

“Faithfulness to God’s Calling”

HEART ATTITUDE: Faithfulness

There are two ways to love the world. God loves the world as He created it and as it could be if it were rescued from evil. Others love the world as it is – sin and all. Our lives reflect the choices we make. Do you love the world as it could be if justice were done, the hungry were fed, and people loved one another? Or do you love what the world has to offer—wealth, power, pleasure—even if gaining it means hurting people and neglecting the work God has given you to do?

As Paul reached the end of his life on earth, he could look back and knew he had been faithful to God’s call. Timothy was Paul’s living legacy, a product of Paul’s faithful teaching, discipleship and example. Who are you training to serve God with you, and after you have moved on? It is our responsibility to keep the Word of God alive in order that it will be perpetuated, generation to generation (should the Lord tarry).

2 TIMOTHY 4:9-22 (NIV)

*Do your best to come to me quickly, (9)
for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to
Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. (10)
Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you,
because he is helpful to me in my ministry. (11)
I sent Tychicus to Ephesus. (12)
When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas,
and my scrolls, especially the parchments. (13)
Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm.
The Lord will repay him for what he has done. (14)
You too should be on your guard against him,
because he strongly opposed our message. (15)
At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me.
May it not be held against them. (16)
But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength,
so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it.
And I was delivered from the lion’s mouth. (17)
The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom.
To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (18)
Greet Priscilla and Aquila and the household of Onesiphorus. (19)
Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus. (20)
Do your best to get here before winter. Eubulus greets you,
and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brothers. (21)
The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. (22)*

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Discipleship/Leadership Bible Study Homework

- **FOCUSING**

1. What person would you like to visit whom you haven't seen in a while?

2. When have you felt abandoned by our friends?

3. For what cause would you be willing to suffer?

- **STUDYING THE WORD**

Paul was virtually alone and probably lonely. No one had been there at his trial to speak in his defense (4:16), and Demas and others had left the faith (4:10). Only Luke had returned (4:11).

4. What did Paul want Timothy to do? (4:9)

5. What had Demas done? Why? (4:10)

Demas had been one of Paul's co-workers (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24), but he deserted Paul because he loved worldly values and worldly pleasures.

6. Why did Paul want Timothy to bring Mark? (4:11)

7. What did Paul want Timothy to bring with him? (4:13)

Paul's arrest was probably so sudden that he was not allowed to return home to gather his personal belongings. As a prisoner in a damp and chilly dungeon, Paul asked Timothy to bring him a coat. Even more than the coat, he wanted his parchments. These may have included parts of the Old Testament, the gospels, copies of his own letters, or other important documents.

8. Who was Alexander? What did Paul say about him? How did Paul instruct Timothy to deal with Alexander? (4:14-15)

Alexander may have been a witness against Paul at his trial; and is mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20.

9. What happened at Paul's first defense? Was he bitter? (4:16)

10. In what way did the Lord deliver Paul? Why? (4:17)

The Most Excellent Way

Discipleship/Leadership Bible Study Homework

11. Of what was Paul convinced? (4:18)

Paul was affirming eternal life after death, not that he wouldn't die. Paul knew the end was near, and he was ready.

12. Write 4:22 in your own words as if you were writing to one who is faithful to in ministry.

As Paul reached the end of his life, he could look back and know he had been faithful to God's call. Now it was time to pass the torch to the next generation, preparing leaders to take his place so that the world would continue to hear the life-changing message of Jesus Christ.

Timothy was Paul's living legacy, a product of his faithful teaching, discipleship and example. Because of Paul's work with many believers, including Timothy, the world is full of believers today who are also carrying on the work.

What legacy will you leave behind?

Whom are you training to carry on your work?

It is our responsibility to keep the Word of God alive for the next generation.

• **UNDERSTANDING**

13. In what way are you tempted to love the world?

14. Why is it sometimes more tempting to love the world than to love God?

15. What about the world do we naturally tend to love?

16. What keeps Christians from holding on to their faith?

17. What people strongly oppose the Christian message today? Why?

• **DOING THE WORD**

18. How will you help a leader with his or her ministry?

19. Who will you express thanks to for encouraging you and discipling you in God's Word?

20. Pray for the Lord's guidance and strength to tell the Good News to those He brings your way.

May the Lord richly bless you as you stay true to His Word!
