

2 Timothy 4

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Tape 8201
Pastor Chuck Smith

All right, let's turn to 2 Timothy, chapter four.

Paul has appeared again before Nero. It looks like the sentence of death is upon him. So he is writing to Timothy, this last of Paul's letters. He speaks of the fact that his departure from the earth is at hand. And so he is giving to Timothy the commission, the charge of being faithful to the Word of God.

Now in the previous chapter, verse sixteen, he said, "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

I charge thee therefore (You see, the therefore, has to take you back. Because all Scripture is inspired by God, and is profitable for doctrine and reproof and correction, and instruction in the ways of righteousness, I therefore charge you, Timothy) *before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ*. Now, this is the second time that Paul has made this kind of a kind of solemn charge to Timothy. And he is really seeking to bolster this young man, in his final words to him.

I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, *who shall judge the quick and the dead*. Now the quick and the dead, does not refer to Californian pedestrians, divided into two categories. The word, quick, is an old English word, which means "alive".

When the Lord returns, He is going to judge those that have lived through the Great Tribulation. And it will be determined whether or not they will be allowed to go into the Kingdom Age.

When we are with the Lord, we also are to be judged. Our works will be judged and we will receive the rewards for the works that we have done, that pass the judgment. The works will be judged, what manner or sort, they are. What the Lord will be looking at, is the motivation for what we did, not so much of what we did, but what motivated us to do it.

There is only one true motivation for the ministry or for serving the Lord, and that's the love of Jesus Christ. It should never be for glory! Let your light so shine before men that they when they see your good works, they glorify your Father, never to glorify you, never to draw attention to you. And there will be many who will come in that day and will say, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name and do marvelous works and all in Your name? And He will say, depart from Me, I never knew you.

A lot of people that today are involved in very noticeable kinds of ministry, the Lord will confess to them, I really didn't know you. The motivation behind what they are doing.

With many, Paul warned the Ephesians, there would rise up from your own group, men whose god is their own belly. Who, really are looking out for themselves. They are not true shepherds of the flock. They are more interested in fleecing the flock than they are in feeding the flock of God. And so the Lord is going to judge.

So I charge you Timothy, because we are going to be judged *at his appearing and his kingdom*; When He appears for us, then we will stand before the judgment seat of Christ. When He comes again, with His kingdom, the first action (Matthew 25), will again be, the judgment of the nations.

So here is the charge of Paul: *2Preach the word*; How great is the need, today, of preaching the Word of God. It is sad that it is difficult to find the preaching of the Word of God. Today there is quite a popular movement to make Christianity sort of innocuous, so it is palatable to everyone. To make church, "unchurchy", so that you really don't know if you are in church or in a theatre. You are so entertained. And it is so clever. You are learning so much about relationships and all, but very little of the Word, being preached. Now Paul said, I charge you before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is going to one day, judge us, preach the Word!

be instant in season, out of season;

Then *reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine*. Exhort with patience with people as you teach, as you teach the doctrine.

Now, the Word of God is inspired. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine and reproof and correction and instruction in righteousness. So he is saying, preach the Word! Reprove! The Word of God is profitable for reproof. And rebuke. And exhort, that is, encourage, with all longsuffering and doctrine.

So the Word of God does all of these things. The Word of God reproves us. It is a reproof when we get on the wrong track. The Word of God is to rebuke us. You remember how that Jesus, in the messages to the churches, was really reproofing them and rebuking them for the things that they had allowed to go on. And then the Word of God is profitable for exhorting. Encouraging the people to pray, to trust the Lord. Encouraging them to just live in close fellowship with God. And then the doctrine, the teaching of what God would have you to be and what God would have you to do.

³*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine;* That time is now.

but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; ⁴*And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.* It's interesting today, again as I said, this modern movement, that seeks to appeal to itching ears. You know, they call it the "seeker friendly" church. They probably should call it the "itching ears" church. They are appealing to people who have itching ears. And they are becoming quite popular because they do appeal to a person who is wanting to be entertained. They will not endure sound doctrine.

