

~2 Timothy~

Lesson 26 – Faithful to the End

Let's begin by reading our text today- **2 Tim 4:19-22**

Today we will be wrapping up our study on the book of 2 Timothy and as we come to our conclusion, Paul has another round of people he mentions in his final salutation. These are the final words he will ever write in this life.

Two weeks ago, we began looking into the lives of the brethren that Paul mentions in this last section from verses 9-22, and as we study this, we are starting to see them as not just a list of names, but as Paul saw them, as brothers and sisters in Christ. A couple weeks ago we learned about 7 of them, and last week we learned of Alexander the coppersmith, and his betrayal to Paul which led to Paul's arrest, his "first defense" in the Roman court, his conviction and ultimately Paul's martyrdom, and today we will take a look at the remaining 9 people and his final closing statements to Timothy. Many of these men and women are dear brethren to Paul, and as he departs this life and enters eternal life, he makes a final mention of them, one, to say goodbye, but I think also he is handing this responsibility of the "concern for all the churches" off to Timothy. You can see the deep love Paul had for the brethren.

Remember, this has been a very personal letter to Timothy directly, one of which we have learned much from, but I think it is important contextually, that we keep in mind that this is a heart felt letter to his son to be watchful, be ready to suffer evil afflictions, do the work of and evangelist, preach the Word and fulfill his ministry. And as we read this final conclusion, you can see the hope in Paul's words that these words might not be his not his final goodbye, but that he might see him in person one final time before his departure.

As we take a look at these people today, one thing to notice is every one of these brethren has a tie back to the church of Ephesus and Timothy himself. This is why Paul mentions these people at the end of the letter because this a personal letter to Timothy.

The first two names of our study today begin in verse 19 greeting Priscilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus. This tells us that these people are still in Ephesus because Paul is writing to Timothy in Ephesus and he is telling Timothy to greet them for him.

Priscilla and Aquila

† ¹⁹ *Prisca and Aquila...*

- Paul first meets this couple on his second missionary journey, in 52AD, when he made his way into Corinth.
 - Aquila and his wife Priscilla had come from Italy because Claudius had commanded all the Jews to depart from Rome, Acts 18:1-2.
 - Claudius reigned as Emperor from 41 – 54AD. A roman historian named Suetonius, wrote concerning this and said it was in the 9th year of Claudius' reign that, "Jews were expelled from Rome at the instigation of constant tumults concerning Christ"¹
 - Priscilla and Aquilla, being Jewish Christians, depart Rome and they evidently came to live in Corinth. Paul meets them when he travels to Corinth and ends up staying with them. One of the ministries this couple had is they always opened their house to the brethren and held church from their house. Paul also worked with them because they shared the same occupation as tent makers.
 - Paul stays in Corinth for a good while, about 1-1/2 years, until 54AD, and then Paul and company depart Corinth and travel to Ephesus on the way back to Jerusalem, and Priscilla and Aquila go with him, Acts 18:18.
 - Paul doesn't stay long in Ephesus, but leaves Priscilla and Aquila in Ephesus, Acts 18:19, and he goes onto Jerusalem

¹ Henry, M. (1994). *Matthew Henry's commentary on the whole Bible: complete and unabridged in one volume*

- While in Ephesus, Aquila and Priscilla start up another house church. They meet Apollos and “*explain to him the way of God more accurately*”, Acts 18:24-26. Apollos travels to Achaia, specifically Corinth, and Aquila and Priscilla write a letter to the church at Corinth to welcome Apollos, Acts 18:27 (they probably knew the church at Corinth well because they used to live there)
- Paul travels back to Ephesus on his 3rd missionary journey and joins up with Priscilla and Aquila again because they are living in Ephesus now. We know this because Paul writes 1 Corinthians in 56AD from Ephesus and mentions Priscilla and Aquila still living in Asia, 1 Cor 16:19- *with the church that is in their house*.
- Sometime after this, Priscilla and Aquila go back to Rome, probably because Claudius had died and it was now safe to return. We know this because Paul wrote his epistle to the Roman church in 58AD and in Romans 16:3, Paul tells the church in Rome to greet *Priscilla and Aquila and the church that is in their house*.
 - So sometime after 1 Corinthians was written in 56AD and Romans was written in 58AD, they moved back to Rome and set up a house church there.
 - Paul also says in Romans 16:3 that this couple “*risked their own necks for my life*”. Its hard to say what event Paul is speaking of, but this shows the closeness they had with Paul.
- Now, when Paul is writing this second letter to Timothy, Paul tells Timothy, who is residing as bishop of Ephesus, to greet Priscilla and Aquila. This tells us they must have left Rome at some point, probably when Christians were blamed for burning down Rome in 64AD and are now they are living in Ephesus again.

