

PAUL'S FINAL WORDS
PART 1-HELP WAS NEEDED
2 TIMOTHY 4:9-18

Introduction

Since *2 Timothy* was Paul's last writing (at least as far as we know), this was his final message to his protégée and to us. We see the Apostle Paul open up to Timothy about some needs he had even as he approached the end of his life.

I want us to begin to look at Paul's final recorded words before his earthly life ended and he entered heaven. I think we can learn some things that will help us in our life as we await Christ's coming.

There are many times in our lives as Believers when we find ourselves in need of HELP from other Believers! We oftentimes don't like to admit that we need **HELP**, but it doesn't keep it from being a reality!

I. SOMETIMES EVEN THE STRONGEST AND BEST OF BELIEVERS NEED HELP!

Here we see that even the great Apostle Paul had need of **HELP** in his life. This was not the only time that Paul asked for help of some kind: **Paul mentioned his need of PRAYER in *Romans 15:30–33***

Listen:

There is no shame in **finding ourselves** in need of **HELP!**

There should be no shame in **admitting to others** that we need help!

There should be no shame in **asking for the help** we need from others!

There should be no shame in **receiving help** when we need it!

The only shame is to **not avail ourselves of the avenues of HELP that are available to us as Believers!**

In *1 Corinthians 12*, Paul gave an analogy of the Body of Believers.

There he compared the Body of Believers in Christ to a human body.

The Body needs each part doing its part to benefit the Body as a whole.

He showed that just as a human body has many individual members that are gifted to profit our whole human body, each of us as members of the Body of Christ are gifted to profit the body of Christ as a whole!

That means each member doing its part to profit the whole body!

1 Corinthians 12:7 – “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.”

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And because we are members of the same body, we ALL should have the same care for all the other members of the body!

1 Corinthians 12:25-27–“25 That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.”

Paul's situation at the time he wrote Timothy here was one of those times he found himself in need of **HELP**. Paul was in prison awaiting trial on charges of being an insurrectionist and a trouble-maker for Rome. That was a high-crime in the eyes of Rome worthy of death!

He was to appear before the emperor Nero, and he was rightly expecting to be executed shortly. **Whatever weight and pressure hangs over a man's head as he faces life's end—whatever needs are created by being imprisoned and facing execution—all this and more pressed heavily upon Paul!**

These verses give us a glimpse into the heart of Paul as he faced this time of trial in his life. **It shows the kind of help he needed and how he was not afraid to ask for the help that he needed.**

A. We See That Paul Needed The Help Of Timothy's Presence! (Vs 9)

That word “*diligence*” means “*to use speed, i.e. to make effort to be prompt*”.

Here we see that Paul asked Timothy to do everything he could to come and visit him as quickly as possible.

Paul needed Timothy's presence and encouragement in his days. Of all the people on earth, Timothy was one of the dearest to Paul. And Paul needed and wanted the company of his dear friend. **Sometimes we just need someone special to us to be with us in our trials!**

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- B. Help Is Needed When Others Have Forsaken Us! (Vs 10)**
There were some very specific reasons why Paul needed Timothy with him! There was only one person who was still with Paul at this crucial point in his life—that person was Luke.

Looking at why everyone had left Paul gives us a picture into what it is that creates some of the needs in our lives as Believers.

Demas had been a faithful Believer and a fellow laborer to Paul (*Philem 24*). He had been in Rome with Paul for some time.

He had even served with Paul in some of Paul's most trying moments while Paul was a prisoner in Rome.

But, something happened? **Demas began to love this present world. What does that mean?**

- 1. Does it mean that he began to love the life of this world more than the promised life in heaven?**
Demas might have begun to fear that he too could be persecuted with his life endangered because of his profession of faith in Christ!

He might have feared that HE might be arrested and imprisoned because of his association with Paul!

- 2. Or does it mean that he began to love the pleasures and comfort, possessions and things of this world more than the sacrifice demanded by Christ?**
After all, there was a stark contrast between what he saw of Paul in prison versus the glamour and excesses offered in the capitol city of the Roman empire.

Whatever the reason, when Demas forsook Paul, it cut Paul to the core. And it left a vacuum and robbed Paul of needed help.

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- C. Help Is Needed When Loved Ones Have To Move On To Their Own Ministries And We Are Left Alone. (Vs 10)**
Both **Crescens** and **Titus** had been with Paul, but they had to return to their own ministries.

Nothing else is known about **Crescens**. This is the only reference to him in the Bible. However, tradition says that he was one of the seventy sent forth to minister by Christ and that he became the bishop of Chalcedon in Greece.
(*Herbert Lockyer. All the Men of the Bible, p.86*).

Titus was a constant companion of Paul during the last fifteen years or more of Paul's life. He had been sent by Paul to Dalmatia (an area of the former Yugoslavia that was busted up into seven different present day countries.)

The absence of these two dear servants also left a vacuum. They needed to return to their own ministries. But you can sense that their departure left an emptiness within Paul's heart. He needed companionship and the encouragement of Believers as he faced death.

And take into account that **Tychicus**, who Paul refers to as “*A brother beloved and faithful minister in the Lord*” in ***Ephesians 6:21***, had been sent on special assignment to Ephesus also. (*Vs 12*) Creating yet another vacuum.

