

THE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH

2 Timothy 4:9-22

"The Final Words of a Death Row Apostle"

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24:47

Well, good morning again. It is still wonderful to be with you all. If you would open your Bibles with me to 2 Timothy 4. 2 Timothy 4, I get the honor of closing out the pastoral epistles.

25:09

Yes, pastoral epistles. Such a blessing. This is our final message in these three books and it has been a wonderful journey to go through. Came across the quote this week by Charles Spurgeon. He said, "this friendship is one of the sweetest joys of life."

25:32

Many might have failed beneath the bitterness of their trials had they not found a friend." Many mighty people would have fallen, crumbled under life's bitter trials except if they were surrounded by friends.

25:52

And so we come to this final words of Paul. I've titled this message "the last words of a death row apostle". "The final words of a death row apostle" is the title of this message. And if you were imprisoned for your faith in an unjust system, awaiting to be executed, what thoughts would be going through your mind?

26:19

What would bring you comfort? Would you like Paul be longing, as Paul just said, for the soon coming of your Lord and Savior? Would you like Paul wanna be surrounded by your close friends to help you through this greatest of trials?

26:39

These longings are on Paul's mind when he pins these final words to his friend and ministry partner Timothy. And so we're gonna spend just a few minutes just before we get into our text this morning to review where we've been.

26:55

The pastoral epistles, 1 & 2 Timothy, along with Titus belong to this group that we call pastoral epistles because they were written from Paul, the apostle, to his sons and the faith who were functioning as pastors.

27:11

Timothy was in charge of the church of Ephesus and Titus was there on the island of Crete. And the pastoral epistles are also important because they have a wealth of information concerning practical life, matters of the church.

27:29

In fact, Paul actually states in 1 Timothy 3:15, to Timothy that he may know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of truth.

27:49

Right, so what a great just purpose statement that Paul puts in there. You guys wanna know how you're supposed to conduct yourselves in the church? Well, 1 & 2 Timothy are for you. Titus is for you, that's what Paul explicitly says.

28:08

Public worship, the selection and qualifications of church leadership, the pastor's personal life and public ministry, how to confront sin in the church, the role of women, the care of widows and how to handle money and are among the many topics discussed.

28:26

1 Timothy, after Paul was released from imprisonment the first time in Acts 28, Paul revisits several of the cities which he administered to including Ephesus. And there he left Timothy behind to straighten out problems.

28:47

We have this idea that often while the early church, well, it's the model church, right? It's the infant, it was led by the apostles, therefore it was just so perfect. And as you read the New Testament, you quickly find the New Testament church, a church of the early days

is no different than our churches.

29:11

Filled with problems, filled with, I had a professor in college that said the only perfect church is an empty one. Because once you get us in there, right? We have a tendency to mess things up. We have our own perspectives, our own points of view, our own prides, our own sins, our own, right?

29:32

Everything that we bring to the table, we have a hard time communicating, or hard time listening and there's nothing new, right? These are the issues that Paul dealt with, right? As Paul's pastoring a church, there's problems within the church.

29:47

So, The Rock we're in good company, right? And so Paul leaves Timothy there to straighten out some of the issues in the Ephesian church, some of the problems, such as false teachings, disorder in worship, the need for qualified leaders, materialism.

30:11

Paul wrote Timothy this letter to help him carry out his task in the church and, hear this, because I think a lot of times when we hear that, we kind of close off ourselves to this letter as if it was written to Timothy alone.

30:30

I don't think at all that was Paul's intention. I think what Paul's intention was, he was writing a letter to Timothy and Timothy's official capacity as the pastor of this church to be read by Timothy and the church, right?

30:46

And we see this in Paul's closing in both 1 & 2 Timothy, he says, "Grace be with you, that you there," problem with are you in English, unless you're from the South, right, Drew, what would it be?

31:01

Y'all, right? Grace be with y'all, right? It's unless Timothy has some multi-personality issue, right? Paul is writing this to Timothy in his official capacity, but he's writing it to the church, that church is that Timothy's overseeing and by extension to us, right?

31:23

We have it in the Holy Spirit, has decided to canonize it in Holy Scripture, not to just encourage the pastors at this church, but to encourage you guys and to strengthen you guys to know how church is supposed to function, what's supposed to happen here.

