

Prayer List

Gene
Veda
Wallace
Sheila
Judy
Rose

Services:

Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.
Assembly 10:00 a.m.
Assembly 11:00 a.m.

Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Brad Behrens - bradbehrens@pinolechurchofchrist.com

Michael Odom - MichaelOdom@pinolechurchofchrist.com

Ernie Sprinkel - preacher@pinolechurchofchrist.com

Demas

This Week's Question:

Answer To Last Week's Question:

Isaiah 1:1-3; Isaiah 53:6

Published by the church of Christ which meets at 755 Pinole Valley Road, Pinole, CA 94564, Phone (510) 724-1994, (Mailing address: church of Christ, P.O. Box 453, Pinole, CA 94564)

Pinole Tidings

www.pinolechurchofchrist.com

Vol. 15, No. 39 - July 13, 2014



G. Brent Phillips

It has been said that, "No man is ever a complete failure, he can always serve as a horrible example!" Such is the life of Demas.

The first time we meet Demas (Philemon 24 and Colossians 4:14) he is among the closest friends and coworkers of Paul, laboring with him in Rome during his first Roman imprisonment. But, Demas was to prove to be a friend who failed. We can learn a lot from failure. We can learn a lot from Demas.

The next time we meet Demas (three years later), it is at the close of Paul's bittersweet life. In 2 Timothy 4:10 the apostle asked Timothy to come to him as quickly as possible, "for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica." Paul's words are filled with tender passion and heart-broken sorrow. Demas is gone. He has deserted the ranks of service in the army of the Lord.

We see the force that led Demas astray—"the present age." We see the choice that Demas made—"having loved." Finally we see the record of the tragic action that Demas took—"has forsaken me." It is interesting to note

that Paul used the same equivalent term that Jesus cried from the cross that derives from Psalm 22:1 (Matthew 27:46). The term “forsaken” literally means “to leave down and in (i.e., ‘out’)” and conveys the idea of forsaking or deserting one who is in the midst of an extreme crisis. Demas was derelict in his duty in the desertion of his friend and fellow laborer. The term “having loved” is explanatory and indicates the reason Demas forsook Paul—he had “fallen in love with the world.” The term love may also ironically reflect the highest form of love for the lowest form of life.

Demas had been up to the big city and now he did not want to go back down to the farm. More to the point, Demas had two views of the world. One was from the inside of the underground dungeon of the Mamertine Prison with Paul, and the other was life on the outside taking in all of the marvelous glories and glamour that Rome had to offer. What kind of fool do we think Demas was?

In the context, Paul and the other disciples had been living in the power and passion of the unseen realm. See 2 Timothy 4:7–8. But for Demas, the pull of the world proved to be too much. One perspective demanded self-sacrifice and self-denial, service rendered to others, and delayed gratification. The other perspective indulged selfishness and glorified the flesh promising instant gratification. One way was hard, the other way was easy. Demas somewhere along the way, began to make comparisons between the sensual and the spiritual. Demas weighed both lifestyles in the balance and then he made his choice. We always choose in life what we really desire. We always end up doing what we really want to do—always!

Demas’ problem was with worldliness and he loved the world. He loved the spirit of the times in which he lived. See 1 John 2:15–17; James 4:4 (Romans 12:1–2; Ephesians 2:2–3). Demas had fallen in love with “the here and the now” and his true love finally won out—it always does! If you love the world, you are, sooner or later, one way or another, going to live in the world. Where our love is, there we finally are. See Matthew 6:24. Be careful what you love! Consider how we are supposed to live in this present age: “For the grace of God that bring salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No!’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope—the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good” (Titus 2:11–14). Demas saw only what was near and he took a chance and made his choice. Consider Hebrews 11:13; 2 Peter 1:5–11 (9). When we look only at what is near we will fall, we will fail.

But our story does not end there. You see, there may be a footnote in history about Demas. Demas forsook Paul and went to the beautiful city of Thessalonica, which stood on a hill overlooking the Mediterranean. Archaeologists digging in the ruins of Thessalonica have uncovered two lists of the most prominent citizens of the city in the First Century. On those lists, is the name, Demas. We wonder, could it be? Was it you, Demas? Was it worth it? Were you happy? Jesus asks, “What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul?” (Matthew 26:26). Yes, Demas, was it worth it?