We are so blessed, that you, having been fed the Word of God, have developed an appetite for the Word of God. It's an interesting thing. Once you have developed this appetite for the Word, you find it is so rich and so exciting. Once you have developed an appetite for the Word, nothing else really satisfies. Everything else becomes sort of froth and frilly. There is no nourishment there. It's like cotton candy. It is sweet in the mouth, but there is no substance to it. It just sort of melts. You know, you think you are getting a big bite, but then it just dissolves and it's gone. It has sort of a sugary taste. That's the way a lot of preaching is. There is no substance to it. And what a blessing it is, that having been nourished in the Word of God, you develop then the appetite for the Word of God, and nothing else really satisfies. Actually once you develop the appetite for the Word of God, you become spoiled and people go from here across the United States and we get these mournful letters. There is no teaching of the Word. They look around and try to find a church that just teaches the Word of God. So we're sort of a novelty in a sense in that, and I don't understand why pastors can't pick up on this, that people, there are people and enough people that are just hungry for the Word, that if you feed them, they'll come. And they think that they have got to have a clever program, they've got to get this bus program going and all of these programs, trying to get people in. When, if you'll just feed them the Word of God, there are enough hungry people to fill the church. Now, we don't appeal to everybody and we are not trying to appeal to everybody, but we are here to just teach the Word of God.

Now the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but they will seek to themselves, teachers, having itching ears, and turning their ears from the truth, they will be turned unto fables.

It is sad that when a person gets a terminal illness, it seems like they lose all sense of reason and perspective in their desire to be healed. They will begin to go to any one, quack or otherwise, who is promising to them a hope of getting better. And there are those who hold out great hope for people's healings. And they have their meetings across the country, their healing meetings. And people go and they are attracted because they are in a terminal condition. And these men take advantage of them. And I believe that even as there are medical quacks, who promise that they can cure you from anything, so there are spiritual quacks. And people turn from sound doctrine unto fables. Tell me I'm going to get better. Tell me I'm okay. And they leave good, reasonable, judgement because of the hope that is laid out for them.

Paul said to Timothy, ⁵*But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.* So Paul is trying to do four things here. First of all, watch, be on the watch in all things.

Secondly, endure afflictions. They that live Godly in Christ Jesus, Paul has told him, will suffer persecution. Endure hardness, he said, as a good soldier. He's basically instructing Timothy, the ministry, Timothy, is not going to be easy. There's going to be hardship. You are going to have difficult people and difficult situations, so endure the afflictions.

Then, do the work of an evangelist. That is, spread the gospel of Jesus Christ.

And then make full proof of your ministry. Why? Because one day we are going to stand before the Lord, who is going to judge those that are alive and dead at His coming and in the Kingdom. So make full proof. The Bible says to judge ourselves, for if we are to judge ourselves, we will not be judged of God.

So Paul said, ⁶*For I am now ready to be offered*, The word, “offered” here in the Greek, literally is, poured out. In the feast, they would take a glass of wine at the end of the meal and they would pour it out unto the gods. It was an offering unto the gods—sort of a libation. And so Paul is saying, I’m now ready to be poured out. I am now ready to be offered. My life is ready to be offered for Jesus Christ. My life is going to be poured out.

Paul’s neck will soon be placed upon the block. A huge Roman soldier with a large headed ax, will with one swift blow, separate Paul’s head from his body. His head will fall into a basket and his body on the other side. I’m ready to be offered. I’m ready to be a sacrifice, an offering my life unto God.

and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:* One day the Lord, if He tarries, each of us will come to that place where we come to the end of the road, hopefully not as Paul. But probably dying a natural death. The time of our departure, Paul said, is at hand. Now, I have fought a good fight!