31:43

So we have 1 Timothy, Titus, the apostles to his lieutenant there, Titus, as he left him on the island of Crete, has so much practical relevance for our modern time. We too need to hear Paul's exhortations about careful selection and appointment of church leadership, about the damaging effects of false teaching, about the importance of helping different groups in the church bring doctrine and Bible to their homes, about the transforming power when we understand Christ's first coming and Christ's second coming, about civic and social responsibilities in the church, and about the implications for practical good works, right?

32:32

And Titus kind of breaks up so nicely. It's church life, home life, and public life of the Christian, chapter one, two, and three. So Titus is so relevant for us. We come now to 2 Timothy. Paul is about to die.

32:51

His head will be removed from his body shortly after this. He's on death row, he's awaiting execution. And what he's doing here is he's passing the mantle from himself to his beloved younger ministry companion, Timothy.

33:12

And you think about this, like how nervous must Timothy had been? Right? Paul is in prison, awaiting his execution. And Paul's writing to encourage Timothy, knowing full well that Timothy you might be next.

33:35

If you, we read a few weeks ago, all those who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. Timothy, be strengthened, be encouraged, stay the course, don't give up, don't compromise.

33:49

Even though you might be right here next to me, right, that's the, I love R .C. Sproul, one of my favorite teachers. And when he's teaching men how to teach, he always has this phrase, look for the drama in the text.

34:06

And you don't have to look too far in this text to find the drama, right? To find the human element of this, right? Paul, we see his humanity here. I want us to get that. We often think he's superhuman.

34:22

He's in a hole. He's lonely. He's scared, right? He's full of hope, right? He's not moved, but he's still a person. He also understood that despite Timothy's soundness and doctrine and personal godliness, he was prone to waiver.

34:50

He reminds Timothy in chapter one, verse seven, God gave us a spirit, not a fear, but a power and love of sound mind. Timothy, don't be afraid. Right, that fear, that's not of the Lord. God has given you strength and power in a sound mind.

35:12

Paul lovingly commands Timothy in chapter one, verse eight, not to be ashamed of the testimony of the Lord. Don't be ashamed, Timothy. You're gonna face so much ridicule. Look, I proclaimed the gospel to the point where the people wanted to put me to death.

35:30

Timothy, don't be ashamed of that message. Don't be ashamed of that message. They're probably gonna put you to death too, Timothy. Don't be ashamed. Don't leave the purity of the gospel. In 2 Timothy 1:13-14, Paul says, "follow the pattern of sound words that you have heard from me in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

36:01

By the Holy Spirit who dwells within us, guard", guard, Timothy, that's soldier language, right? "Guard the good deposit entrusted to you", guard it. Chapter two, verse 15 says, "do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed."

36:26

Why? Because you're rightly handling the word of truth. You see the society around him ridiculed him. And Paul says, Timothy, it's not about what people think or say of you. You could be right here in prison.

36:43

With me, your name being dragged through the mud. Here's the important thing. You have no need to be ashamed because you rightly handled the word of truth, right?

There's a heavenly perspective. The secular world out there might revile you and hate you for what you said, but you know who approves you?

37:03

God. And that's it, right? I love what Paul's gonna say later on in our verse today, and I'm not gonna spoil it for you because it's so precious. So his final words to Timothy include a few commendations.

37:20

Atta boys, good job, Timothy, but many, many commands. Many do this to Timothy, 25 imperatives, right? And if you're a Greek nerd, there it's in the imperative of command. This is a general talking to a subordinate.

37:37

This is the, your commands from your leading officer, right? Not to be neglected, ignored, shoved aside. This is Timothy do this. Right, that's a lot of times. Chapter four, most personal section contains 36% of these imperatives in this epistle.

38:06

Paul wanted Timothy to understand that these were not mere suggestions. Timothy, this isn't a mere suggestion. This is a command from your friend and a command from in our language, your commanding officer.

38:21

Right, do these things, Timothy. Don't lose heart, don't waver. Pragmatists will come in and try to persuade you otherwise. Guard what was entrusted to you. Guard what was entrusted to you. And so we're gonna actually read from verse one to verse 22.

