartache or disappointment or even regret at certain points, but continuing to move forward with God's plan and God's purpose is essential. Look at the way it worked out with Mark and with Timothy and with Luke.

Each one has a different place in Paul's life and in Paul's experience and in Paul's ministry efforts. But by doing what they do best, John Mark evidently, I don't know what his issue was, Paul thought he was wrong to abandon them, to leave them in Pamphylia. If we take Paul's judgment as correct, then evidently John Mark, who was a young man at the time, made perhaps a rash or foolish, ill-considered decision.

But he seems to have recovered. It could be that he could learn things from Barnabas that he wasn't going to learn from Paul. Maybe there was a bit of a personality issue because Barnabas doesn't seem to have the issue with Mark that Paul does.

But God will distribute us. God will unite us and place us in the company of those for whom we can be a blessing and to whom we are associated to be blessed. So it's a fascinating come to pass.

You also have references here to John Mark afterward. And so Mark is in Paul's company, as I said, in Colossians 4, verse 10. Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, greets you with Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, explains a little bit of the nature of that rift.

And evidently, Paul is sending Mark to Colossae because he says, Aristarchus, my fellow

prisoner, greets you with Mark, the cousin of Barnabas, about whom you received instructions. If he comes to you, welcome him. And of course, in Philemon 24, Mark and Aristarchus are found together again, conveying greetings.

John Mark, interestingly, is associated with both the Apostle Paul and with Peter. We believe that the gospel of Mark is Peter's recollections, as you'll recall. And one of the ways we understand this is from 1 Peter 5, verse 13.

She who is in Babylon, elect together with you, greets you. And is Babylon Jerusalem? Is it Rome? Tradition places Peter in Rome on the basis of passages like this, but it's kind of a circular argument. There are those who believe that Babylon represents Jerusalem.

In any case, wherever Peter is, where he is writing the letter of 1 Peter, he says, she who is in Babylon, this would be probably the church. Both Peter and John seem to be referring to a fellowship as she. She who is in Babylon greets you, and so does Mark, my son.

John Mark. What an interesting career. I would love to have an epistle of Mark where he detailed his biography.

From early days through his time of association with both Peter and Paul. This is also a reminder that you see individuals associated with other teachers and preachers. They are grouped for a specific mission and then in later days or in other communities, other towns and cities, they are grouped differently.

And it isn't that Timothy could only learn from the Apostle Paul or Mark could only learn from Barnabas. Paul spends a lot of time with these individuals and then sends them out. And so Aristarchus and Mark are found working together.

And Epaphras and others come and go. And it is a reminder to me that we can learn and grow by association with any good ministry that concentrates on the Word of God. I don't think that we're restricted to a single source.

I think many times we find one that is helpful and we stick with it. And as long as we're being fed and strengthened and our relationship with God through Christ is growing under teaching or preaching from a particular source, it's wonderful. I think there can be multiple sources.

I think you can find helpful insights and you see it in these comings and goings of individuals. So when you look at their appearance and their greetings that are given in various places at various times, it's a reminder that it wasn't only Titus that could talk to the people in Crete. It wasn't only Timothy who talked to the ones in Ephesus.

It wasn't only Paul or one or another individual who would go and stay. Many individuals would come and go and provide the perspective and the unique flavor of presentation that would be helpful at different times to different individuals. So it is possible to find traditions that give later accounts.

Some say that John Mark ended up going to Egypt and preaching and teaching down there. It is hard to know. It's hard to trust sources that are not in the inspired record.

But Paul moves from Luke and Mark who is useful to me for ministry. This gives the idea that he was a practical sort of logistics guy. Luke seems to be able to meet Paul's needs in certain ways.

He is chronicling. He is a writer and a gifted one. He is a physician and evidently a gifted one.

He has an area where his particular gifts are a blessing to Paul and by extension all those that Paul is ministering to. John Mark seems to be more of a get it done guy. He might have in the earlier days of the journeys done scheduling and advance work and ensured that the apostle team whether it is Paul and Barnabas or Barnabas and whoever was accompanying them had a place to stay and make arrangements and figure out are they going to speak at a synagogue and when might they be coming and who all would like to know is there anyone who would like to supply their needs for the journey in terms of food and lodging.

So he seems to have been a great pair of hands is sort of the connotation of this phrase in Greek. He is useful. He is a great pair of hands to me for ministry.

Paul is not going to be traveling apparently from his prison cell but there are still logistical things that perhaps John Mark can accomplish. Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus and we have the idea that if Timothy has continued to pastor in Ephesus and he is going to come to Paul, Tychicus is going to be his replacement. This is another case where the Ephesians have had Timothy as their pastor for something measured in years.

Now Timothy has a new assignment and Tychicus is going to come and provide a fresh voice for preaching and teaching and exhortation. Tychicus in Greek means fortuitous. Colloquially in English we would say lucky, favored in benefits.

He is a beloved brother. He's a faithful minister. He's a fellow servant in the gospel, a man worthy of confidence.

You find him mentioned in Acts chapter 20 verse 4. Sopater of Berea accompanied Paul to Asia, also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, Gaius of Derbe and Timothy and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia. During the first Roman imprisonment, Tychicus was with Paul and carried letters to their destinations. So he is the one that brings the letter to the Ephesians and to the Colossians, probably the one to Philemon and also the letter to the Laodiceans, which I personally think is Ephesians.

He also gave details about Paul's circumstances so that letters were accompanied by a first-hand introduction and description of the latest news about Paul. You find this in Ephesians chapter 6 verse 21. So that you may know my affairs and how I am doing.

I'm not just sending the letter to you, but Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you. So there is both formal and informal communication.

The formal communication is the letter, the informal communication is the news from Tychicus.

Same thing in Colossians chapter 4 verse 7. Tychicus, a beloved brother, faithful minister, and fellow servant in the Lord. Just as we go to the break here, wouldn't it be wonderful if when our name, your name, my name, comes to someone's mind, if they are going to convey greetings on our behalf, we've seen them and they're going to see someone else, but if someone comes to talk about you, what kind of description is uppermost in their mind? If you suddenly think of a person, what are their characteristics? Look at the way Tychicus comes to Paul's mind. Tychicus, he's a beloved brother, he's a faithful minister, and he's a fellow servant in the Lord.

What an epitaph. What a summation. You would love, before they put you in the box and plant you in the ground and the friends and relatives have gathered, that this would be the remembrance.

This would be the obituary. I would much rather have these three descriptions than any rundown of my work history and what I did in the service and where I went to school. This is all one could hope for in terms of a personal description.

A beloved brother, a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord. Servant into and for the Lord. He's the guy.

I could trust no one more to bring the news, to bring the inspired scriptures to you than Tychicus. What a great description. We're going to pause here and take our break.

When we come back, we will pick up at verse 13 and look at these circumstantial details. We're going to find a correspondence in the Old Testament scriptures that was new to me in doing this final examination. It's a very memorable conclusion to draw, an observation to make, and an application to make from the Old Testament scriptures.

We'll see that when we come back from the break.