

EPHESIANS - Ephesians 6

Message 107

Date: 11/21/2021

Words: 5956

Scripture: Ephesians 6:

INTRO: We have come to the last message in the book of Ephesians. It is a book of six chapters and divides into two sections. Chapters 1-3 deal with doctrine, and chapters 4-6 deal with the duties of Christians. Paul wrote it while he was in Rome in prison and in this message we will see how he got the letter to Ephesus. Google said it is 2,344 kilometers from Rome to Ephesus.

In chapter 6 Paul gave a concluding word not related by subject matter to the rest of the book. Here he opened a large window for the reader to look into the realm of the unseen enemy every Christian battles. We are reminded that our real battle is not with people, it is with Satan and his demons.

Paul has encouraged the believer to put on the whole armor of God. Surely we need every part. And when we have put on every part of the Christian's armor, now he instructs the believer to stand. He must stand against the wiles of the devil and he must learn to stand in the evil day. Every believer meets an evil day every once in a while. Many are led off the path in such a day and some give up altogether. One of the most damaging teachings in the Church today is called the Once Saved Always Saved position. From all I can find is a relatively new doctrine in the Church and it has done untold damage. Paul does not give these warnings, knowing they really do not have any potential of happening. He knows full well what may happen. And so we need the whole armor of God.

Paul illustrates the Christian's spiritual armor from some of the pieces of the Roman soldier's equipment. There is the belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the Gospel shoes, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. As time progresses now, the need will be greater than ever to constantly make sure every part is in place. It seems to me that covid 19 has made a turning point for humanity. I challenge our young people, prepare for the future. Memorize the Word. Get into the Word of God. Understand prophecy.

In the last message we began looking at the subject of prayer. Paul brings this conclusion to a close with the subject of prayer. So let me read verses 18-20:

18 praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints—

19 and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

We looked at prayer in general in verse 18 and now we are at verse 19 where Paul asks for prayer for himself on some particular matters.

g) Prayer

-In particular

Verse 19 begins like this: "and for me..." Our question is, "And 'what' for me"? I won't go through the details, but I believe it is the elliptical word "praying" as supplied from verse 18. So it would read like this: "praying with all prayer and supplication etc.. and praying for me."

So he is asking the Ephesians to pray for him. He is in prison so his ministry has been moved into prison and he asks for prayer that "utterance may be given to him." The word translated "utterance" is simply *logos*, a word, singular. When he asks for prayer, it is clear that Paul wants them to pray that God would give him a word.

Now why would it be 'word' singular? He wants the Lord to give him a word. The idea is this, let us say someone says, "I would like to have a word with you." The meaning is not one single word. It is a

matter that could take many words. It might be a word of correction or a word about a business deal. It is a word about something in particular. Paul wants them to pray that the Lord may give him a word, a special message.

Now this word that he asks them to pray for is so that, and he says, "that I may open my mouth boldly." You see, we may be in a predicament and might say, "I don't know what to say." But if a word has been given us, when the time comes then we do know what to say, and he wanted to have a word given to him so that he did know what to say, and that he could then say it boldly.

So notice that he asks that a word might be given him. The verb here is in a rare mood. Daniel B. Wallaces book says this mood may be used as giving a polite request. He says we might use it like this: "Do you think you might help me with the dishes tonight?" instead of, "Please help me with the dishes."

It could be said like this: "Would you consider praying for me that the Lord would give him a word?" And the idea here is that if the Ephesians pray this for him, it is possible for it to happen. I think we might go further and say that if they pray this for him, it is more likely that it will happen.

I had quite long discussions with a man who had spent 10 years in Russian prisons. His name was David Klassen. And time and again, when he was in various situations the Lord gave him a word so that even the KJB man questioning him was stuck when he was questioned by Klassen.

Now Paul wanted the Ephesians to pray for him that a word might be given to him that he might open his mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel. May I ask you, does it happen that when you would like to speak to someone, you don't have a word? How many of us sit down with someone and we might have an opportunity to share the Gospel and it does not even enter our minds to pray for a word from the Lord? Paul is in prison and asks for prayer for this. He could have asked for prayer that he might be released, but in this request we see what is highest in his concerns.

Now note that Paul is not self-confident that he will be able to handle each situation. He asks for prayer for this. Does it happen to you that you are with someone and you might have an opportunity to share the Word of God, but you don't know what to say? Maybe you say, "It's not my gift. I'm just like that." But do we ever think that if we pray or request prayer, God might give us a word?

