

The Desertion of Demas and our need of Discipline

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[0 : 0 0] Welcome to our service and as we come together around the Word of God, let us seek His blessing upon His Word. Let us pray.

Amen.

To lead us unto Thy known truth and to open our hearts to receive it. For we acknowledge, O Lord, that without Thee we can do nothing, that we are dependent upon Thee and upon Thy Spirit to apply Thy truth to our hearts so that it may bring forth fruit in our lives.

We seek, O Lord, that it may please Thee to bless each one of us according to our individual needs.

In this act of worship into Thy known presence. And that we may indeed come confessing our sins. We give thanks for the promise that Thou hast given in Thy Word that if we confess our sins that Thou art faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

[2 : 1 3] We give thanks for the work of Thy Son, O Lord and our Saviour, Jesus Christ. That Thou did send Him into the world and that Thou did deliver Him up to the cross of Golgotha where He bore what our sins deserved in His own body upon the cross.

And we give thanks for the cross of Golgotha where He bore what our sins and that He bore us.

We give thanks for our risen Christ and that He ascended to Thine own right hand. And there that He sat down having completed the work that Thou didst give Him to do.

And that through Him that we have boldness and that through Him that we have boldness and confidence this day. And to come to our throne of grace. And to seek Thy mercy and to seek Thy grace to help us in our time of need.

We give thanks for His continual ministry at Thine own right hand. And the intercession that He makes for those whom Thou didst give to Him in the covenant of redemption and who He has redeemed through His own blood.

[3 : 5 5] And we give thanks for the great promise that Thou has given to Thy people. That He shall return again not to offer Himself as a sacrifice for sin.

But to gather His people. And to bring them in body and soul. And to the inheritance that He has prepared for them.

So that they will be forever with the Lord. We give thanks that we have that living hope through the Gospel. And so we pray that as the Gospel has been proclaimed this day.

That it may go forth in the power and demonstration of Thy Spirit. In convicting and converting. And in the building of Thine own church here on earth.

We pray for Thy servants who have gone forth with Thy Word. That they may, O Lord, be given the utterance. That they may have that boldness and confidence to proclaim Thy truth.

- [5 : 03] That they may have the unction of Thine own Spirit upon them. And that their labours would not be in vain. We pray, O Lord, for Thy people.
- We pray that they may be faithful to Thee. And that their witness may be blessed in our community. And in all communities throughout our islands and throughout our nation.
- In their own families, in their homes and in their workplace. That they may be as lights that shine in the midst of darkness. We pray, O Lord, for those who are ill.
- And those who are within the circle of our knowledge. May Thy known healing hand be upon them. And for those who are outside the circle of our knowledge.
- Thou knowest them, O Lord. And we pray that Thou would draw near to them. That Thou would heal if that is in accordance with Thy known sovereign will.
- [6 : 05] And if it be otherwise, we pray. That Thou would prepare them in soul. O Lord, we pray that it may please Thee to come in a day of Thine own power among us.
- And that Thou would bring days of revival and days of awakening among us. O Lord, we pray that Thou would bless the careless and the indifferent.
- Those who have hardened their hearts against Thee. Those who walk in darkness. May Thou, O Lord, work with Thy Spirit in their hearts.
- May Thou bring them to know their great need. And the sufficiency of Christ to meet with that need. We pray, O Lord, for those who may be lonely this day.
- O that they may know that there is one who has promised that he will never leave nor forsake those who will put their trust in him.
- [7 : 11] We pray, O Lord, for our nation. A nation that has so little regard to Thee. O Lord, have mercy upon us.
- Look upon us in pity and compassion. And we pray, O Lord, that we may return unto Thee. And that we may know that promise that Thou hast given to all those who will turn unto Thee.
- That Thou will return to them. O Lord, we pray that Thou would bless us as we come together. O Lord, we know that there are many things to distract our minds and our thoughts away.
- But we pray that through Thy Spirit that our minds may be focused upon Thy Word. And that we will see the glory of the incarnate Word through the written Word.
- That our hearts may rejoice. O Lord, that we would search our ways. That we would, O Lord, find that assurance.
- [8 : 18] That we are in the way. That we are in Christ. That we have, O Lord, that we have, by faith, embraced Him as our Lord and as our Saviour.
- We pray, O Lord, that Thou would continue with us now as we wait upon Thee. And all that we ask for the forgiveness of our many sins in Jesus' name and for His sake.
- Amen. We shall now read the Word of God as we find it in the second letter to Timothy and chapter 4.
- Amen. Amen. Thanks for throughout life.
- But after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves, teachers having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned into fables.
- [9 : 41] But watch thou in all things and due afflictions. Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me 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 is appearing. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed into Thessalonica.

