

Persevering with the Saints: Loving People For the Long Haul

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Leadership Conference 2016

Prison has produced some amazing works.

Paul was arrested, charged, found guilty and sentenced to death by the sword. Prior to meeting the executioner's sword, inspired by the Spirit of God, he writes.

How do we persevere with the saints, how do we love people for the long haul?

Paul exhorts Timothy and us about friends, warns us about enemies, and brings us to the feet of Jesus.

I. **Exhorting About Friends** (Vs 9-12)

• **Timothy**

This call to come speaks of the closeness of Paul and Timothy. It speaks of close gospel partnership and the nearness of death.

• **Demas**

Demas is a friendship that abandoned Paul. Demas was at one time mentioned by Paul favorably. (See Philemon and Colossians)

“There is a love for this world that makes ministry impossible. Either it abandons ministry, or it makes ministry worldly enough to be at home there. Under Paul's leadership Demas couldn't make the ministry worldly, so he left.

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Young (and old) culture-embracing Christians need to ponder this a long time. There is a love for the world — the present age, the God-ignoring, God-denying, God-demeaning, Christ-distorting products of culture — that is mutually exclusive with real, deep love for Jesus. There is a love for this world that is irreconcilable with the ministry of exposing the world and witnessing to the world and rescuing from the world, and, if possible, changing the world.

So, young Timothy, — remember, more people leave Christ and leave the Church and leave ministry and leave the hope of heaven because of love for this world than anything else. One wonders: What was in Thessalonica? “In love with this present world, Demas has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.” Was it a woman? Was it home — perhaps he grew up there? Was it a business offer? Was it just comfortably and safely far away from this utterly committed apostle Paul? What we know is: Demas did not leave in order to follow Jesus. He left Jesus to embrace the pleasures of the world. That happens to your friends in ministry. And some of them never come back.” John Piper

- Crescens And Titus

- Luke

- Mark

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- Tychicus

II. Warning About Enemies

- Alexander

Alone in a prison cell, deserted by friends, hated by enemies, and at the end of life. If this letter ends right here, I close my bible depressed.

III. But The Lord.... vs 17

Leader, when the presence of men is absent, you are not alone. The Lord remains!

The Lord stands by me SO THAT.....

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Clement of Rome says that Paul was taken outside of the city and beheaded.

Leader- the best way you can persevere with saints and love people for the long haul is to allow Paul to exhort you about friends, warn you about enemies, and be brought to the feet of Jesus.