The Household of Onesiphorus

† 19 ... *the household of Onesiphorus...*

- Onesiphorus is only mentioned in this letter of 2 Timothy, **2 Tim 1:16-18**. Onesiphorus and his household must have lived in Ephesus because Paul says, “*you know very well how many ways he ministered to me at Ephesus*”, 2 Tim 1:18.
- Onesiphorus diligently sought Paul out in his dungeon in Rome and found him. You can tell from Paul’s writings how much this meant to Paul. Onesiphorus refreshed him, probably physically and spiritually.
- Paul now is mentioning Onesiphorus again, but not him specifically, but his household. Now if you go back and read the account at the beginning of this epistle, Paul addresses the household and prays that the Lord grant mercy on them and then discusses Onesiphorus and his heroic act to seek Paul out.
 - And if you read it close, when Paul mentions Onesiphorus specifically, it is in the past tense, aorist indicative.
 - I have a strong hunch that Onesiphorus gave his life to come see Paul because now he tells Timothy to greet the household and not him personally. Onesiphorus probably died while he was in Rome.
 - And notice the reward Paul desires that Onesiphorus be given in that “Day”, which we know as the Bema, βῆμα, Judgement, when rewards are give to the faithful. And what great rewards Onesiphorus will be given for his faithfulness having refreshed the Apostle Paul in his chains.

Erastus

† 20 *Erastus stayed in Corinth...*

- Erastus is mentioned three times in Scripture. We first see him in Acts 19:22 going with Timothy up to Macedonia around 55AD. But before heading north, they stop by Corinth and deliver the “previous letter”, 1 Cor 4:17; 5:9. Erastus and Timothy then go on up to Macedonia, but it is possible that Erastus doesn’t stay long and possibly returns to Corinth while Timothy remains in Macedonia.
- Timothy stays in Macedonia for about 2yrs until Paul comes to see them at the end of 57AD, and Erastus was probably in Corinth during these 2 years.

- Paul and Timothy then travel back down to Greece and stay there for three months, Acts 20:1-3. While Paul and Timothy are in Greece, probably Corinth, Paul writes the letter to the Romans and in Paul's salutation at the end of Romans, Paul makes mention of Erastus saying, "Erastus, the treasurer of the city greets you", Romans 16:23. "ὁ οἰκονόμος τῆς πόλεως - "manager or a steward of the city"
- It is possible that for the last 2-3yrs, Erastus had been in Corinth and became the "steward of the city". Maybe Erastus was from Corinth originally, or he knew somebody, and he became a person of importance in Corinth.
- Now in 2 Timothy, Paul mentions Erastus again, saying, "Erastus stayed in Corinth".
- So in all three instances, we see Erastus associated with Corinth.
 - In 1929, excavators discovered lying underneath the Corinthian theater, a Latin inscription about Erastus, "ERASTVS. PRO. AED. S.P-Stravit" or in full "*Erastus pro aedilitate sua pecunia stravit*"
 - The English translation of the inscription is, "Erastus in return for being a commissioner of public works (aedileship) laid (the pavement) at his own expense."
- This is very likely the same person in Romans 16:23 and Acts 19:22 and probably not a coincidence that Paul says he stayed in Corinth because he had a job to do.
- But not once did Paul say Erastus left him in Corinth, "having loved this present world" like Demas. This is a great example of someone being a fellow worker for God, but still having a day job in the world.
 - It's just a matter of the heart. We are in the world, but not of it. This doesn't mean we all quit our jobs and become missionaries. Sometimes God calls us to work in a company to be a light in the darkness. To be a witness to others in that company. Obviously, Paul was okay with Erastus being a steward of the city in Corinth because his heart was serving God.