Crescens into Galatia. Titus into Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee. For he is profitable to me for the ministry.

And, take it as have I sent to Ephesus, the cloak that I left at Troas and Carpus, when thou comest, bring with them, and the books, but especially the partuments.

[10 : 54] Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil. The Lord reward him according to his works. Of whom he be thou aware also, for he hath greatly withstood our words.

At my first answer, O man, stood with me, but all men forsook me. I pray, God, that it may not be laid to their charge. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me, that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

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.

Salud for Scylla and Aquila, and the household of Oniphasis. Eratos, aboard at Corinth, and by Trophimus have I left at Midland.

Seek to thy diligence to come before winter. Elybos, greet thee, and Putins, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

[12 : 04] The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. And the Lord bless unto us the reading of that portion of his word.

And seeking his help and blessing, let us again read at verse 9. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed into Thessalonica.

The ministry of the Apostle Paul spanned over 30 years from his conversion around between 34 to 37 AD to his death under Emperor Nero in 68 AD.

During his ministry, he was imprisoned several times. While under house arrest in Rome, recorded for us in Acts chapter 28, Paul wrote the following letters or epistles, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon.

According to Philippians chapter 2, verse 24, and Philemon verse 22, he expected a release during that time.

[13 : 27] But finally he was re-imprisoned in Rome, and this time he was executed. And in his last imprisonment that he wrote, this last letter known to us as 2 Timothy.

When he wrote the letter, he knew that he was facing certain death. For he said, For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

Paul uses two metaphors here. He sees his life and death as a sacrifice poured out on an altar. And then he uses this word departure, which is an interesting term because it's a term that is used for loosening ships from their moorings and anchors.

And in light of his expected death, he assesses his life, and he says, I have fought a good fight. I have finished my course.

I have kept the faith. For one reason or another, almost all of Paul's associates in the ministry were gone, and only Luke was at his side to our system.

[14 : 47] It was a dark hour indeed. However, Paul's concern was not himself, but it was the gospel ministry.

So he sends for Timothy and calls him to his side. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. There was a unique relationship forged between Paul and Timothy in the gospel.

Paul speaks of Timothy with great affection. When he wrote his first letter, he writes, My own son in the faith. And the relationship between them was both spiritual and personal.

The relationship was bound by their faith in Jesus Christ. Paul writes, Timothy's tears probably fell when the last parted, and now Paul longs to see Timothy.

Paul and Timothy met when Paul was passing through Lystra on his second missionary journey. And it is generally accepted that he was the one who introduced Timothy to Christ.

[16 : 16] We know that Timothy learned the scriptures at his mother's knee. As Paul says, When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother, Luz, and thy mother, Eunice.

And I am persuaded that in thee also. Writing to the church at Philippi, Paul wrote of Timothy, For I have no man like-minded.

He will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But we know the proof of him, that as a son with a father, he hath served me in the gospel.

And as we come now to this chapter 4 of this letter, it was a profoundly serious moment indeed. And Paul wanted Timothy to sense the importance of it.

It was serious not merely because Paul was facing possible death, but even more because Paul and Timothy would one day be judged when Jesus Christ appeared.

[17 : 35] He begins this chapter by saying, I judge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom.

It would do us all good to reflect on the fact that one day we will face God and our whole works will be judged.

This realisation should encourage us to do our work carefully and faithfully.

In 2 Corinthians chapter 5, Paul wrote, Wherefore we labour, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that everyone may receive the things done in the body, whether it be good or bad.

So here Paul gives three final admonitions to Timothy. He says, Preach the word. Fulfill your ministry. Be diligent and faithful.

[18 : 48] Now why did Paul emphasis here diligence and faithfulness? Well, verse 10 to the end of the chapter at least gives part of the answer.

As Paul suffered in prison, awaiting death by execution, he felt very keenly a sense of loneliness.

He reports in verse 16 that, At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all men forsook me. He felt a sense of loneliness and a sense of isolation.

