

LESSON 13

Faithfulness and Paul's Companions

Materials

- RBP transparencies 1, 2, and 16
- Lesson 13 case study from resource CD
- 2 Timothy 4:18 verse card from resource CD

Scripture Focus

2 Timothy 4:9–22

Key Verse

“And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen” (2 Tim. 4:18).

Overview

Paul closed his final letter to Timothy with a number of personal notations. He spoke of some who had strayed from him and from the Lord's service. He also spoke of many who had remained faithful, including one who had once strayed but then returned. Paul gave Timothy personal instructions and a blessing. Finally Paul delivered a great testimony of God's faithfulness to him, a most fitting conclusion to a letter about faithfulness.

Topic

Fellow ministers

Theme

Companionship in ministry is vital, and the Lord's companionship is essential.

Desired Learner Response

The learner will value companions in ministry and seek to be a companion to another.

Outline

- I. Companions Who Strayed (2 Tim. 4:10a, 16)
 - A. Demas (4:10)
 - B. Deserters (4:16)
- II. Companions Who Stayed (2 Tim. 4:10b, 11a, 12, 20)
 - A. Crescens (4:10)
 - B. Titus (4:10)
 - C. Luke (4:11)
 - D. Tychicus (4:12)
 - E. Erastus (4:20)
 - F. Trophimus (4:20)

III. Timothy (2 Tim. 4:9, 11b, 13–15, 19, 22a)

- A. Come (4:9)
- B. Bring (4:11, 13)
- C. Beware (4:15)
- D. Greet (4:19)
- E. Blessing (4:22)

IV. The Lord (2 Tim. 4:17, 18)

- A. Stood (4:17)
- B. Strengthened (4:17)
- C. Delivered (4:18)

Getting Started

Scariest than a “Haunted House”

You are camping in a remote area known for wild animals. During the late fall night, a fierce thunderstorm rips your tent and drenches everything. You have no choice but to hike more than a mile through the woods to your vehicle. Which of the following would be most reassuring as you travel?

- Dry clothes
- Your favorite cookies
- Someone to go with you
- An MP3 player

Ask: How does being alone impact our feelings in a fearful situation? What value would a companion be during your trek? (Questions 1, 2)

Paul closed his letter to Timothy with a look at companions in ministry.

Searching the Scriptures

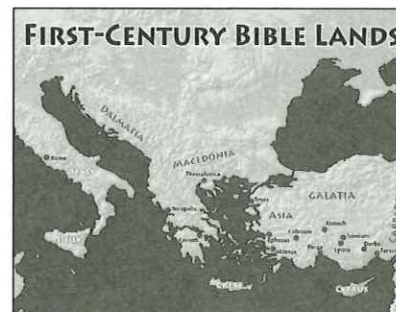
This is the final lesson of our study, *From Forgiven to Faithfulness*. The three New Testament letters we have studied present three successive themes. Philemon teaches forgiveness, Titus shows godliness, and 2 Timothy demonstrates faithfulness. The most important part of this lesson is the final section on the Lord.

I. Companions Who Strayed (2 Tim. 4:10a, 16)

MAP: Display transparency 2 throughout this lesson to track the travels of Paul's companions.

A. Demas (4:10)

Demas had been with Paul during Paul's first Roman imprisonment (Col. 4:14; Philemon 24). But by the time Paul wrote 2 Timothy, Demas had forsaken Paul. The word Paul used to speak of the forsaking gave the idea of leaving



a person in a difficult situation. Demas not only left Paul, but he left him at a time when Paul really needed him.

Demas left Paul because he loved “this present world.” Perhaps he loved the pleasure, the comforts, the conveniences of the world. He was no longer willing to risk hardships and exercise self-denial to be with Paul in Rome while Paul was a prisoner on death row. Demas loved the world just as the Christian is supposed to love the appearing of Christ (same word is used for love in 4:10 and 4:8).

READ: 1 John 2:15. **ASK:** Loving the world (system) is evidence of what grave problem? (Question 3)

Demas forsook Paul and went to Thessalonica. Perhaps that was his home, for he is mentioned with Aristarchus, who was from that city (Philemon 24; Acts 20:4). Demas may have quit and gone home, back to his old place, his old job, and even his old friends. What a sad foreshadowing of those today who follow Christ for a while and then return to their old ways.