Now one can hardly open one's mouth boldly when one does not have a word. But when you have a word and you know what to say, you might just be waiting for a chance to put that word into the conversation. And when you have a word to say, now you can open your mouth boldly. It is not easy for many of us to open our mouth, yet to share the Gospel that is what you have to do. I know it is important to live right, but living right does not share the Gospel.

Albert Barnes says of these words, and I quote: "That I may open my mouth boldly. He was in Rome. He was almost alone, he was surrounded by multitudes of the wicked. He was exposed to death. Yet he

desired to speak boldly in the name of the Lord Jesus, and to invite sinners to repentance. A Christian in chains, and surrounded by the wicked, may speak boldly, and may have hope of success – for Paul was not an unsuccessful preacher ever (even?) when a captive at Rome.”

The letter to the Ephesians is one of four prison Epistles Paul wrote at this time. Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon are the other three. Turn to Philippians 1, just a few verses past where we are. We begin in verse 12:

12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel,

13 so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ;

14 and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear.

Paul is saying, “I got thrown into prison, but what happened to me has actually turned out for the advance of the Gospel into an entirely new area. The whole palace guard and all the rest have found out that my chains are in Christ.”

Let me read part of an article from the internet here:

Upon entering the city of Rome, "Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Regiment" (Acts 27:1) handed Paul over to the Prefect of the Praetorian Guard (the commanding officer). The official duty of the Prefect was to keep in custody all accused persons who were to be tried before the Emperor. "Now when we came to Rome, the centurion delivered the

prisoners to the captain of the guard; but Paul was permitted to dwell by himself with the soldier who guarded him." (Acts 28:16).

It is interesting that Luke uses the phrase, "the captain of the guard," since there were usually two Prefects (captains) in the Praetorian Guard. However, between the years 51 and 62 A.D. there was just one Prefect; his name was Afrianus Burrus. It is believed by most scholars that Paul arrived in Rome around 60 A.D. It is also interesting to note that by the end of the second century the work of the Praetorian Prefect was highly elevated. "The command of these favored and formidable troops soon became the first office of the empire. As the government degenerated into military despotism, the Praetorian Prefect, who in his origin had been a simple captain of the guards, was placed not only at the head of the army, but of the finances, and even of the law." (Edward Gibbon, *The History Of The Decline And Fall Of The Roman Empire*, Vol. I, p. 159).

Paul had been delivered to the Praetorian Guard to await trial before the Emperor. Paul is twice referred to as having been "bound in chains," where the Greek word halusis is used (Acts 28:20; Eph. 6:20). The halusis was a short length of chain by which the wrist of a prisoner was bound to the wrist of a soldier who was guarding him, so that escape was impossible.

Though allowed some freedom, Paul was still under constant guard. In the course of two years one by one Praetorian Guards would be on duty with Paul. But these guards were also under the constant influence of Paul and the gospel! They could not help overhearing what Paul taught others. They could hear Paul as he spoke to others. They would hear him pray and sing praises to God. They would note his courage, gentleness, loyalty to Christ and deep inner conviction. They would have noticed that Paul was no ordinary prisoner, brought to Rome to entertain the crowds in the Circus Maximus. He was an uncondemned Roman, one who had appealed to Caesar. It is almost certain Paul would have tried to teach his "captive audience" i.e., those soldiers chained to him.

Paul's imprisonment had opened the way for preaching the gospel to the finest regiment in the Roman army! All the Praetorian Guard knew why Paul was in prison—and many of them were touched by the gospel. No wonder Paul declared that his imprisonment had actually been for the furtherance of the gospel! The news spread from guard to guard, to the families of the guards, and then to Caesar's household! This very sight had to give great comfort and

fresh courage to the brethren at [Philippi](#). Paul ended the Philippian letter by saying, "All the saints greet you, but especially those who are of Caesar's household" (Phil. 4:22).

<https://www.padfield.com/2001/the-praetorian-guard.html>

I understand the Palace guards were worked in 6 hour shifts and so rotation after rotation was chained to Paul and became his prisoner. And he adds that not only all the palace guard knew that he was there for Christ, but he adds that all the rest knew as well. So a lot of talk took place about him.

Think of this. Most of them, if any, had ever heard the Gospel. It was brand new news. The word "furtherance" in verse 12 indicates the Gospel is making pioneer advance.