And he says regarding them, I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge. See how Paul demonstrates the spirit of Christ as he was ready to forgive.

But he goes on and he says, It is not a good thought to think that when others forsake us, that the Lord will stand with us.

[20 : 14] And the Lord is all that we need. When everybody else forsakes, yet the Lord will not forsake.

In Psalm 41, verse 9, we read, Yea, my known familiar friend, in whom I trusted, which did eat of my bread, hath lifted up his heel against me.

Now we know that these words were quoted by Jesus at the Last Supper. But when David wrote the psalm, he was probably referring to his counsellor Ahithophel, who turned traitor and joined Absalom's rebellion, as recorded for us in 2 Samuel chapter 15 to 17, that you can look at yourselves.

But here in the cold, damp cell of his Roman prison, Paul writes, For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed into Thessalonica.

The rest had left for various duties. Only Luke is with me. And he says, Take Mark, and bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

[21 : 37] Mark was a companion on Paul's first missionary journey, but he deserted them before they returned to Jerusalem, as recorded for us in Acts chapter 15.

And as a result, Paul refused to take him again on the next missionary journey, which caused a temporary breach between Barnabas and himself.

Barnabas separated himself from Paul, and took Mark with him, and they sailed away to Cyprus. However, we do find Mark again in the company of Paul at Rome, during his first imprisonment.

But now Paul asks for him, because he is profitable to me for the ministry. How good to know that one failure in Christian service need not make one's whole life a failure.

He also asks Timothy to take to him, The cloak that I left at Troas and Carpus, when thou comest bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

[22 : 53] The dark, the dark, damp cell of a Roman prison was not the warmest of places. And I was coming close to winter, so he desired the cloak to keep him warm.

But he also wanted the books and parchments. And although Paul knew that it was inevitable that he would soon die, he was wanting still to study the word of God, and he still wanted to write notes.

Bring with you not only the cloak, but bring with you the books and the parchments, because I still want to study the word of God, and I still want to write notes.

But while some had gone elsewhere, as we noted, to hold their duties, Demas is named as one who has forsaken or deserted him.

Now Demas' name not only appears here, but it appears twice, another two times in the New Testament. Paul listed him along with Mark and Luke as one of his fellow labourers in Philemon.

[24 : 11] And verse 24, then he is simply called Demas in Colossians 4. And here is the third time that he is mentioned in the New Testament, and this time it is recorded of him that he forsook or that he deserted, having loved this present world.

The Christian life is never easy. Jesus said, In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.

No Christian should be surprised by the trials and the problems of this present life. Jesus says, When you face tribulations, take heart, be encouraged, be strengthened.

How? Because I have overcome the world. When we face tribulations, we should not direct our hearts to the world, but to the blessings that we have in Christ.

Now at this time in Rome, things were extremely hard, for persecutions of Christians was at its height. And that's because in the summer of 64 AD, the city of Rome suffered a terrible fire that burnt for six days and seven nights, consuming almost three quarters of the city.

[25 : 46] And the Emperor Nero laid blame for the fire on the Christian community. So Christians were arrested and put to death in the most ghastly way.

They were made the subjects of spout, for they were covered with the hides of wild animals and wild dogs were set upon them. They were nailed to crosses.

They were set on fire. They were burned to serve for the evening lights. Was Demas not willing to risk his life by associating with Paul, for it was dangerous times and Paul himself was facing death?

Or maybe he did not want to be associated with Paul and the Gospel because it was unpopular and dangerous at that time. However, it was not any fear of persecution that made Demas forsake Paul.

For we are told here quite explicitly, Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.

[27 : 02] It was not because of the fear of persecution, but for his love for the world. What we are told is that he began to love this present world.

It began to lay hold of him and get a grip of him, but it was not always like that for this man called Demas. There was a time and Demas had been dutiful.

As we noted, Philemon and verse 24, Paul mentions him along with Mark and Luke as my fellow labourers. Demas partook with Paul in the work of God.

He had been dutiful, he had been devout, he had been dedicated. But somehow, in some way, and for some reason, that was all abundant now.

And Demas became gripped and consumed by this present world. We do not know the ins and outs of this, but Demas got distracted.

[28 : 16] I really believe that can happen to every one of us here, no matter what our standing is in God, we can also become distracted. We too can become sidetracked.