As we have pointed out, in the past, Paul, I’m certain was a real sport’s lover. I’m sure that he followed the Olympics. He used often times, illustrations from sports, from the running of the races, from the wrestling matches and all. He used them for illustrations. They that strive for the masteries are tempted in all things. Now they do it for corruptible crowns, but we’re working for an incorruptible crown. In other words, if they are willing to discipline themselves, to train and all, in order just to get a laurel wreath, we’re working for an incorruptible crown. How much more should be disciplined in our walk with Jesus Christ? And be willing to sacrifice and to live a disciplined life for Him.

They that run in a race, run all, only one receives the prize. So run, that you might obtain. You won’t receive the prize unless you have actually strived lawfully.

Then looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, you know, we, running with patience, the race that is set before us. I believe, that Paul was the author of Hebrews. The fact that he uses again, a sport’s illustration, I think, helps confirm it.

But I have fought a good fight and I have finished my course, that is the race course. I’m coming to the end. And I have kept the faith.

⁸*Henceforth there is laid up for me (not a laurel wreath, crown, but) a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.* There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give to me, in that day.

Now, Paul said, we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ. It is important to realize that that judgment seat of which Paul speaks is a reference to the judges’ seat in the Olympics. It’s not the Superior Court judge. But it’s the judges in the Olympics. When you have run your race and you’ve come now before the judges. They place on your head the laurel wreath.

So we will stand before Jesus. Every child of God at that day is trusting to hear the words, “Well done, good and faithful servant. You’ve been faithful in the little things and now I will make you ruler over many. Enter into the joy of the Lord!” We’ll all appear before the judgment seat.

And so, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, (I’ll stand before Christ, the righteous judge, to receive the rewards for those things that I have done for Him here on the earth.) The Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day:

Now salvation is not a reward. Salvation is a gift of God. Eternal life is a gift of God. It’s not a reward. It’s not of works, lest any man should boast. But, having received salvation, now I serve the Lord and labor for the Lord. And your labor for the Lord is not in vain. You will receive the rewards for the works that you have done. The reward isn’t eternal life, that’s God’s gift. But then, our place in the Kingdom, will be the reward in that day. Notice, Paul said, it’s not for me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing, His epiphany, His manifestation, when He appears.

Now do you love His appearing? Are you looking forward to the appearing of the Lord? The reward is for those who love His appearing.

So now Paul gets to some practical matters. He said to Timothy, ⁹*Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:* Get here as quick as you can! Paul realizes that's it's only a matter of time until he is going to be putting his head on the block. So Timothy, be diligent! Get here quickly!

¹⁰*For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica;* Now Demas was one who was a fellow laborer with Paul in one epistle. In another epistle, he's just named as being there. And now, we find Demas has forsaken me. That's a sad downward trend. First of all, he's a fellow laborer. Then, he's just there. And now he's not there. He is forsaken, having loved the present world. He's gone to Thessalonica.

Crescens (And we know nothing about Crescens. He left for Galatia.) *to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.* Now Titus is also a minister that Paul writes to, the next lesson that we study will be Paul's letter to Titus. Titus has left and gone to Dalmatia.

¹¹*Only Luke is with me.* So Timothy, hurry and get here. The rest of them have sort of gone, except for Luke. He is still here.

Take Mark, Now this is interesting because early on, when Paul and Barnabas were first called to the mission field, (Acts 13:2). As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, "now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul of the work to which I have called them." They fasted and prayed and laid hands on them. The Spirit sent them forth, first to Crete and then, over into Asia. They took John Mark with them.

Now John Mark was the nephew of Barnabas. So he accompanied with them on the first missionary journey as far as Crete. But when they got on into Asia, Mark, for some reason, maybe homesickness, maybe fear, left and went back home. He sort of deserted Paul and Barnabas and went back home.