Trophimus

† ²⁰ ...*Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick.*

- Like Tychicus, Trophimus was probably a convert from the Ephesian church, being called "*Trophimus, the Ephesian*" in Acts 21:29.
 - We see him first mentioned in Acts 20:4 as Trophimus of Asia, with Paul's company including Timothy and Tychicus.
 - This is after Paul's three year stay in Ephesus on his 3rd missionary journey around 57AD.
 - Paul and his company travel back to Jerusalem and Paul enters the temple, but the Jews from Asia had seen Trophimus with Paul and they assumed that Trophimus, being a Greek, had entered the temple with Paul, so they stirred up the crowd and almost beat Paul to death, Acts 21:26-32.
- From this point, Paul is arrested and spends 2 years in the Caesarea prison and 2 years under house arrest in Rome. There is no mention of Trophimus during this time, but more than likely he probably went back to the church in Ephesus.
 - However, sometime after Paul's release from his first imprisonment, Trophimus must have rejoined with Paul because he was "*left in Miletus sick*", so this shows that he had to be with Paul again to then be left in Miletus.
 - This word for sick, *astheneo*, ἀσθενέω, literally means "without strength". Paul has used this in a spiritual sense saying "weak in faith or weak through the flesh", Rom 4:19; 8:3; 14:1.
 - But Paul also used this same word in Phil 2:26-27 concerning Epaphroditus saying "*he became sick and almost died, but God had mercy on him ...*".
 - Trophimus was probably physically sick and could not endure the hard road with Paul so Paul left him in Miletus.

- This is an interesting concept, because most people would expect Paul to just lay hands on Trophimus and he would be miraculously healed, but this didn't happen.
 - God is the One who heals and we are all healed in the name of Jesus.
 - Sometimes this healing manifests in this life, but it will always manifest in eternal life with our new glorified bodies.
 - This is the hope we must have with healing, and we should never be discouraged if we don't see physical healing in this life. We hope in Jesus and not in the healing.

† ²¹ *Do your utmost to come before winter.*

- Paul again urges Timothy to “do your utmost” or make a maximum effort, *spoudazo*, *σπουδάζω*, to come see him before winter. And for the reasons we mentioned in verse 9, Paul was alone, only Luke is with him, winter is now coming and it is impossible to make the trip from Ephesus to Rome in the winter, his execution is happening soon and he probably won't be alive come spring.
- Paul is yearning to see his faithful son one last time before his departure into everlasting life. And if you remember this was Paul's desire since the beginning of this letter. Paul says in 2 Tim 1:4- “*greatly desiring to see you, being mindful of your tears.*”

Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brethren

† ²¹ ... *Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.*

- We don't know much about this last group of people other than they are all brethren from Rome. They are not fellow-workers with Paul, but probably more acquaintances. Evidently, they are not those willing to stick their neck out to be with Paul, because otherwise it wouldn't be just Luke alone with Paul, these other people would have been with him. But we can assume that Timothy knew these people personally and this is why Paul sends their greeting to him.
- The only person in this list that we really know anything about is Linus. According to Eusebius, Linus became the bishop of Rome from 68 – 80AD, and a faithful leader of the church in Rome. *Eusebius. Hist. Eccles. 3:2, 4, 13, 14.*
 - The catholic church records Linus as the 2nd pope of Rome after Peter, but this is of course not correct, because the catholic church didn't even begin until Constantine and the Council of Nicene in 325AD.
- Not much is know about the other three names except some scholars have found ancient records of a Pudens and Claudia residing in Rome at this time, so these may have been another husband and wife team, but I find that doubtful because I think Paul would have mentioned these two together in the list, instead of putting Linus in between.

† ²² *The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.*

- Paul gives two benedictions in his last words to Timothy. One to him personally and the other is to the church as a whole.
- To Timothy he says, “*The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit*”- ‘Ο Κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματός σου.
 - Paul is speaking directly to Timothy using the second person singular pronoun σου. Paul comforts Timothy as the Lord comforted him, 2 Tim 4:17- “*but the Lord stood with me and strengthened me*”, and now Paul also assures his son that “*the Lord Jesus Christ will be with your spirit*”.
- To the church as a whole Paul says, “*Grace be with you. Amen*” - ἡ χάρις μεθ’ ὑμῶν. ἀμήν.
 - This “you” is the plural form of you, as in “you all” speaking to the church assembly as a whole.
- Paul always ends his epistles with some form of grace in the ending. If you look at all 14 of his epistles, he always ends with a salutation of grace as he says in 2 Thessalonians 3:17-18- ¹⁷ *The salutation of Paul with my own hand, which is a sign in every epistle; so I write.* ¹⁸ *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.*

Amen.