But that is not all. The Christians that lived at Rome who came to see Paul in prison saw and heard this man who was a prisoner, not of Rome, as one would expect him to say, but a prisoner of Jesus Christ. And when they saw his boldness, his fearlessness to share the Gospel at the palace, they took courage. It appears they had been timid or even afraid. Through his example they became confident by his lack of fear to preach at the heart of Rome. Not only could Paul share with the palace guard, but his life resulted in the growth of boldness among the Christians there.

Now let me just add a word here. It is important to understand when one opens one's mouth that one understands that the one you are talking to has a free will, and one must never try to force anything. You might know the saying, "A man persuaded against his will is of the same

opinion still." One of the primary truths of the Gospel is that it must be chosen of one's free will. There is no glory for God from that which does not come from free will. One is free and able both to accept or reject the message.

Let me add something else: I have made many failures in trying to talk to people. Sometimes I was downright ashamed of myself. The devil can use that to shut us up and say, "That is not my thing." But one must learn from that and try again. If one did not do anything after not being an expert on the first try one would never amount to anything. Our passage says, "praying in every season in the Spirit." Prayer is the key to much of the Christian's life.

Now take note of the word "boldly." The idea in this word is "to speak freely." Paul asked for prayer that he might speak freely. Such speech is not strained. It flows freely. I know what it is like to try to speak when the freedom is not there.

Now the reason he wanted prayer for freedom of speech was that he might make known the mystery of the Gospel. And that raises the question, just what is this mystery of the Gospel? John Gill says this: "the mystery of the Gospel; or the mysterious doctrines of it, such as the doctrines of a trinity of persons, of the union of the two natures in Christ, justification by his righteousness, regeneration by his Spirit and grace..." etc.

I do not think that is correct. You will not remember this, but in chapter 3 we spent a good while on a certain mystery. Turn to it. We'll begin in verse 1:

1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—

2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

3 how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,

4 by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),

Twice here, Paul mentions a mystery. In verse 3 it is 'the mystery' and in verse 4 he calls it the mystery of Christ. We go on in verse 5:

5 which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:

Now he says of this mystery that it was not made known in other ages as it has now been revealed, and it was revealed by the Holy Spirit to the Lord's holy Apostles and prophets. And now he will tell us what this mystery is, verse 6:

6 that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,

7 of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.

What he earlier called "the mystery" and "the mystery of Christ" is here explained as the fact that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the same body. And this

body is the Church. That Jew and Gentile would become one body was the great mystery. Most in the known world at that time will have known of Israel and Judaism. But that the message of Jesus Christ was a message for the whole world, not just the Jews, this would have been news indeed! The mystery is that they, the Gentiles, could become part of the work of God.

We go on in verse 8:

8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

9 and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;

10 to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,

11 according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.

I believe this is the mystery Paul wanted to boldly make known to Rome. He could have said something like this: "You Gentiles know how we Jews had our own country and our own faith and we did not mix with you. If you wanted to join our faith you had to be converted, washed from your *Gentileness* and become a Jew. There was only one nation under God and

that was us, the Jews. We had the true God and you all had the wrong God.

"But God sent His only Son, Jesus Christ into the world. It was not long ago. You might have heard of the man called Jesus Christ, and how the Jews, together with Rome put Him to death. You may have heard stories of how He was raised from the dead. Well, He was raised from the dead. Come to Israel with me and I will take you to many people who can verify that He showed Himself alive for 40 days. The proof of this cannot be disputed.

"But what I want to tell you is that He died, and He died in your place. All have sinned and come short of the glory of God. That is true of Jew and Gentile alike. Let me list some sins. Listen to the 10 commandments. Now I ask you, have any of you failed in any of those? Ok, so then you are a sinner and sinners, when they die go to hell.

"But listen to this, you will have a hard time believing it. He died for Jew and Gentile alike, and all those who repent of their sins and put their faith in Him receive eternal life from Him. They can die in peace. This is for you. You and I can become brothers in the faith. God has now made Jew and Gentile one in Jesus Christ."

Well, I do not know what all he told them, but he wanted to make known to them the mystery. What messages he must have given them, and what conviction must have set in on many of them when he dealt with sin and the need for salvation from sin.

But further, he wanted to make known to them the mystery of the Gospel. The Gospel is the good news. We looked at

that when we looked at the shoes the Roman soldier wore. That Jesus died in the place of every sinner who would ever be born and that everyone can partake of salvation freely, is good news beyond description.

That we are sinners is very clear. From Scripture we learn that hell is the eternal abode of those who die in their sins. We further learn that there is nothing good, no good work, anyone can do to get rid of one sin. And we learn that if we repent of our sins He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins. That can become such common news to us that it loses its amazement.