So when Paul and Barnabas started out on the second missionary journey, or were getting ready to leave on the second missionary journey, Barnabas said, well, let's take Mark. And Paul said, no way! He deserted us the first time. I don't want to take him. Barnabas said, oh, come on. We've got to take him. Paul said, no we are not going to take. And the argument became so severe that Barnabas said, if you don't take him, I'm not going. Paul said, all right, don't go. And Paul took Silas and took off. And Barnabas took Mark and they took off. The contention was so great between them that they split over the issue of Mark, Paul, not wanting him along because of his desertion on the first trip.

Now here is an interesting thing. This is sometime later. And Paul, writing to Timothy, said, *and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.* So it's possible, within the church to have division in the leadership, in direction. It's possible to have disagreement. Men, like Paul and Barnabas, had a disagreement. They parted company over it, but they didn't remain parted. If you are going to disagree, disagree agreeably. It isn't necessary to part company.

I was over in Hawaii on vacation and Dr. McGee was there with the gospel bus. And he was at the Long House at the Hawaiian Hilton Village. So Kay and I walked over in the evening for his Bible study. He saw me and called me up on the platform and introduced me to the people. It was about 1973 or 74. He said this young man, he teaches the Bible and a lot of young people are going to his church. He said, we don't agree on everything, but I agree with his right to be wrong. He was a salty old character, but I sure loved him.

So it's possible not to agree on everything, but we should disagree agreeably. In other words, it shouldn't divide us. So Mark, who was once unprofitable, has now become profitable to Paul and to the ministry.

¹²*And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.* Tychicus, I have sent to Ephesus because Tychicus was the minister of Ephesus. When Paul wrote the letter to Ephesus and also to Colosse, Tychicus was the messenger who took the letter back to Ephesus. He was the minister at the church in Ephesus. So Paul had sent him from Rome, back to Ephesus.

Now getting very practical, Paul said, ¹³*The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee,* It was very cold in that Mamartine prison, where Paul was kept as a prisoner. And so with winter time coming on, Paul said bring my coat, if you don't mind. I left it in Troas with Carpus.

and the books, Now just sitting there in prison, there was plenty of time for reading. So Paul wants to keep his mind active. Bring the scrolls, actually, literally.

but especially the parchments. Paul remained a student of the Word. And I believe that when you become a student of the Word, it is a life long occupation. I don't think there was ever a place where you quit studying the Word of God. And I have found that after fifty years in the ministry, the Word of God, is more exciting to me than it has ever been! And I enjoy studying the Word of God more than I ever have! The more I study, the more I learn, the more I long to learn. And so Paul, even though he realizes the time of my departure is at hand, he still wants to read. He still wants to study.

¹⁴*Alexander the coppersmith* (Paul said) *did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works*: I wouldn't want to be Alexander the coppersmith. Now Paul warns Timothy, be wary of him also.

¹⁵*Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words*. There were those people who were insisting on adherence to the law of Moses. They were opposed to Paul's message of grace. So Paul is warning them to be careful. Be wary of this fellow, Alexander the coppersmith because he has been a real thorn, a real problem.

Now getting back to the situation in Rome, ¹⁶*At my first answer* (that is his first hearing before Nero) *no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge*. Paul was left to stand alone. No man stood with me. They all forsook me. So often times, the deepest valleys have to be traversed alone.

When Jesus went through the valley for us, it was alone. Mark tells us, they all forsook Him and fled. So He stood alone! He suffered and died for us, alone!

So Paul now is experiencing the fellowship of the sufferings of Jesus, as he has to stand alone. All of those companion that were once there. Demas has forsaken him. The others are all gone. No man stood with me. They all forsook me.

¹⁷*Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me*; But verse seventeen, notwithstanding or nevertheless, the Lord stood with me. And He strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully know. You remember Jesus said to the disciples. You are going to be brought before the courts, before the kings and before the judges. Don't take any forethought of what you are going to be saying, for in that hour the Holy Spirit will come upon you and give you the words to speak. It's interesting how the Lord always is there in the darkest nights. The Lord is always there to stand by you. When you pass through the waters, they will not overflow you or I will be with you. Fear not, for I am with thee. Be not dismayed, I am thy God. The Lord has promised to be with us in those dark hours of our lives.