B. Deserters (4:16)

Imagine yourself on trial for a capital crime. The death penalty awaits if you are found guilty. You have no lawyer and no one willing to be a witness on your behalf. That’s where Paul stood (2 Tim. 4:16). No man stood as a witness and no man stood as an advocate or attorney with Paul. There were Christians in Rome at the time, but when the trial began they were nowhere to be found. Luke must have arrived later, for he was present as Paul wrote (v. 11). Paul sought God’s forgiveness for those who deserted him, even as Christ asked forgiveness for His crucifiers and as Stephen did for those who stoned him.

READ: 2 Timothy 4:16. **ASK:** What did Paul demonstrate about the value he placed on companions in ministry by forgiving those who deserted him? (Question 4)

II. Companions Who Stayed (2 Tim. 4:10b, 11a, 12, 20)

A. Crescens (4:10)

Crescens had been with Paul earlier, but by the time Paul was writing to Timothy, Crescens had departed to Galatia, which was some distance east of Ephesus, where Timothy was serving at that time.

B. Titus (4:10)

You will recall that Titus was in Crete during Paul’s time of freedom between the two Roman imprisonments and that there Titus received an epistle bearing his name from Paul. Probably Titus had joined Paul at Nicopolis, after his replacement had arrived in Crete (Titus 3:12). Sometime between his meeting with Paul and Paul’s trial, Titus had gone to Dalmatia.

There is no reason to believe that Crescens and Titus had loved the present world and deserted Paul (2 Tim. 4:10). More likely, they had left Paul for

further ministries in Galatia and Dalmatia, probably at Paul's direction. So Crescens and Titus continued to be faithful companions of Paul, even though they were not present with him at this time.

READ: 1 Corinthians 5:3. **ASK:** What companionship, mentioned in principle in this verse, could Paul have enjoyed with Crescens and Titus? (Question 5)

C. Luke (4:11)

The only worker in the gospel still with Paul as he wrote was Luke, the doctor (v. 11). Luke was with Paul rather consistently (though not constantly) from the middle of the second missionary journey, through the third, the imprisonment in Caesarea, the trip to Rome and the first imprisonment, and finally, the second imprisonment. It is interesting that the Gentile doctor, Luke, would be the only one with Paul during his final days.

D. Tychicus (4:12)

Tychicus had been sent by Paul to Ephesus (v. 12). Possibly he was sent to be Timothy's replacement so that Timothy could visit Paul (vv. 9, 21). He may have been the one who carried this very epistle from the dungeon of Paul to the hands of Timothy. And so by the time Timothy would read the letter, Tychicus would have already been sent and Paul's past tense ("I have sent") would be appropriate.

READ: Colossians 4:7. **ASK:** What glowing description does Paul make of his companion, Tychicus? (Question 6)

E. Erastus (4:20)

Erastus stayed at Corinth (2 Tim. 4:20). Paul had sent Timothy and Erastus together into Macedonia during the third missionary journey (Acts 19:22). Timothy would be interested in knowing what had become of his, and Paul's, companion.

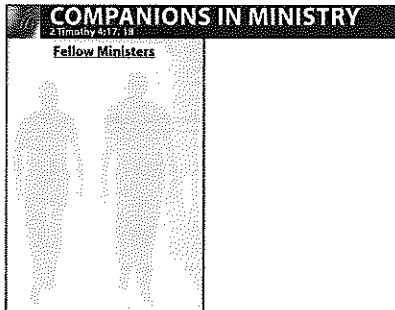
F. Trophimus (4:20)

Trophimus had been with Paul in Jerusalem after the third missionary trip and was indirectly the cause of the uproar that led to Paul's arrest (Acts 21:26–31). Since Paul had a Gentile with him in Jerusalem, some Jews thought (incorrectly) that Paul had taken a Gentile into the temple. On the basis of that false assumption, the Jews rioted.