- D. Help Is Needed When We Have A Ministry To Carry On For The Lord. (Vs 11)**
Only Luke was left with Paul. So, Paul tells Timothy to bring Mark (John Mark) with him because Paul needs him to help with the ministry.
(*Cp. Acts 15:37-39*-The Contention with Barnabas)

What ministry was Paul speaking of here? Obviously Paul was still carrying on the Gospel ministry while in prison.

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Paul ministered wherever he was, even when he was in prison. His faithfulness is a dynamic example to us. We should minister wherever we are, no matter the circumstances.

And when we faithfully minister, no matter who we are, we need help. If Paul needed help, we need help.

We cannot do the work of the ministry alone. We must have the help of other believers.

E. Help Is Needed When Personal Items Are Lacking. (Vs 13)

Paul needed three things.

The prison dungeon was no doubt dark, cold, and damp, and Paul needed more clothing. (*cp. 2 Tim. 4:21*)

He also needed *"the books, but especially the parchments."*

The point is this. We all have practical needs, needs that we sometimes cannot provide for ourselves due to illness, poverty, age, lack of access, lack of know-how, or a host of other reasons.

As Believers, sometimes we find the need to ask for the help of other Believers; and as Believers, we need to help when others have need and we have the ability to help them.

F. Help Is Needed When Others Actively Oppose Us And Cause Trouble For Us. (Vs 14-15)

We don't know exactly what **Alexander** had done.

The word that Paul uses for *"did me much evil"* is the a verb that means *to display*. It was often used for the laying of information against a man—i.e. being an informant against him

Informers were one of the great curses of Rome at this time! They sought both to gain favor for themselves and to receive rewards by being informants!

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It is possible that **Alexander** was a renegade, who went to the magistrates with false and slanderous information against Paul.

Sadly, sometimes professing Believers turn against other Believers who are trying to do a work for God.

They begin to criticize, gossip, murmur, grumble, and oppose others. And it is usually done to gain their own way.

There are also those who seek the favor of others by tearing someone else down.

Paul needed the help of a courageous Believer who would stand with him. He needed someone who would stand by his side and stand against the evil and false charges of **Alexander**.

G. Help Is Needed When We Are Forsaken By All Others. (Vs 16)

Paul was facing a capital charge as we said—the charge of being a trouble-maker or insurrectionist against Rome.

He was appearing before Nero, the Emperor himself, who served as the Supreme Court of Rome.

Two trials were necessary: the preliminary trial or examination was where the charges were laid out and briefly examined, and then the trial itself was where the defendant was either found guilty or not guilty.

Paul had already faced the preliminary trial and so he is referring to his answer in that phase of his trial.

Unbelievably and tragically, the very same thing that had happened to Christ happened to Paul.

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Not a single person—not one Believer and not one friend—attended court with Paul. No one stood with Paul.

When a believer faces such a terrible trial, he needs help. He needs courageous Believers standing with him. What an indictment! What a challenge for us to be courageous and faithful to each other in the dark hours of trial and need!

SOMETIMES EVEN THE STRONGEST AND BEST OF BELIEVERS NEED HELP!

II. BUT EVEN WHEN WE FIND NO HELP FROM MEN, GOD IS WITH US! (Vs 17)

No greater declaration could be made: *"But the Lord stood with me."*

There may be times when men may not stand with us, but if we stand faithful to the Lord, He is with us all the way!

He will never forsake us no matter how grave or threatening the situation may be. He will be right by our side.

But we must be faithful to Him. Christ will stand with us as we stand with Him.

Paul declares that Christ was with him because he was not ashamed of Christ. He continued to preach the Gospel of Christ to whomever he came in contact with!

The result: Paul *"was delivered out of the mouth of the lion."*

III. IN THE FACE OF DEATH, BELIEVERS HAVE THE ASSURANCE OF GOD'S ETERNAL DELIVERANCE! (Vs 18) (i.e. Being rescued from death and being transported into the Lord's heavenly kingdom.)

Humanly speaking, the situation may have seemed bleak for Paul.

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He was not guilty, yet he was being condemned to death on false charges because the civil and state religious leaders were set on stamping out Christ and His Church.

Paul was doomed to death in the eyes of the world. But not in the eyes of Paul. In the eyes of Paul, he was going to his coronation!

The Lord Jesus Christ was going to preserve him and transport him into the kingdom of God, the kingdom that is gloriously perfected and that lasts forever. Paul had only one final statement about the matter: *"To Christ be glory forever and ever."*

2 Corinthians 1:10—"Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."

2 Peter 2:9—"The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished."

Isaiah 41:10—"Fear thou not; For I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

Isaiah 43:2—"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

Conclusion

SOMETIMES EVEN THE STRONGEST AND BEST OF BELIEVERS NEED HELP! (When you find yourself there, don't be afraid to ask for help!)

BUT EVEN WHEN WE FIND NO HELP FROM MEN, GOD IS WITH US!

AND EVEN IN THE FACE OF DEATH, BELIEVERS HAVE THE ASSURANCE OF GOD'S ETERNAL DELIVERANCE!