There is no record in the Bible or church history that Timothy ever made it Rome to see Paul. If he had, there is a good chance he would have ended up like Onesiphorus, giving his life to comfort and be with the Apostle Paul.

- I think it is interesting that even among the immense danger in seeking out Paul in Rome, this didn't stop Paul from urging Timothy to come see him.
- In fact, it is quite the opposite with Paul. Through this letter to Timothy Paul continues to implore Timothy to share in the sufferings with him even amongst the looming danger. On the surface this seems negligent, but I think it shows the absolute trust Paul had in God and the eternal life mindset that he constantly walked in. Remember Acts 20:22-24, "chains and tribulations await me (even death) but none of these things move me." He still went on to do the work of the Lord.
 - In season and out of season, life and death, convenient or inconvenient
 - I am not saying to be careless with your life, but in all things trust in God. This is the way Paul lived his life.

In this letter, we not only see Paul's heartfelt plea to see his son one final time, but we see the mantle of the great Apostle being handed to Timothy. Paul had an immense trust in Timothy, but I think more so, Paul trusted the words of God that prophesied over Timothy when he laid hands on him at Ephesus, 1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6. Paul knew this was the man to carry on the work of the gospel. This was the man whom he would deeply entrust the revelation of Jesus Christ so that all would know Jesus and come to the knowledge of Truth, 1 Tim 2:3-4; 2 Tim 1:13-14; 2:25-26.

As a quick recap of this book, let's look at some of the things Paul charged Timothy with. He told him, "stir up the gift of God which is inside you, 1:6; do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, but share with me in the sufferings for the gospel, 1:8; hold fast the pure sound doctrine of Jesus Christ, 1:13; keep the revelation that was committed to you, 1:15; be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus, 2:1; endure hardship and suffer evil afflictions as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, 2:3; do not entangle yourself with the affairs of this life, 2:4; endure so that you will also reign with Him, 2:12; do not make a war of words to no profit, 2:14; make a maximum effort to stand alongside God, approved as genuine, rightly dividing Word of Truth, 2:15; avoid profane and idle babble, 2:16; depart from unrighteousness, 2:19; cleanse yourself from dishonorable vessels so as to be sanctified and a useful vessel to the Master, 2:21; flee youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, 2:22; avoid foolish disputes, 2:23; do not fight but be gentle, teach, be patient, correct, 2:24-25; turn away from those who are of corrupt minds and those who resist the Truth, 3:1-8; Abide in the Word of God that you have learned, 3:14-17; Preach the Word, be ready in season and out of season, convict, rebuke, exhort, be watchful, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, and fulfill your ministry, 4:1-5".

Timothy was faced with much hostility, but the root of the opposition was the enemy, the doctrine of demons that were trying to tear down the pillars of Truth. This letter encouraged and strengthened Timothy to fight the good fight and lay hold on eternal life. And in this letter of exhortation, Paul continually admonished Timothy to press on toward the prize of the high calling; to fight the good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith.

This entire book has had one focus, and that is the Truth of Jesus Christ. Guarding the Truth, holding fast the Word of Truth, upholding the Truth, rightly dividing the Truth, knowing the Truth, teaching the Truth, separating yourself away from those who resist the Truth, always having your focus on the Truth. And if you do this, who will you always be looking to? Jesus Christ.

I believe this stance and yearning for Truth can be summed up in one heartfelt statement and that is, "To have loved His appearing". If you love Jesus Christ and the fact that He died and gave His life for you and was resurrected so that you can have eternal life in Him, you will joyfully do these things we just listed.

It is then that we can stand confidently before the Righteous Judge, having loved his appearing, having been proven genuine because we lived a life of faithful endurance to the end. It is then that we will receive the crown of righteousness and we will hear the words, "well done, good and faithful servant. Enter into the joy of the Lord."