38:40

I'm gonna start, my text this morning is from verses nine through the end of the chapter, but I wanted to read this whole section so that we put this in the context of what's going on. And I also want you to hear those 36% of the imperatives that are in this chapter.

38:58

These are Paul's final words. And so all those who have ears to hear, hear the word of God. Paul says this, verse one, "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is the judge of the living and the dead.

39:16

And by his appearing, note that word, by his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word. It's an imperative. I charge you. This is what you're to do, Timothy. Preach the word. Be ready in season and out of season.

39:36

Reprove, rebuke, exhort with complete patience and teachings. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound doctrine. sound teachings, but have itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

40:05

As for you, Timothy, and by extension, as for you church. Always be sober-minded, endure suffering. Do the work of an evangelist. Fulfill your ministry. For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.

40:30

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day, and not only to me, but also all those who love his appearing."

40:53

There's that word again, appearing. For all those who love his appearing. Church, do you love, do you long for the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ? Here's our passage for today. Timothy, "do your best to come to me soon.

41:12

For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia, Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry.

41:33

Tychicus, I have sent to Ephesus. When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas. Also the books and above all the parchment, Alexander the coppersmith, did me great harm. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds.

41:53

Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message. At my first offense, no one came and stood by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them. But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me, the message might

be fully proclaimed, and all the Gentiles might hear it.

42:19

So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever, amen. Greet Prisca and Aquila in the household of Onesiphorus.

42:41

Erastus remained at Corinth and I left Trophimus, who was ill at Miletus. Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren. May the Lord be with your spirit, grace be with you all."

43:06

Amen, that is the word of God, let's pray. As we open up this passage, Father, I pray that you would speak. Your spirit would illuminate our hearts and our minds to hear and to understand that we would be changed by these words and you would be glorified.

43:30

It's in Jesus' name we pray, amen. Do your best to come to me soon, Timothy. I love how Paul just said in verse eight. And not only to me, but all those who love his appearing. So in one moment, Paul's longing for the appearing of Jesus Christ.

43:56

And the next moment he says, Timothy, if I could appear before me, there's this double longing, this idea of where's Paul's strength and comfort in the hope of the appearing of Jesus Christ. And in the fellowship, the camaraderie of his friends.

44:24

Right, Timothy, come soon, come quickly. Do your jolly best to get here. Come. How would we feel in that situation? Alone in a dungeon, in a hole in the ground. Timothy, come, please come. And you gotta understand what does that mean for Timothy?

44:52

Right, you're coming and you're associating yourself with a man on death row, a man who preaches the same gospel you preach. There is an element here that Timothy come and be with me, and that might mean your death as well.

45:13

Right, but along for the fellowship. Right, so he's longing for that friendship. Then verse

10, for Demas in love with this present world has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. In life and ministry, people move on for various reasons, good and bad.

45:33

It's always painful, it's supposed to be. If it's not painful, if you can leave a congregation of people and not think twice about it, well that says something about your character. You made no investment in those people.

45:53

You made no investment in them. Paul's companion Demas, he parted from Paul, and Paul's words here carry a weight, carry a sadness, and an honesty. Colossians 4:14, Paul says this, Luke, the beloved physician, greet you.

46:14

This is the same Luke Paul's gonna mention in this. As does Demas in Philemon verses 23 and 24. "Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ, sends greetings to you, and so do Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, my fellow workers.

46:40

My fellow workers." What is going on here with Demas? Did his faith shipwreck like Alexander, the Coppersmith? I don't think that's what's happening here. I think Calvin, in his commentary on this, I think he captures what's going on here rightly.

47:03

Calvin writes, "and yet we must not suppose that he altogether denied Christ, talking about Demas, or gave himself up either to ungodliness or to the allurements of the world, but he merely preferred his private convenience or his safety to the life of Paul.

47:25

He could not have assisted Paul without many troubles and vexations, attended by many imminent risks of his life. He was exposed to many reproaches and must have submitted to many insults and been constrained to leave off the care of his own affairs.

47:47

And therefore, being overcome by his dislike of the cross, he resolved to consult himself to his own interests." In other words, the life of ministry that he spent with Paul was too difficult. It was too hard.

