

**CONTEND FOR THE
GOSPEL**

KEEP THE FAITH

GRACE BE WITH YOU



Setting

Paul in Prison, end of his ministry

Written to Timothy, young pastor & friend

Themes

contend for Gospel, keep the faith, endure suffering & hardship

encouragement to be faithful, centrality of God's word, the steady opposition to truth

warning to be on guard, divisive people, false teachers, foolish arguments

“⁹ Do your best to come to me soon. ¹⁰ For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry. ¹² Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. ¹³ When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds.”

“¹⁵ Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message. ¹⁶ At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! ¹⁷ 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. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸ 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.”

“Greet Priscilla and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus remained at Corinth, and I left Trophimus, who was ill, at Miletus.

²¹ Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers.

²² The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.”

1. Life has Relational Difficulties

- honest feelings, lonely, abandoned, opposition
- honest longing, visit, encouragement, things

a) Can be let down by significant people

- Demas – fellow worker, ministry team
- Philemon 1:24, Col. 4:14
- left Paul – deserted me
- reason – in love with present world
- shared ministry experience - gone

b) serving Jesus can scatter key people

- Crescens – Galatia
- Titus – Dalmatia
- Tychicus – Ephesus
- Carpus – Troas
- Erastus – Corinth
- Trophimus – ill at Miletus
- God's leading could leave you without some key people around you

c) Personal hostilities and attacks in Ministry

- vs. 14-15 – Alexander the Coppersmith
- did me great harm
- opposed our message strongly
- active in opposition – be careful yourself
- leave him for Jesus to deal with

d) Alone in a time of Great Need

- facing charges in court – alone
- know from vs.21 – believers around there

- missed an important moment for Paul
- disappointed, discouraged, not bitter
- don't miss the truth, may it not be charged against them!
- extended grace to those who failed him

2. It's not that Simple

- can let one another down, experience difficulty in serving together, have tough history & love one another

a) Get Mark and Bring Him – useful in ministry

- Acts 13:13

- Acts 15:37-39 “³⁷ Now Barnabas wanted to take with them John called Mark. ³⁸ But Paul thought best not to take with them one who had withdrawn from them in Pamphylia and had not gone with them to the work. ³⁹ And there arose a sharp disagreement, so that they separated from each other. Barnabas took Mark with him and sailed away to Cyprus,”

- see the repair & deep relationship

3. Jesus is Faithful & We Need One Another

a) God Sustains & Does His Work

- vs. 17
- Acts 18:9-11
- Acts 23:11
- Acts 27:22
- God stands with, sustains, does His work

b) I totally trust Him now & tomorrow

- vs 18, rescue, bring me safely to Him

c) I Still Need You Guys

- vs. 9 – do your best to come soon
- vs. 11 – get Mark & bring him
- vs. 13 – there are things I need
- vs. 21 – come before winter
- Paul often says these things
 - Rom. 1:11, 15:23, Phil. 1:4, 1 Thess 2:8
- human community important

d) Keep your Human Connections vs. 19-21

4. God's Spirit & Grace be with You

Why is it always “*grace to you*” at the beginning of [Paul’s] letters and “*grace be with you*” at the end of the letters? Here’s my answer: Because, as the letters begin, Paul believes that God’s grace is being mediated to the readers by the words — the truth — of each letter. And as the letter ends, and people have been receiving grace through reading or hearing these truths, he knows that the readers will now leave and return to the troubles of the world, and he prays that this grace, which they have now received through the word of God, will go *with* them as they return to the world. — John Piper

So What?

1. There will be relational difficulties

- disappointment & discouragement from significant people to you
- serving Jesus will separate important people
- face opposition & hostility – leave them with Jesus
- when you feel alone – Jesus still faithful

2. Repair Broken Relationship

- past failure or friction doesn't preclude future relationship and benefit

3. Recall God's Faithfulness

- changes your perspective
- puts your hope in the right place

4. Don't discount needing one another

- tend your relationships – they matter

5. Go with God's Spirit & Grace