



## **A Spiritual Encouragement Message May 7, 2020**

### **Don't Be A Demas**

**By Andrew Lemus**

One of the realities we all face while living in this world is the sobering challenges of trials. They come at us as a result of mistakes we or others have made, our choices both good and bad, the environments we live in, and a multitude of other reasons. Trials are a part of life and can, if endured by faith, produce maturity and all the fruits that come along with it (James 1:2-4). It is in these moments of hardships that we should seek encouragement, counsel, joy, and refreshment and this can be fulfilled by our friends in Christ.

For the Apostle Paul, it was his friends that helped him persevere in Christ while he endured house arrest for two years in Rome. Men that stood by his side to spur him on, give him hope, and motivate him to continue the walk he was called to. One such man was a disciple named Demas. It was Demas that Paul listed among other great fellow workers Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, and Luke (Philemon 1:23-24). It was friendships that helped Paul get through some tough times.

Several years after Paul wrote Philemon we find Paul in a much more dire situation, in prison writing what is believed to be his last epistle before his execution. A letter to his friend and fellow worker in Christ Timothy (2 Timothy). In this letter we find Paul broken, discouraged, and calling for his brother Timothy to hurry to him from Ephesus to bring him comfort and love. What could have left this powerful, faithful, and brave man of God broken? Was it the dark and depressing prison that he found himself in? No, what broke Paul's heart was that his friend and fellow servant in the Lord Demas had abandoned and deserted him in his time of distress leaving Paul alone and helpless (2 Timothy 4:9-10). I can see the picture now, Paul crying out to his fellow brother in Christ and good friend to come to him in the midst of such a

great trial, made dramatically worse by the unloyal actions of what Paul thought was a friend in Christ.

One simple lesson we can pull from this text is easy to see, don't be a Demas. That's right, **Don't Be A Demas**. Unfortunately, many of us have experienced something like this in our lives and can empathize with Paul, his abandonment, and the heartache he felt. We have had friends in Christ abandon us in the midst of our trials and it hurts. Like Paul, we have Christ as our comfort when we find ourselves alone in our trials but the Lord intended us to have one another as well (2 Timothy 4:9-18). Paul pleaded with Timothy to come to him because his friend abandoned him and he needed someone.

As Christians we are called to follow in the footsteps of the greatest friend we will ever have, that is Jesus Christ (John 15:13-17). Our friend Jesus loves us when we do wrong, when we mess up, when we do good, when we go through trials, and as we live, move, and exist in this world. He is there for us through thick and thin, pain and joy, the good, the bad, and the ugly. Let us give thanks for the friend that we have in Jesus, but please don't stop there. As His disciples, we are called to follow in His footsteps, loving one another like He loved us, and being a friend when others need friends the most.

Disciples of Christ, Don't be a Demas.