Paul then goes on in verse 20 like this: "...for which I am an ambassador in chains..." When he says, "for which," he is referring to the Gospel. He is in prison for the Gospel.

Turn Acts 19. Let me give a little history on how Paul got to be in prison in Rome. On Paul's third missionary journey he went to Ephesus, to whom this letter is written. He spent 2 years and three months there, which is a long stay in one place for him. We go to verse 21:

21 When these things were accomplished, Paul purposed in the Spirit, when he had passed through Macedonia and Achaia, to go to Jerusalem, saying, "After I have been there, I must also see Rome."

Well, he was in Philippi during the days of Unleavened Bread, a feast Pastor Daryl has recently spoken to us of. So there are between 40 and 50 days left until Pentecost and Paul wanted to be in Jerusalem for that feast. So turn to chapter 20 and we'll begin in verse 15:

15 We sailed from there, and the next day came opposite Chios. The following day we arrived at Samos and stayed at Trogyllium. The next day we came to Miletus.

16 For Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus, so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be at Jerusalem, if possible, on the Day of Pentecost.

17 From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church.

18 And when they had come to him, he said to them: "You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you,

19 "serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews;

20 "how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house,

21 "testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

22 "And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there,

23 "except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me.

24 "But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and

the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Skip over to verse 36:

36 And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all.

37 Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him,

38 sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

So it seems he received warning after warning not to go to Jerusalem. Well, he got to Tyre, which is now not far from Caesarea, on the coast, and from where he will travel by road to Jerusalem.

We'll pick up in 21:9,

8 On the next day we who were Paul's companions departed and came to Caesarea, and entered the house of Philip the evangelist, who was one of the seven, and stayed with him.

9 Now this man had four virgin daughters who prophesied.

10 And as we stayed many days, a certain prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

11 When he had come to us, he took Paul's belt, bound his own hands and feet, and said, "Thus says the Holy Spirit, 'So shall the Jews at Jerusalem bind the man who owns this belt, and deliver him into the hands of the Gentiles.'"

12 Now when we heard these things, both we and those from that place pleaded with him not to go up to Jerusalem.

13 Then Paul answered, "What do you mean by weeping and breaking my heart? For I am ready not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus."

14 So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, "The will of the Lord be done."

Well, it's a bit of a story yet, but Paul ended up back in Ceasarea a prisoner and as a Roman citizen he appealed to Ceasar and that is how he ended up in Rome as a prisoner.

So back to Ephesians 6:20, where he says he is an ambassador in chains. In the Philippian passage we read earlier he said his chains were in Christ. He was a prisoner for the Lord. And now he says he is an ambassador in chains. That is a strange mixture of words; ambassador and in chains, but this is how he viewed himself.

I wonder how we might view ourselves if we ended up in prison for the Gospel? An ambassador is one who is officially sent by one country to represent his country in another country. A Canadian ambassador to Russia is a Canadian in an official capacity in Russia to represent Canada.

Here is Paul, an official from the Kingdom of God sent to Rome. He was a prisoner he said to the Philippians, a prisoner in Christ. He views himself as in Christ's stead in Rome.

Twice this word "ambassador" is used in the NT. The other time is in 2 Corinthians 5:20. Listen as I read verses 18-20:

18 Now all things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation,

19 that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation.

20 Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.

We were estranged from God through sin once ourselves, and God reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ. This takes place when we repent and put our faith in Christ. And now that we are reconciled, the Lord has given to us the word of reconciliation. And in reconciling lost sinners to the Lord we must meet with lost sinners. And Paul was ushered right into the presence of many lost sinners. And in this Corinthian passage he says: "Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us, we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."

So in Ephesians 6:20 he says this:

20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Paul requested prayer that he might speak boldly, and here is the last clause: "...as

I ought to speak." How should an ambassador from one country speak on his countries behalf? Ashamed? Intimidated? How should a Christian, as representing the kingdom of God and His Lord Jesus Christ, speak? Ashamed? Intimidated? Fearful? No, he should speak boldly as he ought to speak!

B. Final Conclusion

We come now to the final conclusion to this letter. Paul made his initial conclusion in verses 6-20. It is section not related to the rest of the letter as much as it is a conclusion. He said, "Finally my brethren..." But now in verse 21 he will make the final conclusion.

Verse 21:

21 But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you;

22 whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts.