Demas began to feel the pull and the power of his old life, and that can and will happen to us all.

This happens very often when we fail to commune with God, when we have less devotional life, less reading of the Word of God, and less praying and less fellowship with other believers.

Because we need that every day. We need to meet and connect with God more than we need anything else. And when we fail to do that, we are on a very slippery slope.

Another way the world will pull you is when we fail to conquer sin in our lives. There are things in our lives that we have to let the Lord really deal with, really take away.

[29 : 26] You know, sin in our lives is like weeds in our garden. It is no good just cutting the heads off now and then. You have to take up the roots.

And if you do not, they will keep rising. And if they are neglected, they will overrun the whole garden. That is why the Christian life needs to be a disciplined life.

A disciplined life where we deal with the indwelling sin that still resides in our body.

I really think that is what happened to Demas in his duties and dedication even to the work of our Lord.

He let things slip. Remember how Paul speaks of discipline in his own life. I keep my body, he says. He disciplines his body.

[30 : 29] lest having preached to others, he himself should be a castaway. Discipline is important in the Christian life.

And I really think that is what happened here to Demas. He let things slip. And we cannot afford to do that for if we do, the pull and power of the world and of our sin will get grip on us.

So Demas was, he was devout and dutiful but he got distracted. He grew weary and so he deserted.

Notice what Paul says, he loved this present world and emphasis is put upon the present world as if to make a contrast with the world to come.

Demas' whole attitude, his whole desire, his whole make-up was for this present world to the neglect of the world to come.

[31 : 42] He got distracted. Maybe at one time and possibly it was true that the world to come was very much focused in his mind. But he got distracted.

And the love of the temporary and the present got a hold of him and gripped him. And that became prominent and became the focus of his life. This present world.

In 1 John chapter 2 we read, Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

And he explains this in verse 16. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

And listen, and the world passeth away, and the lust thereof, but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.

[32 : 48] we speak of a worldly person as a person who lives for the pleasures of the flesh. A worldly person lives for what they can see, the lust of the eyes.

A worldly person lives for the pride of life, the vain glory that appeals to men. But a dedicated Christian lives for the joys of the Spirit.

As spiritual believer lives for the unseen realities of God. A Christian who does the will of God lives for God's approval, and he abideth forever.

While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen, for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.

Love not the world. In the New Testament, the world can mean the physical world, the earth, and Christians ought to appreciate the beauty and usefulness on the earth that God has made.

[34 : 05] The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firemen showeth his antivore. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. The word world can also mean mankind, and Christians certainly ought to love people, not only their friends, but their very enemies.

But the word can also mean a system. And we are to be aware that the world system uses three devices to trap Christians.

lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. The sea same devices trapped Eve back in Eden.

For we read there, and when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, lust of the flesh, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, lust of the eyes, and that tree to be desired to make one wise, the pride of life, she took the fruit.

The worldly system tempts us in forbidden ways. The eyes sometimes can have an appetite.

[35 : 29] Have you ever said, feast your eyes on this? In Joshua chapter 7, we read of a man called Achan, a soldier who brought defeat to Joshua's army, and all because of the lust of the eyes.

For he says, when I saw among the spoils a goodly Babylonish garment, and 200 shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold of 50 shekels weight, then I coveted them and took them.

A Christian is in the world physically, but he is not of the world spiritually. Christ has sent us into the world to bear witness of him.

A Christian cannot help being in the world, but when the world is in the Christian, then that is when trouble stirs. Christ knew the temptations that believers would face, so he prays, not that they be taken out of the world, but that they are kept.

Kept. The world needs a Christian more than the Christian needs the world. Well, what happens when the world takes over?

[36 : 59] one will lose the enjoyment of devotional exercises. One will lose the enjoyment of Bible reading.

Prayer becomes a chore. Even Christian fellowship becomes empty. A person does not become worldly all of a sudden.

It is a gradual process. It creeps up on a person. James speaks of the friendship of the world, and he speaks of being spotted by the world.

The world leaving dirty marks on areas in your life, by you adopting ways of the world. Then you conform to the world so that you can hardly tell the two apart.

Paul warns us in Romans, he says, and be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

[38 : 22] As we said, to become worldly can be a gradual process. The downward steps and the consequences are illustrated for us in the life of Lot.

If you read up Genesis 13 and 14 and 19, what you find in these chapters regarding Lot is this, that first Lot looked towards Sodom.

