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# Sermon Notes

November 14, 2021

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## Friends and Foes 2 Timothy 4:9-22

### Mentors

- ❖ Many great Christian leaders have had a spiritual mentor
  - for Timothy, that person was Paul
  - special care, teaching, setting a high example
- ❖ Mentorship is a two-way street
  - *my true child in the faith... my beloved child*
  - it seems apparent that Paul has no other earthly friend who is as dear to him as Timothy
    - *I have no one like him* (Phil 2:19-20)
    - Timothy not only adheres to Paul's doctrine, he follows Paul's example
    - a faithful, dependable coworker and partner in the gospel
- ❖ Paul longs to see Timothy once more before his life on earth is over

### Updates on Key Coworkers

- ❖ Crescens has gone to Galatia, presumably for the purpose of ministering there
- ❖ Titus has crossed the Adriatic Sea to go to Dalmatia
- ❖ Tychius is deployed to Ephesus, bringing Paul's letter and trading places with Timothy so Timothy can go to Rome
- ❖ Demas has deserted the ministry and gone to Thessalonica
  - Demas once showed great potential and was part of the inner circle of Paul's ministry team
  - Demas puts comfort and convenience above faithful gospel ministry
  - a great heartache for Paul
  - faith and faithfulness are things we must exercise and keep pursuing
    - those who commit to following Christ must count the cost
    - those who commit to following Jesus will always be on a collision course with worldly values
- ❖ On the plus side
  - despite an earlier "hiccup" in their relationship, Paul now values the ministry of John Mark
  - Mark, the missionary dropout, has skyrocketed from being useless to being useful to Paul and the cause of the gospel
  - failure is not final, you can come back from disgrace

## BTW...

- ❖ “Timothy, please bring a few necessary items along with you.”
  - coat
  - books and parchments
    - possibly Paul’s copy of the OT Scriptures and volumes that contain his own notes
    - perhaps material passed on to Mark and Luke that is useful to them in writing their gospels

## A Foe

- ❖ A strong, urgent warning about Alexander, who shows his true colors as an enemy of the gospel
  - possibly the same Alexander as 1 Timothy 1:20
    - an out and out heretic
    - ringleader of a movement in Ephesus that is threatening to derail the church there
  - if this is the same Alexander, he may bear a grudge against Paul
    - Paul’s words about him doing Paul great harm may suggest Alexander’s role in getting Paul arrested
    - whoever this Alexander is, he has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that he is an enemy of the gospel
- ❖ ***The Lord will repay him according to his deeds***

## Odds and Ends

- ❖ A final reminder of how the Lord stands with and undertakes for His servants in their times of need
  - Paul sees his personal experience through the lens of what Jesus experiences in His own suffering and death
  - desertion, deliverance, salvation, the Lord’s nearness and the supreme power of God to persevere in it and prevail through it
- ❖ The Lord stands by and strengthens Paul so he can proclaim the gospel even in difficult circumstances
  - even in the face of death, Paul can boldly proclaim his confidence in Christ
  - no evil worked against God’s people can keep them from the goals and purposes God has for them (*cf.* Romans 8:31-35)
- ❖ God does all this for His own glory (4:18)
- ❖ Final greetings for Priscilla, Aquila and the family of Onesiphorus
- ❖ Updates on Erastus and Trophimus along with greetings from members of the church in Rome
- ❖ Final benediction: ***The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.***

## Personal Application

1. Thank God for those with whom you have CO-labored for Christ in the past and present. Pray for God’s grace to intervene in the lives of those who have stood in opposition to your efforts for Christ and His kingdom.