Since Trophimus had been a companion of the Christians at Ephesus (Acts 21:29), Paul told Timothy and the people there what had become of him (2 Tim. 4:20). Paul had left him sick at Miletus ("Miletum"). Paul, who had great powers of healing (Acts 19:11, 12), either could not or did not exercise those powers upon his own fellow worker in the gospel. Paul did not exercise his powers upon Timothy either, for he simply prescribed the common medication of that

day for Timothy's chronic stomach problem (1 Tim. 5:23).

The gift of healing in the New Testament was intended by God as a sign to authenticate the messengers of God to unbelievers so that they would pay attention to the gospel and receive Christ. It was not intended by God to keep believers well. Therefore, even the most faithful Christian workers were not healed by Paul, because that was not the purpose of the gift.



TRANSPARENCY: Display transparency 16 with the right half covered. **ASK:** What does Paul's list of faithful ministers teach you about the need for companions in ministry? (Question 7)

III. Timothy (2 Tim. 4:9, 11b, 13–15, 19, 22a)

Paul gave Timothy four instructions and a blessing as he came to the end of the letter. Timothy had been exhorted to be faithful; he could demonstrate that faithfulness by doing as Paul directed.

A. Come (4:9)

Paul requested that Timothy leave his post in Ephesus and come to be with Paul in Rome. Timothy was to be diligent in his efforts to make the visit (same word as in 2:15), giving it high priority and intense concentration.

READ: 2 Timothy 4:9. **ASK:** What are some possible reasons why Paul desired Timothy's visit? (Question 8)

Paul was in a difficult situation and desired human companionship. He was trusting in the Lord, but he also desired the presence of a faithful friend. All his other friends, except for Luke, had either been sent on ministry trips or had deserted.

Paul also wanted Timothy to come before winter set in. First of all, travel in the winter was dangerous, as Paul knew by experience (Acts 27). Secondly, Paul needed his coat before the winter cold invaded his cell.

B. Bring (4:11, 13)

Timothy was to bring some things to Paul (2 Tim. 4:13). Paul asked that he bring a cloak. The cloak was a heavy coat that would provide some warmth in the cold jail cell. Paul had left it at Troas with Carpus during his travels between the two imprisonments. Perhaps he had accidentally forgotten it, a very human thing to do. Perhaps he had left it on purpose because the weather was warming up at the time and he would not need it for the summer.

READ: 2 Timothy 4:13. **ASK:** Why would Paul want Scriptures while he was alone in prison? (Question 9)

Paul requested that Timothy bring the books and the parchments. The books were writings on papyrus. The parchments were writings on animal skins. The parchments likely contained the Old Testament Scriptures, and Paul especially

wanted those. It is noteworthy that Paul still wanted to study, especially the Scripture, even as death was approaching. He practiced what he preached (2:15). What a challenge to us! Many of us seldom read a book or dig into the Word. Paul was a student of the Word up to the day of his execution.

Paul also requested Timothy to bring John Mark with him. John, whose surname was Mark (Acts 15:37), had left Paul during the first missionary journey (Acts 13:5, 13). When Paul and Barnabas were ready to begin the second journey, a dispute arose between them over John Mark (Acts 15:36–41). Paul would not let John Mark go because of his previous desertion.

But by the time of Paul's first imprisonment, Mark had been restored to fellowship with Paul (Col. 4:10; Philemon 24). And as Paul was imprisoned the second time, he desired Mark's presence.

READ: 2 Timothy 4:11. **ASK:** How did Paul describe Mark? (Question 10)

Some have suggested that Mark knew Latin, and that would have been useful to Paul. Whatever the specifics, Paul desired Mark's companionship in ministry.

C. Beware (4:15)

Timothy was to beware of a man named Alexander, the coppersmith. The word "coppersmith" could mean a worker in copper or any metal. Perhaps this man made silver idols of Diana. He may have been one of the workers who rioted over Paul's influence in Ephesus during the third missionary trip (Acts 19:23ff.)

Alexander did Paul much evil. Paul desired the Lord to reward him according to his works (2 Tim. 4:14). This may be a simple statement of fact that the Lord would reward him that way. Or it may have been Paul's desire that the Lord would reward him in such a manner. If this man did oppose God and His gospel, then God, the righteous Judge, would be right in bringing a judgment against him. And Paul could seek that judgment, not out of personal revenge, but out of a sincere desire for God's honor. Remember Paul's totally different attitude toward those who forsook him personally but did not fight against the work of the Lord (v. 16).