48:07

He preferred the safety of home versus the radicalness of this apostolic ministry. I think that's probably what Paul is saying here. So Demas, Timothy, come to me. I'm here, you come to me. Why? Because Demas, he departed, he loved this world.

48:33

He loved this world, right? All who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution. Jesus says, you wanna follow me, pick up your cross and follow me. The call to Christianity is a call to come and die.

48:48

If you think you are the owners of your life, I encourage you to look at the cross because the cross preaches something completely different, that you were bought with a price, that you were not your own.

49:01

Your life does not belong to you, it belongs to Christ. And he is Lord and he is King of your life. And to follow him means to recognize that, to be in submission to that, not in just the Sunday morning things, but into all the things.

49:19

And all the things. And Paul says, Demas, it was too hard for him. He loved this present world. He loved the idea of the bigger houses, the bigger cars, whatever the drama there we fill in the blanks, he loved that more than the hardships.

49:39

And so he departed. And then he lists a few other names. Not to say that these people also bailed. I don't think that's what Paul is saying here. I think what he's saying here is I've dispatched these other individuals to specific tasks and they are fulfilling them, but I miss them as I only have Luke here with me.

50:02

So he says, "Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia." Verse 12, "Tychicus, I have sent to Ephesus. Verse 20, "Erastus remains in Corinth and I left Trophimus who was ill in Miletus," back to verse 11.

50:21

"Luke alone is with me. Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you for he is very useful for me in the ministry." Church, can we be real for a second? Life is hard. Life

is hard. There are so many trials.

50:43

There are so many soul crushing things that happened in life. It's a guarantee. Death will visit 100% of us. And we need each other. We need each other. That's not a thought, this normal North American idea that I pull myself up by my own bootstraps.

51:09

I don't need anybody. I set my own destiny. Church, we need each other. And I wanna give you this exhortation. If this is your church, make investments in the people that are around you. Get to know them.

51:25

Bring them into your life. You bring others into your life as well. Because if this is your church, these are your trenchmates. These are the ones that are gonna surround you when the diagnosis come in.

51:40

When the trials happen. Make that investment in the body of Christ. Right, that's the message that we see all throughout the New Testament. There's no such thing as the lone Christian. Right, the video streamings and things like that in our culture, they're great.

52:03

I have nothing wrong with them, but it's created this false illusion that you can do church from your couch at home, absent from the church. And sure, you're gonna get the word of God. You're gonna be blessed by that, but you're missing a massive portion of blessing that the Lord intends for you.

52:24

It's gonna be hard. Because again, the only perfect church is an empty one. You get us in there, we mess all things up. Right, but we're supposed to live together. We're supposed to work through issues together.

52:35

We're supposed to, like a family, work through things. Love each other. We don't get to just walk away. Right, now that doesn't mean you can ever leave a church and move on to, that's not what we're saying.

52:51

Right, because God places us in various places throughout our lives. But I love what Jim Elliott said, wherever you are, be all there. Right? This is the body of Christ that the Lord has brought you to.

53:08

Right, long for them. Right, don't walk in here on a Sunday morning with the thought of what can I get from these people. But walk in here with the thought of what can I give to these people. Right, and when we do that, we all get, we all gain because we're ministering one to another.

53:29

I think that's Paul's heart, Timothy. Come quickly. Luke alone is with me. Grab Mark on your way. Bring him here. There's a story of reconciliation behind this too. Paul instructs Timothy to get Mark.

53:47

Now those of you that know Acts, know that in Acts 13:13, Luke, right, there's lots of crossover here. Luke who alone is with me. Luke writes, "now Paul and his companion set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia.

54:07

And John", that's Mark here, "left them and returned to Jerusalem." A few chapters later, chapter 15, after the Jerusalem Council. "Now Barnabas, who was Paul's ministry partner, up until that point, wanted to take with them John called Mark, but Paul thought it best not to take with them the one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them on the work.

54:34

And there arose a sharp disagreement between Paul and Barnabas. so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark and with him sailed to Cyprus and Paul took Silas." So we see here Acts 13, John Mark bailed.

54:55

Acts chapter 15, Barnabas says, hey, let's bring Mark. And Paul says, no, dude bounced. Right, like why would we bring him? I don't wanna fall for that trick again. Now was Paul wrong in Acts 15?

