

**DISTRESS SIGNAL!**  
**2 TIMOTHY CH4:9-13**

***“We must be global Christians with a global vision because our God is a global God” John Stott.***

**Remember** we talked about the “context” meaning the circumstances that formed the setting, where we ask the “What, Who, Where, Why, When and How.” In order to help us, we will continue to go over every week the following:

The key to understanding 2 Timothy lies in recognizing Paul’s altered circumstances. He is no longer free to pursue his task of proclaiming the gospel to the gentiles. Arrested (probably in Troas Ch4:13) and now a prisoner in Rome (Ch1:16-17; 2;9). Having already undergone a preliminary hearing (Ch4:16-18) and awaiting his final trial, from which he has little hope of anything except death (Ch4:6-8). Some have ministered to his needs (Ch1:16-18), others have gone out on ministries (Ch4:10,12) and at least one has abandoned him (Ch4:10). Meanwhile the situation in Ephesus has worsened with some deserting the gospel (Ch1:15) and despite his previous excommunication (1 Timothy Ch1:20) of Hymenaeus, he is still at work overthrowing the faith of many (Ch2:17-18). In the midst of these circumstances Paul sends his second letter to Timothy.

Timothy meanwhile is facing pressures from within the church Ch1:8 – distance and shame of the Gospel and its servants, Ch1:15 – desertion, Ch2:17-18 - wandering from the truth, Ch3:8 – men who are opposing the truth.

Running alongside this, Timothy is facing pressures from outside the church – Ch3:11-12 + Ch4:14-15 in the form of persecution. It is these circumstances that form the setting for Timothy, and because of these circumstances, he may not complete what God has asked him to do (Ch4:5)!

**ILLUSTRATION**

**When did the Titanic sink? 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> April 1912! There were 2240 people on board! Sadly 1504 people drowned! Harold Thomas Cottam (27 January 1891 – 30 May 1984 – 93 years old!) was a British wireless operator on the RMS Carpathia who fortuitously happened to receive the distress call from the sinking RMS Titanic on 15 April 1912. The Titanic had sunk more than an hour earlier, but **the Carpathia rescued 705 people in lifeboats.****

***Time is running out for Paul and in his “distress signal”***, he uses his time left to give essential details to Timothy, some to know and some to carry out! Details regarding loneliness, desertions, departures (which could also be desertions), sending out and the essential personnel along with the essential equipment needed, to see the mission through to the end!

Chris Green suggests that the latter verses of the letter and “The themes they cover – desertion, loyalty, opposition and the future – are central to the letter as a whole” (Finishing the Race, Christopher Green, 2000, pg147). Paul in his closing personal remarks reveals crucial “need to know” details.

### **DETAILS OF DESPERATION! V9**

Think Acts Ch27:20 and 2 Corinthians Ch1:9, as Paul yet again faces incredible hardships!

The apostle Paul is cut off, lonely, abandoned, exiled from Churches that he loves and friends that he misses! Isolated, locked up, and deprived of the basics, his team has been split up, possibly for a variety of reasons, but the reality is, the team is gone!

The request presumes the usual time scale permitted for such a defence within a **Roman Judicial System**, as Paul is able to factor in the time for the letter to arrive, the time for Timothy to make arrangements to leave and the time it would take to Journey from Ephesus to Rome, via Troas. However, there is still an urgency – Do your best v9 + v21 to get here!

**Remember 2 Timothy Ch1:4!** Paul is longing to see Timothy! Three times in Ch4 - v9, v13 and v21 we see in Paul's writing an urgency in his distress call to see Timothy! He has to see him!!

### **DETAILS OF DESERTIONS, DEPARTURES AND DEPENDABLES! V10-12**

**Demas** – originally a fellow worker (Colossians Ch4:14, Philemon 24). Deserted, why? His love for the world! Opposite to v8!

**Crescens** – Not mentioned anywhere else! **Has he also deserted?** Not sent out by Paul v12 - Tychicus

**Titus** – Titus was initially left in Crete (Titus Ch1:5) and at some point has rejoined Paul. **Has he also deserted?**

Why does Paul mention Crescens and Titus here, with Demas, who has deserted and not mention them when he talks about Tychicus?

**Dr Luke** – We know that Dr Luke (Colossians Ch4:14), is both the author of the Gospel of Luke (Luke Ch1:1-4) and of the Book of Acts Ch1:1).

**John Mark** – Presumably the author of the Gospel of Mark, the man who ran away naked in Mark Ch14:51-52, who later joined Paul and Barnabas in Acts Ch12:25, went on mission with them in Acts Ch13:5, abandoned the same mission in Acts Ch13:13 and was the root cause of a huge “bust up” between Paul and Barnabas in Acts Ch15:37-40. Being reinstated in Colossians Ch4:10, identified as the cousin of Barnabas, he is also mentioned in Philemon 24 as a fellow worker and 1 Peter Ch5:13 as Paul's spiritual son!

**Tychicus** – He is the one who takes the letters to Ephesus and Colossi. “The beloved brother and faithful minister – Ephesians Ch6:21 + Colossians Ch4:7, a fellow servant Colossians Ch4:7

**The new team! Paul, Timothy, Dr Luke, John Mark and Tychicus!**

### **DETAILS OF DELIVERIES! V13**

Cloak – Poncho, a big heavy duty type blanket/cloak that would keep you snuggled no matter the weather! This would have been ideal for the conditions within a prison. Remember the Prison would be damp, dark, filthy, full of disease!

Parchments – Biblios (library), Books, scrolls. Scripture, writings, essential equipment! A combination of the Scriptures and Paul's important writings, notes, records etc. These would have been vital to Paul, the team and the continuation of the mission.

### **APPLICATION**

Think about you area, how are we going to reach that area for Christ?

Who are the discouraged leaders in your Church?

How can they be encouraged?

Pray for those areas that we want to reach and and pray for those discouraged leaders!