Paul wanted the Ephesians to know how things were going with him from someone who had been with him, and this was Tychicus. Tychicus came from the area of which Ephesus was the capital, so it was fitting to send him. Also, Tychicus would bring this letter to Ephesus. Now for our young people, remember this: No cell phones, not even telephones, not even telegraph; no way of communicating with people that far off other than by letter. And a letter had to be taken by someone from where you are to the one you are communicating to. So Paul chose Tychicus to take the letter. Likely he would be interested in going home for a while.

Tychicus would also take Onesimus with him. Onesimus was a run-away slave from Philemon, at Colossie. He got saved and Paul is sending him back to Philemon and the story about this is given in that little letter.

Onesimus, it appears, was from Colossie and likely he took the letter Paul wrote to the Colossians to them.

So Tychicus would travel back to his home area and bring all the news related to him to Ephesus and you can imagine the excitement in the Ephesian church when he arrived there. I suppose they would have had a special service and there would have been a question and answer period.

Then in verse 23 we have a common salutation:

23 Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Lord willing I will speak on grace and how it leads to peace in another message when I get to it. Last year we went through a Bible study on this word and I feel I have a better hold of this most difficult word.

CONCL: In conclusion to this letter let me share what we think happened to Paul after his time in prison in Rome. We read in the later part of Acts before how he decided to go to Jerusalem though he had many warnings that he would have trouble. He did go, and he did have trouble, and after quite a long while he ended up in Rome, a prisoner.

Let me read from the Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary on its article on Paul, of his closing years. I quote: "Acts leaves the question of Paul's release unanswered, but there is strong evidence for believing that he was released at the end of two years. The amicable attitude of the Roman Government in Acts favors it, the Prison Epistles expect it, the Pastoral Epistles demand it, and tradition asserts it. Paul's subsequent activities must be inferred from scant references in the Pastorals. From their contents it seems clear that 1 Timothy and Titus were written before the outbreak of the Neronian persecution. After his release, perhaps in the spring of AD 63, Paul went east, visited Ephesus, stationing Timothy there when he left for Macedonia (1 Tim. 1:3). He left Titus to complete missionary work on Crete, and in writing to him mentions plans to spend the winter at Nicopolis. From Nicopolis he may have

made the traditional visit to Spain, working there at the outbreak of the Neronian persecution in autumn of AD 64. II Timothy makes it clear that Paul is again a prisoner in Rome, kept in close confinement as a malefactor (1:16-17; 2:9). At his first appearing before the court he escaped immediate condemnation, but in writing to Timothy he had no hope of release (4:16-18, 6-8). He was executed at Rome in late AD 66 or early 67. Tradition says he was beheaded on the Ostian Way."

The site gotquestions.org says: "According to tradition, Paul was executed by beheading in Rome, although the exact circumstances of his trial and death were never written down. We do know from Scripture that Paul spent his final days living in the deplorable conditions of a Roman prison, awaiting his execution. Certain that his death was imminent, Paul wrote to his beloved protégé [Timothy](#): "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing" ([2 Timothy 4:6-8](#)).

Following the account of the early church historian [Eusebius](#), *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* records that Paul was led by Nero's soldiers "out of the city to the place of execution, where he, after his prayers made, gave his neck to the sword" (chapter 1, section X).

The great Apostle's life has run its course and he has now been in glory for 2,000 years! Listen to some of the last words he wrote. I am reading 2 Timothy 4:5-11:

5 *But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*

6 *For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.*

7 *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.*

8 *Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that*

Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.

9 Be diligent to come to me quickly;

10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry.

Let me ask you, do you feel sometimes like you try so hard to do well but life simply does not go well for you. Think of Paul. He has suffered untold difficulties to bring the Gospel to others. Now he is at the end of life and he knows it. He has few friends. Demas, whom he favorably mentioned in Colossians, has now forsaken him, having loved this present world. Other friends left him for reasons he does not give. Only Luke, the doctor, the writer of the Gospel of Luke is still with him.

And now, shortly, he will be taken out by Nero's soldiers and he will kneel down and pray and his head will be removed by the sword. Would you not expect a royal departure for all his service? But it is not to be. Let me tell you what will be: A royal trip to glory. God will send His angels to bring him home. What Paul knows is that crown of righteousness awaits him in glory. In this world, a cross; in the next, a crown.

And what he left us in epistles, is unspeakable wealth! And the glory of this will go with him for eternity! And now, for 2,000 years he has been in the presence of the Lord in that great city, the New Jerusalem!