Paul suspected that Alexander would continue to oppose the truth of God as Timothy and other Christians proclaimed it in Ephesus. Therefore, Timothy must beware of him (v. 15), or guard himself against Alexander.

READ: 2 Timothy 4:15. **ASK:** What benefit of companionships did Paul's warning about Alexander demonstrate? (Question 11)

D. Greet (4:19)

Timothy should give Paul's greetings to Priscilla and Aquila (v. 18). This couple had fled from Rome because of persecution against the Jews. They had been with Paul in several places (Acts 18:2, 18). Now they were in Ephesus, serving the Lord with Timothy.

Onesiphorus, a very faithful companion of Paul's and resident of Ephesus, received Paul's greetings along with his household.

E. Blessing (4:22)

READ: 2 Timothy 4:22. **ASK:** What companionship did Paul request for Timothy? (Question 12)

Paul desired God's greatest blessings to rest upon Timothy. The word "spirit" is used very similarly to the word "soul" in the Bible, and yet there seems to be the distinction that the spirit is our nonmaterial part related to God. Paul desired the favorable presence of Christ and His grace to be consciously present with Timothy.

IV. The Lord (2 Tim. 4:17, 18)

As Paul neared the conclusion of his letter with its focus on faithfulness, he had no more fitting end than to turn Timothy's attention to the faithful One, God Himself. Paul proclaimed the great faithfulness of God, Who alone was faithful to Paul in his greatest hour of need.

READ: 2 Timothy 4:17. **ASK:** How important was the Lord to Paul while Paul stood trial? (Question 13)

A. Stood (4:17)

When Paul had his trial, God stood with him. No human being was present to support him, but God was faithful to His promise never to leave (Heb. 13:5). Paul had been faithfully carrying out the Great Commission, and Jesus never left him (Matt. 28:19, 20). Paul sensed the Lord standing by his side as he endured the anguish of his trial for a capital offense and ministering to him.

READ: John 19:26. **ASK:** Who stood by Jesus Christ at His darkest hour? (Question 14)

B. Strengthened (4:17)

God strengthened Paul as he stood before the tribunal. He strengthened Paul so that his preaching might be fully known to the Gentiles. Paul's trial would have been a sensational hearing. Roman governmental dignitaries other than the required legal officials may have packed the courtroom. Paul had no lawyer, and so he spoke in his own behalf. Since he was on trial for preaching the gospel, it would be relevant for his defense to have included a clear presentation of the gospel.

READ: Philippians 4:12, 13. **ASK:** What had Paul learned earlier in his ministry that he found true at this crucial time in his life? (Question 15)

This courtroom scene could easily have been viewed as an "out of season" time for preaching. Paul could have tried to rationalize his way out of doing

it. But he saw the situation as a choice time to preach Christ, and the Lord strengthened him to do so.

C. Delivered (4:18)

God delivered him out of the lion's mouth. The lion may have meant Caesar, king of the empire. It may have meant Satan (1 Pet. 5:8). Paul may have intended it to convey death, as in Psalm 22:21. All three combine nicely, for Satan was the unseen force working through Caesar to bring Paul to death. But God delivered him at that point.

God would deliver Paul from every evil work. Paul was going to die soon (2 Tim. 4:6), so he did not mean God would keep him from death. The preservation would extend even through death and into Heaven. God would keep Paul from recanting and becoming unfaithful, even through execution. And God would keep Paul safe from the forces of evil who would like to snatch him out of God's hands and thwart God's plan for his life. And so Paul ended with a doxology to God (v. 18). God was faithful to Paul, and Paul would be faithful to his Lord all the way to Heaven, for God was able to keep that which Paul had committed to Him until that day.

