

Onesiphorus and the Ministry of Refreshment

2 Timothy 1:15-18

During the final days of his life, the Apostle Paul was bound in chains in a Roman cell, awaiting his appeal to Caesar and ultimately his own execution. We know from his letter to Timothy that, in spite of the circumstances, his faith remained strong. At the same time, however, he was not immune to some of the natural human emotions that go with such a difficult situation. During these dark days of loneliness, discomfort, disappointment, and uncertainty, the Lord provided strength and renewal. He did so through His presence, but He also used a man—a man whose name is obscure and difficult for us to pronounce and who is mentioned briefly only twice in the New Testament. Yet to the Apostle Paul, this man became a dear friend and a choice servant for the Lord. His appreciation for this man overflows into intercession that is unique in Paul's writings: "May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus"... "May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day" (2 Tim. 1:16, 18). Who was this man? What made him so dear to Paul? Let's look at his life and learn some practical ways to offer refreshment.

I. INTRODUCTION: Everyone needs the Ministry of Refreshment!

II. EXPOSITION:

A. Background of 2 Timothy:

B. Characteristics of a "Refresher"

1. He seeks out the Person in Need:

- *Negative: Phygelus and Hermogenes* - "deserted me" or ignored him
- *Positive: Onesiphorus* - "searched hard"

2. He Ministers By:

- *His Presence*
- *His Acceptance*
- *His Cheerfulness*
- *His Persistent Focus on Others*

3. He Bucks the Crowd's Opinion to Selflessly Serve:

- *Selfless Service is based on Conviction.*
- *Selfless Service is not convenient for the person serving.*
- *Selfless Service is not convenient for the family of the one serving!*

4. He will be Rewarded by the Lord:

III. CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION:

(This outline is provided to assist you in understanding and applying this morning's message. Third in a series of messages by Pastor Hornok on "Lesser Knowns...Better Known." This message is available online at www.MidvalleyBible.org. MBC 6/28/2015)