We find with Paul, as he had many periods of real discouragement. It seemed like the Lord would come and stand with him in those darkest nights. When Paul was in Corinth, his venture into Europe would seem to be a disaster. He was beaten, imprisoned, having to escape from the cities under the cover of darkness, under the cover of subterfuge. Finally arriving at the wicked city of Corinth, Paul just seems to be shell-shocked, gun shy and at the night the Lord came to Paul. He said, don't be afraid. Speak up, because I am with you. There shall no man lay his hands on you to hurt you. And so the Lord was encouraging Paul. I've got a lot of people in this city, Paul. Don't be afraid. Go ahead and speak out.

In what, I think, was probably the darkest night of Paul's life, when his life long ambition to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Jews in Jerusalem finally came. He was standing there on the porch of the Antonio Fortress and the Jews were on the temple mount, below him. He now had the great opportunity that he had longed for from the day of his conversion.

When Paul was converted on the road to Damascus, Paul expressed his desire to share this glorious new found truth that Jesus is the Messiah. And suddenly the Scriptures began to make sense of the Messiah having to suffer and die and with this brilliant light of the gospel, just shining, the revelation—Jesus is the Messiah! He was sure that he could convince his school buddies, back there in Jerusalem. Those he had been to school with, surely I can show them now in the Scriptures, how that the Messiah had to suffer and die and rise again.

The Lord said to Paul, no, they will not receive you. And Paul sort of argued, but Lord, I know them.

And they know me. And the Lord said, no, they won't receive you. I'm sending you to the Gentiles.

So Paul still longed for that moment, when he could preach to the Jews in Jerusalem. It came. His ambition now has come to fruition. I'm here. All right! But rather than bringing their conversion, it brought their wrath! They began to throw dirt in the air. They began to tear their clothes. They began to scream. Kill him! Kill him! They began to rush towards the Antonio Fortress, so the captain brought Paul in for his own safety, for his own life's sake unless he be torn by the mob. And that night there in prison, must have been one of the darkest nights in Paul's life. When all your life, you have been dreaming of that special moment. And you have in your mind, this vision of what can be and what could be, and the opportunity finally comes. And it's a total bomb out. It's a total disaster. That cell must have seemed awfully dark.

And I imagine that Paul was sort of kicking myself. Why did I mention the word, "Gentile"? Because that was the thing that caused the flare-up. Why did I mention that? Oh, why did I? Ooooooh, you know. He was just tormented and feeling just so totally discouraged! I had my chance. I blew it! And he said, the Lord stood by me! Now, you don't say cheer up, unless a person is really down. The Lord said, cheer up Paul. As you have testified of Me here in Jerusalem, and notice the Lord acknowledged, you've witnessed of Me here. You've done it. So must you also bear witness of Me, in Rome. Now, I'm sure that Paul thought it was over. He thought, it's over. My ministry is over! I've, you know, have no place to go from here. I was a total failure.

Jesus didn't say, you really messed up, Paul, you know, oh man! No, but He said, you've testified. In other words, you did it! You testified of Me. That's all that's required.

I think that we make a mistake many times in thinking that we only get rewarded for those people who come forward to receive Jesus Christ. You are not paid a commission! You're paid a salary. Your job is to witness. His job is to convert.

I had a cousin one time who came to a meeting that I was holding. When I gave the invitation, she came forward. She was a very interesting cousin. We used to call her "Dizzy Dot". But afterwards, she hugged me! She said, oh Charles, darling, you've saved me! You've saved me! I said, oh no, no, no, Dorothy, I didn't save you.

Salvation is of the Lord, you know. If you are saved, it's something that Jesus did, not something that I have done. But, we are required to witness. You shall be witnesses, Jesus said, unto Me. In reality, we can't do more than that. We bear witness of the truth of God, the Word of God, and we bear witness of the work of God in our lives. And many times, the greatest testimony is just the testimony of what the Lord means to you and what He has done for you!