TRANSPARENCY: Display transparency 16. **ASK:** What has your companionship with the Lord done for you over the years? (Question 16)

Making It Personal

Provide Companionship

To whom could you provide the blessing of Christian companionship this week? Could you assist that person in their ministry for Christ or request their assistance with your ministry? Could you share with that person a testimony of God's faithfulness to you, either seeing you through a difficult time or delivering you out of it? (Question 16)

Write a Friend

Contact an old friend that you haven't talked to in a while. Write him or her a note of thanks for companionship through the years. (Question 17)

Review Transparency

Use transparency 1 to review the Mark of the Faithful for this lesson: Depends on faithful companions.

Memory Verse

Distribute copies of the 2 Timothy 4:18 verse card from the resource CD. Encourage the learners to memorize the verse.



Use the case study for lesson 13 as desired.

Marks of the Faithful	
1. Forgives others as God forgives.	8. Guards and teaches sound doctrine.
2. Remembers and shares God's forgiveness.	9. Ministers with energy and commitment.
3. Seeks and supports godly leadership.	10. Interprets the Bible accurately.
4. Lives a genuine, godly life.	11. Remains faithful to God's powerful Word.
5. Serves zealously in light of Christ's Return.	12. Lives accountable to God.
6. Ministers thoughtfully and intentionally.	13. Depends on faithful companions.
7. Serves faithfully in the face of fears.	

Answers

to Bible Study Questions

Lesson 1

3. By calling himself a prisoner, Paul set a humble, submissive tone for his letter rather than an authoritative, demanding tone.
4. Paul's tone revealed his humble heart and his submissive attitude toward God. Submission and humility are qualities that Paul wanted to see in Philemon as he dealt with Onesimus.
5. The enemies without and within are the same. The keys to victory over temptation are still the same.
6. Redemption and forgiveness of sins came at the expense of Jesus' shed blood.
7. He would need faith in the Lord to believe that forgiving Onesimus was really the best thing to do. He would need love toward this new saint in order to fully forgive him.
9. We can give God verbal praise when they acknowledge our kindness. We can do things anonymously to focus the attention on God. We can talk about what God has done for us and that we are acting in kindness out of our gratefulness to Him.
10. Philemon might have begun to realize that he had a duty to love Onesimus, his new brother in Christ, that was above his right to punish him.
11. It would remind Philemon of Paul's faithfulness in extreme difficulties and motivate Philemon to be faithful to do "that which is convenient [fitting]" in his situation; forgive and receive Onesimus.
12. He could serve Philemon, not merely as a slave, but as a Christian servant should serve. (See 1 Corinthians 7:21–23; Ephesians 6:5–9; Colossians 3:22–4:1; 1 Timothy 6:1, 2; Titus 2:9, 10; 1 Peter 2:18–21.)
13. The concept of substitution is clearly introduced. Onesimus could have been the substitute for Philemon in the matter of ministry to the imprisoned Paul.
14. If Onesimus' desertion was part of God's plan for the good of Paul, Onesimus, and Philemon, then

Philemon couldn't rightfully refuse to forgive Onesimus.

15. By accepting Onesimus.

Lesson 2

3. Christ's walk is the pattern for the believer's walk.
4. His holiness.
5. They did not want to know or acknowledge God.
13. We will obey it if we take it seriously.
14. Perhaps nothing. Asking the Father to forgive His crucifiers demonstrated His perfect love and His unwavering willingness to forgive.
15. He called upon the Lord, committed his spirit to the Lord, and asked forgiveness for his murderers.

Lesson 3

3. One surrendered to serving God should be doing what God wants done.
4. In the same way that Paul did.
5. The tasks that Paul gave to him were demanding and required a strong spiritual leader. A weak spiritual leader would have folded under the pressure or ruined his ministry through compromise or sinful behavior.
6. Both God's purpose for His churches and human nature do not change.
7. Deacons are primarily to assist the pastor by serving the members in the church. In this sense, they are vitally linked to the spiritual well-being of the people. Deacons who are concerned only with financial decisions are not serving as God intended for them to serve.
8. Ephesians 5:25—God instructs husbands to love their wives in the self-sacrificing way that Christ loved the church. 1 Peter 3:7—God instructs husbands to know their wives and to honor them as fellow heirs of eternal life.
9. If he cannot direct a small household, he cannot direct the larger church.
10. So their judgment would be clear to distinguish between right and wrong and their minds sharp to