55:12

Was Mark wrong in Acts 13? Were they both wrong? We don't know. But what we do

know is now at the end of his life, we have a story of reconciliation because Paul tells Timothy, go get Mark. Go get Mark.

55:30

The guy that bailed on me, the guy that caused a separation between me and Barnabas, the point where we parted ways, go get him because he's very useful for me for the ministry. That's incredible story of reconciliation.

55:47

Right, that's incredible story of reconciliation. That's such the heart of God. And now at the end of his life, Paul, the apostle has two gospel writers with him. You think that's pretty significant?

56:04

Luke who's gonna write Luke in Acts and Mark who's gonna write the gospel of Mark all there with Paul. Mark is very useful for the ministry. Right, and we look back throughout history and Paul probably didn't know the weight of it.

56:20

He's gonna write a gospel that's gonna be read, canonized. He's so useful. God wasn't done with him. I thought he was, but he's not. He says, when you come, verse 13, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas in the books and above all the parchment.

56:44

And so we see here that Paul's vulnerable. Demas bailed, his colleagues are scattered. Luke alone is faithful, he's with them. Mark is useful, Alexander is harmful. Right, that's what the flow of thought of what's going on here.

57:05

Paul in prison, he's vulnerable. He's lonely, he's longing for his friends. He shares a story of a dear companion that loved this world, loved the pleasures of this world and bailed on him. My colleagues, my friends that I administered, they're scattered all over the world doing ministry.

57:26

Luke, he's alone with me. Now Alexander, bring Mark, he's useful. Now Alexander, he's harmful. Verse 14, "Alexander the copper Smith did me great harm. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds. Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message."

57:50

Paul here turns a great warning against the man who sought to oppose the gospel message preached by Paul. To oppose the gospel message preached by Paul. Forever ensconced in holy scripture. We have holy spirit inspired name dropping.

58:08

Right, this guy Alexander. We saw him in first Timothy, Paul says his faith was shipwrecked. Right, he did me great harm. And some wrestle with this idea, especially when we understand of this name dropping, like why did this get put in here?

58:27

Because you remember, this wasn't just a private letter to Timothy, this was a letter that we're reading today. Alexander did me great harm. Did me great harm. What did he do? He opposed the gospel. He opposed the gospel that we preached.

58:45

Beware of him, turn from him. And here's my resolve. What Paul says, I wanna say. Right, I don't wanna be an Alexander spot where Paul could write of me. Yeah, he did the gospel great harm. He opposed the message.

59:05

He didn't take what was entrusted to him and guard it and preach the word. He didn't do that, he manipulated it, he changed it. He, whatever he did, he opposed it. And he caused great damage. He caused great damage.

59:25

One commentator wrote, "Paul's objection to Alexander and exhortation to Timothy do not reflect some petty or personal narrowness on Paul's part. They rather reflect apostolic conviction that to oppose the gospel message is the gravest of errors and an affront to Christ's lordship."

59:45

While there are some opponents whom Timothy should gently instruct, right? There's a difference. Timothy shepherd those people. Beware of these people. Alexander is by his own choosing in a different category.

01:00:04

He's in a different category. Now, whether by ignorance or willingness, there's gonna be people who will seek to quench and pervert the gospel, right? And I don't wanna glance

over the human element here, the practical real life church element here.

01:00:22

This cost Paul. He says, this caused me damage. This cost him friendships. No doubt there was gossip in the church. No doubt there was people taking sides, saying, but Alexander's such a nice guy. But inside he hated the gospel, right?

01:00:43

Church, sometimes the reality for pastors, as we've seen throughout the pastoral epistles, are to be on the lookout for wolves and sheep's clothing. It is not kind for pastors to allow wolves to wander amongst the sheep, right?

01:01:03

There are seasons where pastors need to rise up and sharply deal with a wolf who is opposing the gospel. It is a part of the ministry. It's never pleasant. It's the worst part of pastors. The pastoral ministry, absolute worst part, because there's a cost to it.

01:01:20

As we just, there's always a human element to it. I love what Calvin said. He said, the pastor ought to have two voices. One for gathering the sheep, and another for warding off and driving away wolves and thieves.