Paul's testimony was what? What the Lord had done for him. And so, having borne witness, that's all that was required. Having borne witness, now it is their responsibility to do with the witness with what they please. They can accept it or they can reject it. But that's not my responsibility. My responsibility is just to bear witness.

Now notice, earlier, Paul spoke about having borne witness, when he stood before Nero. That he had the opportunity to bear witness there at the first hearing. But God requires that we bear witness. It's up to the Lord then to do with it what He pleases. So once again, Paul it seems, is deserted by his friends. He is alone.

But notwithstanding the Lord stood with me. And He strengthened me *that by me the preaching might be fully known*, Here he is declaring that he took the opportunity of sharing with Nero, the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Now, Jesus when He said to the disciples, you are going to be brought before the magistrates and kings and so forth. He said, it will turn to you for a testimony. That is, it will give you an opportunity to witness.

So every time that Paul appeared before a judge, or a king, or a ruler, as he was in court, he used the opportunity to witness. When Paul pleaded his case to Felix, what did he do? He told Felix of his own conversion. It was a witness of what God had done in his life and that often, is the most powerful witness you can give.

Later, when he had to repeat the testimony before Festus, as he was being tried by Festus, again Paul

repeats the story of his conversion. How that he was against this sect. He determined to wipe it out, but he met the Lord. And the change that happened in his life when he met the risen Christ.

Then when Paul appeared before King Agrippa, each time, you know, he's going up the ladder, as far as the influence of these people, he is standing before. Now, before Agrippa, Paul lays on a heavy, heavy witness, seeking to convert Agrippa. I'm certain that Paul, in his mind, thought, if I can convert King Agrippa, it will have a rippling through the whole province. And so he laid on him a heavy witness. It was so heavy, he started to press the close. Agrippa, do you believe the Scriptures? I know you believe the Scriptures. It was a presumptive close. He was really coming on strong. And Festus was there and he said, Paul, you've studied too much. You've gone crazy! And Agrippa said, almost thou persuadest me to become a Christian? And Paul said, I wish you were all together as I am, except not these bonds.

Now Paul has the chance to appear before the Emperor of the Roman Empire, Nero. I'm certain in Paul's mind, he thought, wow! This guy is the head honcho. If I can convert him, think of what that will do for Christianity? And I am sure that Paul laid on Nero a witness that wouldn't quit. In fact, Paul said, He strengthened me that by me, the preaching might be fully known! Paul declared unto him the gospel of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the death of Christ and all. And the Scriptures, he no doubt, laid on Nero a heavy, heavy, message.

and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. That's a reference to Nero. God, deliver me out of the mouth of the lion.

¹⁸*And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work,* That deliverance is going to come, Paul knows, by death.

The time of my departure is at hand. The word, departure, is an interesting word in the Greek. It's a word that speaks of untying or unloosing. It is used of a ship that has been tied at the mooring, but is not ready to set sail. And so they loose the moorings, the departure, the unloosing of the moorings, so that the ship can set sail.

Paul didn't look at death as coming safely into the harbor. He looked at death as leaving the harbor and setting sail into the glorious eternal future. It's the word that was used for pulling up the tent stakes. Paul said, I'm about ready to pull up the tent stakes and move on.

To the Corinthians, he said, that we know when this earthly tent is dissolved, we have a building of God not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. I'm about ready to pull up the tent stakes, move out of the tent and move into the building of God, eternal in the heavens. And so the time of my departure is near. And the Lord is going to deliver me. Paul realizes that it is though death that deliverance will come.

and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. I'm soon to be with the Lord! The time of my departure is at hand! I'm ready to be offered up. I'm ready to be poured out for the Lord.