What next? Then he pitched his tent towards Sodom in the well-watered plains of Jordan. What next? Then he moved into Sodom.

He looked towards it. He pitched his tent near it and then he moved into Sodom. And so Sodom was captured by the enemy, Lot was captured too.

Lot was ensnared by the present world. So Demas forsook Paul having been ensnared, having been attracted by the present world.

[39 : 32] this was a man who at one time focused upon the world to come. But something took place, we don't know the ins and outs of it, but he became distracted so that his mind became focused only on this present world.

And Demas is a warning for us all. How this passing present world can ensnare us and spiritually it can destroy us.

Jesus gave the parable of the sower and it tells us in the parable and these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground who when they have heard the word immediately receive it with gladness and have no root in themselves and so endure but for a time afterward when affliction or persecution arises for the world's sake immediately they are offended.

Now that is not a full description of Demas at all but then in the parable of the sower Jesus goes on and he says and these are they which are sown among thorns such as hear the word and then listen and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches and the lust of other things entering in choke the word and it becometh unfruitful that is a description of Demas the cares of this world the deceitfulness of riches and the lust or the strong desire of other things entered in and Demas became unfruitful you know a person has a very sobering choice to make will

I live for the present only or will I live for the will of God and abide forever will I live for the present only or will I focus my mind on the world to come and prepare myself for the world to come there are moments of choices given to us in the Bible for instance when Moses when he was 40 years of age we are told in Hebrews chapter 11 by faith Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season he had the choice he was a privileged person in Pharaoh's palace but he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of

[42 : 47] God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season we do not deny that there isn't pleasure in sin of course there is to our sinful nature there are pleasures in sin but for a season esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt which was his esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt for he had respect and to the recompense of the reward and what did he do by faith he forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king for he endured as seeing him who is invisible Joshua on another occasion said choose you this day whom ye will serve whether the gods which your father served that were on the other side of the flood or the gods of the Amorites in whose land ye dwell make your choice but as for me and my house we will serve the Lord a person has a very sobering choice to make Demas chose this present world it must have broken Paul's heart to see Demas back in the world it must have broken his heart to see Demas turning away from him and going and embracing this present world to see him fall so shamefully no wonder Paul says to me and to you take it him that thinketh he standeth lest he fall take it he says him that thinketh he standeth lest he fall we need to examine ourselves daily we need discipline in our lives every moment of the day did

Demas come back to follow the Lord well we do not know however we have already noted a man who failed but who came back to serve the Lord a man by the name of John Mark whom Paul here desires that he would come along with Timothy because Mark had become profitable to him in the ministry a man who failed but who came back if you have failed the Lord if you have moved away from him for whatever reason if the things of this present world distracted you what are you to do you are to repent and you are to commit yourself anew to follow the Lord to follow the Lord and if you are following the

Lord then remember to examine yourself daily to have discipline in your Christian life remember Demas remember Demas he is a sobering light for us in the word of God a sobering point for us all in the word of God for Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world may the Lord bless our thoughts let us pray eternal and ever blessed Lord we pray that thou would grant to us the grace to persevere for he that endureth to the end shall be saved we acknowledge oh

Lord that there are many things in the world that can be attractive to us that there are many things that can be have a pull upon us but we pray oh Lord that thou would give us the grace to enable us to overcome those things to add to us the grace to examine ourselves daily and to discipline our lives thou knowest oh Lord that there are difficulties and there are problems in following thee but we give thanks that thou art the one who is able to grant to us the grace to enable us to be steadfast and unmovable and so we come oh Lord to thee today and we acknowledge our own weakness we acknowledge that without thee we can do nothing and so we seek oh

[48 : 20] Lord that through thy spirit and that thou would help us encourage us and uphold us and let our focus be not on the things of this world but in the things of the unseen world the things that are at thy own right hand let our affection be on the things that are above and not on the things of this world that is passing away that is temporary but let our focus be on the things that passeth not away and that are eternal let demons be a warning to us today as we have reflected upon him oh Lord we give thanks for thy word that thy word is a word of invitation a word of encouragement but it is also a word of warning and a word of rebuke the two edged sword we pray oh Lord that thou would continue with us during the day and prepare us for the evening service if that is in accordance with thine own sovereign will and now may the grace of our

Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all now and forever more Amen Amen