

## THE WORLD DEMAS LOVED

Scriptures: Col. 4:14; Ph. 24; 2 Tim. 4:10.

Intro: As I have mentioned before, occasionally I like to turn in my messages to biography. The biographies of Scripture are most instructive. Perhaps the reason for this is that every one, whether long or short, has been written under the supervision and direction of the Holy Spirit.

It is impossible to tell why our interest is directed at times to certain people in the Bible, but for some days now I have been thinking about Demas. After considering all of the information that I have been able to gather, I am not sure that I would have liked him, but I have found the facts very illuminating and helpful.

He is only mentioned three times in the Bible. (See references above.)

In all three of these epistles we learn that he was a companion of the Apostle Paul, AND THAT THERE SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN A CLOSE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMAS AND LUKE, "the beloved physician."

So he had the advantage of being in close contact with two of the outstanding men in the New Testament, two men who were used of God in the writing of scripture: the Apostle Paul, and Luke.

I am inclined to feel, though I state this with reservations, that Demas had some close connection with the Colossian church. Maybe he was a Colossian. He must have known Philemon, and surely knew about the remarkable conversion of Onesimus. He certainly knew Timothy.

So he had all of the advantages of knowing the right people, people who would have helped him to be different from what he was. He was Paul's fellow-worker.

We know also that it was during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome that his name appears for the first time. These were days of great conflict and great uncertainty for the Apostle Paul--and days which remained very much the same until the end of his life.

2 Timothy, as far as we know, was the last inspired epistle written by the Apostle Paul.

Nowhere in Paul's epistles do we have a specific statement as to where Demas stood spiritually--that is, whether he knew the Lord or not. ~~This is quite often the case. Although the Gospels were all written after the death and resurrection of~~

It might seem like presumption to some even to suggest that he may not have been born again. But we have some facts given by the Spirit of God which should make us think. For us, the importance of Demas' life cannot be overlooked because he had the closest possible association with Paul and his co-workers, but this is not what makes a person a Christian.

Please turn to 2 Tim. 4:10.

I want to build my message tonight around the three (not two) things which Paul tells us about Demas.

I. "Demas hath forsaken me."

At first, this might seem like the same as, "and is departed unto Thessalonica"--but it is different.

He tells us where Crescens went, and where Titus went, but he does not say that they had forsaken him.

What does he mean? Vv. 16-18 give us our answer where Paul says, "All forsook me."

Evidently all who had been with Paul at the time he is describing here forsook him at the time, but Demas was the only one, or seems to have been the only one, who did not come back.

Demas deserted Paul. He left him helpless in difficult straits. Thayer suggests the idea that Demas left Paul in the lurch.

When?

Again look at v. 16. "At my first defence no man stood with me, but all men forsook me."

What was Paul's defence?

It was a "verbal defence" (Thayer, p. 65). Peter uses the same word in 1 Pet. 3:15, translated "answer."

In Acts 22:1 Paul says, "Men, brethren, and fathers, hear my defense which I make now unto you." This is the same word.

And in Acts 25:~~22~~<sup>16</sup> Festus tells King Agrippa that Paul is going to have the opportunity "to answer for himself concerning the accusation laid against him." The same word is used again.

What is Paul doing in these cases, and what is Peter referring to in 1 Pet. 3:15.

It all has to do with the Gospel. The lines were drawn. Paul life was at stake.

Paul knew what was coming when at the house of Philip in Caesarea he said, "What mean ye to weep and to break mine heart? For I am ready, not to be bound only but also to die at Jerusalem for the name of the Lord Jesus" (Acts 21:13).

So, these were days when Paul needed all of the help and encouragement that he could get, but Demas left him in the lurch!

When it came right down to the point of standing for the Gospel of Jesus Christ before the men of the world, Demas was nowhere to be found.

What is the reason for this amazing behavior? This brings us to our second point.

## II. "Having loved this present world."

The Greek says, "having loved this now age."

By this expression Paul is talking about the world the way ~~it~~ is now, and there is a very obvious contrast with the way the world is going to be after the Lord returns.

It has to do with the world which men have made who are alienated from God. The "atmosphere which at every moment of our lives we inhale, again inevitably to exhale" according to Archbishop Trench.

It speaks of the way this world is going—  
 the way people in the world think . . .  
 the aims and aspirations of the world . . .  
 the goals and objectives of unregenerate men . . .  
 (as pictured so graphically in Romans 1)  
 the pressures which everyone feels to conform . . .

This world has a god. Cf. 2 Cor. 4:4

It has its rulers. Cf. 1 Cor. 2:6, 8.

It has a wisdom all its own (1 Cor. 1:20) which is contrary to the wisdom of God.

It has a distinctive character: "evil" (Gal. 1:4). This

means not only that it is completely different from what God wants it to be, but that it is an active evil, always seeking to corrupt others, and seeking to draw others into the same doom for which it is destined.

The child of God is warned not to be conformed to this kind of a life (Rom. 12:2)—not to let his way of thinking and his character be shaped by this world. The world will demand that you go its way.

And perhaps the most illuminating statement of all is found in 1 John 2:15-17 (where the related word, cosmos, is used—not aion). What searching words!

Now let us return to our text.

How did Demas feel about this age, this world, the way things are?

HE "LOVED" IT!!!!

What does this mean?

It means that, after carefully looking at the world, and then at the Gospel and the people who believe the Gospel, after carefully weighing all that each stood for, he felt that he could not give up the world because it meant more to him than anything else! He "loved" it!

Now will you look at a very interesting contrast? Cf. 2 Tim. 4:8 where the same word for love is used in a different way.

And so . . .

III. Demas "is departed unto Thessalonica."

Why did he go there? We do not know. What did he do there? We do not know. What ever became of Demas? We do not know.

Is it possible that 1 John 2:19 is a commentary on Demas?

Concl: Think of the epitaph that could be written on his tomb:  
DEMÁS - WHO LOVED THIS PRESENT WORLD.

Surrounded by the greatest advantages spiritually—but these alone did not, and could not, change him.

Why is it here? Obviously as a warning to us. This became the turning point in Demas' life. Possibly no one really knew how

he felt until the crisis came. But all along he had been weighing, thinking, deciding.

Let me ask you very seriously tonight . . . HOW DOES THIS WORLD LOOK TO YOU?

Do you look at it, and like what you see? Does it have more influence on you than the Word of God, than the truths of God, than the Spirit of God?

This world is passing away, and every one who places his hopes on this world will be doomed forever.

Don't be deceived into thinking that because  
    you have been raised in a Christian home,  
or because  
    you have attended a Bible-teaching church,  
or because  
    you know personally some teachers of the Word of God . . .  
that you do not need to pay attention to the feelings that  
are in your heart.

Demas did not change Paul's mind. Nor did his decision affect Paul's destiny. But how tragic were the results for Demas.

Cf. Psa. 139:23, 24.