¹⁹*Salute Prisca and Aquila,* And so the last final greetings are for Prisca and Aquila. This wonderful couple that Paul met when he first went to Corinth, who were in the business of making tents. And Paul worked for them, while he was in Corinth, ministering. They had come to Corinth from Rome, originally, when the Roman emperor, Claudias, ordered the Jews out of Rome. They went to Corinth where Paul met them. Later on they went to Ephesus. They preceded Paul in Ephesus. When Appollos came there, they ministered to Appollos, no doubt ministered with Paul there in Ephesus. But then, went back to Corinth, but have now come back to Ephesus again. So they were sort of going between Corinth and Ephesus. And so greet them, Prisca and Aquila.

and the household of Onesiphorus. ²⁰*Erastus abode at Corinth:* Erastus stayed at Corinth. Erastus, it is thought, was the treasurer of the city of Corinth. In fact there is a plaque there on the pavement. And it says this section of the pavement was donated to the city of Corinth by Erastus. It's written in Latin. Paul calls him the chamberlain or the treasurer of the city of Corinth, so there is an interesting archaeological discovery that sort of confirms this fellow, Erastus as the treasurer of the city of Corinth, even as Paul makes mention. So he stayed at Corinth.

but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. It's an interesting thing, I think that we have a false idea concerning miracles and healings in the early church. The way the New Testament is written, it seems like

they are just common place experiences. We read the Book of Acts and we read of all the marvelous miracles that were done, but if you count them and you figure out the number of years that the period covered, there was maybe one per year that are mentioned in the Book of Acts.

This idea that God wants everybody to be well, you never need to be sick, is not really Biblical. And I think that we have a real mistake in preaching and the teaching by the healing evangelists, that you know, sickness is a sign of spiritual weakness or a sign of a lack of faith or things of this nature, as they are promoting healing.

When Paul wrote to the Philippians, he made mention of Epaphroditus, who was so sick that he almost died.

Paul, writing to Timothy, said, take a little wine, Timothy, for your stomach's sake and your many sicknesses, dysentery or whatever. He sort of was giving him a medical prescription, so to speak.

Now Paul speaks about this fellow, Trophimus, that he had to leave at Miletum, because he was sick.

Paul, himself, writing to the Galatians, talked of his many sicknesses, infirmities or sicknesses. We get the word infirmity--the infirmary, at a Navy base or whatever. You go to the infirmary or the sick bay. And so Paul spoke about his many infirmities, his many sicknesses.

So not everybody was healed. I think that it is a mistake to believe that everybody is going to be healed. That sometimes, God uses sicknesses. Paul spoke about his thorn in the flesh. Three times he asked the Lord to remove it. And the Lord finally said, my grace is sufficient for you. My strength will be made perfect in your weakness. Paul said therefore, I will glory in my sickness, infirmity, that the power of God might be manifested in me.

So here is another cases—Trophimus. Paul no doubt, prayed for him, but yet he had to leave him in Miletum, because he was too sick to travel on with Paul. Now that doesn't take away from the fact that God can heal and God does heal. But He doesn't heal everyone. And Godly, spiritual, people are often sick. And it is not a sign of some sin or something wrong in our life.

That was the wrong philosophy of Job's comforters. They looked upon his problems as the manifestation of sin in his life. That was a wrong diagnosis. And God rebuked them for it. And so God often times uses sickness in dealing with us.

Paul then said, ²¹*Do thy diligence to come before winter.* I want that coat. I don't want to spend the winter in this Mamartine prison, you know it get cold here. So do your diligence to get here before winter.

Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. These are names of those of the church in Rome.

The final, ²²*The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.* Paul's personal letter to his son in the faith, Timothy.

And now we move on to Titus.

Father, we thank You for the opportunities that You give to us to witness for You. And even as Paul exhorted Timothy in the things to preach the Word, to be instant in season and out of season, to reprove and to rebuke, and to do the things of the minister. Lord, help us, that we will be faithful. Faithful to the Word. Faithful in feeding Your flock, that they, Lord, might come to a correct understanding of Your requirements and Your ways. How to be a better witness. How to serve You and what You require of them. Teach us Your ways, Lord, and lead us in Your paths. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.