01:01:38

That's the role of the pastor. We're to have two voices, one which which we address the sheep. And when wolves come in our midst to seek to devour and pray upon our congregation, our voice changes. Our voice is supposed to change.

01:01:54

We're to warn, we're to exhort. Beware of Alexander. He's doing the gospel great harm. Verse 16, "at my first defense, no one came and stood by me, to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them."

01:02:12

I love his pastoral heart. Lord, I understand the pressure. I understand the pressure. Don't charge it against them. But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me. So that through me, the message, I love this, the message.

01:02:27

What was Paul's concern above his own life? They're gonna kill me. But you know what I

rejoiced? The message might be full, it was fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles heard it. That's a win, that's a victory.

01:02:46

My head's gonna roll, but they heard the gospel. I want that perspective. And he says, so I was rescued from the lion's mouth. Right, like that's a crazy thought. Paul, you're in prison. You're in a dungeon, you're about to die.

01:03:04

You were rescued from the, like what are you talking about? Then he says, "the Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever, amen." What a gospel perspective. When you think about what's happening, Paul's like my head's about to roll.

01:03:30

But you know what? The Lord will rescue me. That doesn't mean he's gonna stop the axe from making contact with his neck. It means the Lord's going to rescue him in the ultimate sense, right? We often get so stuck on the earthly as we think this is it.

01:03:55

What does he say? The Lord's gonna rescue me. And what is he gonna do? He's going to bring me safely into his kingdom. What a weighty sentence. Paul, you are in grave danger. You're in grave danger, Paul.

01:04:12

What you guys are failing to see is my Lord, my God is gonna bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. I want that perspective. I want that perspective. We trust in God's sovereignty to bring us into salvation.

01:04:32

We trust in God's sovereignty to keep us in salvation. And you know what? We trust God's sovereignty to complete our salvation and to bring us into glory. All of us are going to die one day. Where's your trust in that?

01:04:54

Where's your trust in that? Paul wrote this in Romans 8. "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ, salvation or distress, or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written, for your sake, we are being killed all the day long.

01:05:17

We are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered. No one, all these things, we are more than conquerors through him who loved us." I want that perspective. I want that perspective. They could kill me, but God's going to bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom.

01:05:41

And there's nothing they can do to change that. Trust in him, church. Trust in him. Your head might be separated from your body, but you're going to be in good company side by side with Paul the apostle.

01:05:56

Cancer might take you, a heart attack might drop you, a car crash might crush you, but God's got you safely in his hand. He's got you safely in his hand. You have nothing to fear. You have nothing to fear.

01:06:12

Great Prisca and Aquila and the household of Onesophorus. I love the story of Onesophorus. He talks about them in chapter one verse 16 says, "May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesophorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains."

01:06:26

But when he arrived in Rome, what did he do? He searched for me earnestly and he found me. May the Lord grant him mercy from the Lord on that day. And you well know all the service he rendered at Ephesus.

01:06:42

Pastors need men like Onesophorus. Paul needed men like that. He wasn't superhuman. He was in a dungeon. He was in a pit. He needed his friends to come and surround him. Do your best to come before winter.

01:06:59

Eubulus sends greetings to you as does Pudens and Linus and Claudia and the brothers. The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with y'all. That's right. Jesus, thank you so much for these passages. Heavy weighty things.

01:07:20

Real life things. Precious things. I hope we can we think about this idea that no matter what life throws at us, the Lord will rescue us from every evil deed and bring us safely

into his heavenly kingdom.

01:07:40

That is such a precious promise that I pray we would walk out these doors holding on to. That we could fully trust in you for everything. And although the world will come against us for the message we proclaim, we don't get to change it or alter it or hide it.

01:08:02

Our job is to preach the word. Your job is to cause the word to have its effect, to take root, to grow in our hearts. And all those who desire to live Godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. That's a promise.

01:08:20

And let us approach this Christian life with clarity, knowing that walking with Christ will cost us everything. But as Paul says, for me to live as Christ and to die as gain, give us that perspective.

01:08:40

Help us develop that theology, that hope that serves as an anchor to our souls, that we would not be moved. But we would fix on the firm foundation of Christ. That's in Jesus' name we pray. Amen.