

2 Timothy 4:9-22

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Date: 27 February 2019

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[0 : 0 0] Now as we come into this latter part of chapter 4 in 2 Timothy, we saw towards the end of the first part how Paul was saying to Timothy, you know, I, verse 6, am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure is at hand.

While he is encouraging Timothy to be careful of those who might be less faithful in the things of the Lord, ready to fall away, the time will come, they won't endure sound doctrine, they'll want false teachers and the itching ears, they'll turn away, but watch, you watch in all things Timothy, endure afflictions, you do the work of the evangelist, you make full of your proof of your ministry for I am now ready to be offered and the time of my departure.

And Paul is looking forward in a sense to that taking of himself out of the world and to behold the Lord as he is, that crown of righteousness which he shall give me at that day and not to me only but unto all them that love his appearing.

And we said how not everyone will love the appearing of Christ. How both in Matthew 24, at verse 30 I think it is, or 37 thereabouts, where it says, you know, then when the Lord signs that the Son of Man appears in heaven, then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn.

And it mentions in Revelation how the nations shall wail because they see him coming in glory and the fearful realisation that the horse they have not backed, the one they have rejected, the one in whom they have poured scorn and division, is in fact the King of Kings.

[1 : 3 7] And the Son of Righteousness now come back to judge the world. So all those that love his appearing look for it, long for it, and wait for it now upon this earth.

But even though he may be a highly spiritual apostle, as all the apostles were of course, and filled with the knowledge and the anticipation of the coming of Christ or his being summoned to him, yet still whilst we or they are in this world, we remain flesh and blood.

And flesh and blood has not only its own weaknesses, but it also has its own feelings and thoughts. So this verse 9 is so human.

Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. You could say that, yes, he wants his coat because winter's coming on and it's cold and there's other aspects of that later on in the verses we'll see in a wee minute.

But this is almost a cry from the heart. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. He doesn't know how long before he will be again brought before Caesar, before he may be tried again, before he may be executed.

[2 : 4 5] He anticipates that soon. I am ready to be offered up, verse 6. But do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. Come soon. Come quickly, Timothy, because I know I haven't got long.

And I long to see you again before my time is taken away. The humanness of Paul and of all those who are spiritual giants in our eyes, we need to recognise that it's in and through Scripture.

And I remember once, many years ago, when not only when you hear what you think of as great men saying, well, make sure you pray for me and so on. You think, yeah, okay, I'll say that I'm going to be.

It's not us. They need to pray for you, spiritual giants. It's you, big people, we need to pray for our little ones like us. But Paul, for example, in Ephesians 6, at the end where he says, you know, praying always, he's talking about the armour of God and the wielding of the sword of the Spirit.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit. Watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in bonds, that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak.

[4 : 03] Remember once, this is what I said many years ago, and somebody I would consider a spiritual giant signing something for me. He put in this little text, Ephesians 6, 19 and 20, at the end of it.

And I looked it up and thought, why would somebody of that stature need a nobody like me to pray for him? Why did he put that in? Then why does Paul put it in here?

Why does the great apostle of the Gentiles plead with the ordinary and in many cases nameless Christians to be praying for him also? Because he needs their prayers.

Every bit as much as they need his. It is a mutual, mutually supporting body, this body of Christ. And Paul is all too human.

He is not superhuman. He is not purely spiritual. He is flesh and blood as well. He needs to know. He has to support the strengthening of his brothers and sisters.

[5 : 01] We find this again, you know, in the Acts of the Apostles at the end of Acts, remember? In Acts 28, he's making his final stage of the journey toward Rome.

And by then he's been through all manner of trials, you know, getting all loose mobbed almost in Jerusalem and shipwrecked and washed up on the shores of Malta. And all these other adventures that he had on this journey.

But now he's coming closer and closer to the actual reckoning, to Rome itself. We read in Acts 28 and verse 15. From thence, when the brethren heard of us, they came to meet us as far as Appii Forum, which is about 43 miles out of Rome.

And the three taverns, which is about 10 miles near, about 33 miles out of Rome. Whom, when Paul saw, he thanked God and took courage.

We think, why would Paul need to take courage? He's not sure. Paul wasn't afraid of anything. But you can get the sense of him just beginning to get a little bit more nervous. The courage kind of draining out of him a bit because he is just flesh and blood.

[6 : 09] And at the end of the day, then, these brethren coming, coming all this way, 40 miles, 30 miles coming to meet him, to encourage him, to strengthen, to bring him along his way to Rome.

To know that as he draws near to Rome, he's not doing so alone as a prisoner in chains. He's doing it as almost a celebrity, as one of their brethren, one who is beloved who may have come to meet and to take along on his journey.

And Paul thanked God and took courage. All the saints, whether they are New Testament, whether they are old, they are all only as strong as the Lord is enabled to make them.

And they need the strength, not only of the Lord's Spirit, but also of one another. That's why we're designed for fellowship on the Lord. Remember, when God makes man, when he makes man, male and female, says, let us make man in our image.

The Trinity exists in relationship. And God intends us, whatever may be our marital status or our position in this world, we are intended to be in relationship.

[7 : 20] Brethren and sisters and mothers in God and fathers in God and children in the Lord and all the family of the Lord's people to uphold one another in the Lord.

We are to be strengthening one another. Because without that, we're not pure spirit. We're not just in isolation.

Even in the Old Testament, we read of Isaac, you know, it says Isaac at the end of Genesis 24, verse 67, says, Isaac was comforted after his mother's death.

And I think, okay, so he was cheered up when he got married. Most people be cheered up on their wedding day or something. But no, if you look at, if you do the arithmetic of how old Sarah was when she had Isaac and then what age she was when she died, it means that he had been mourning the death of his mother for three years.

Three years Isaac had been mourning. Three years he had been grieving. And then when Rebecca is brought to him and he loved her and he rejoiced in her and it says he was comforted after his mother's death, joy came back into his life because of a human connection.

[8 : 34] The saints of the Lord are not just pure spirit. They are also flesh and blood. And this is what we find here with Paul pleading with Timothy to come to him as quickly as he can.

Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me. However, Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world. Now, Demas is mentioned at the end of Philippians and in Philemon as one of Paul's fellow workers.

But when it says he has forsaken me, having loved this present world, it's not just the case, well, the world's a nice place and it's just enjoyed. It's not like that. Rather, it's a contrast in verse 10 with what we have at verse 8.

The crown of righteousness is to be given to Paul and to all those who love his appearing, who love the appearance of Christ. That is a future event at the time when Paul is writing and still for us, of course, Christ's second coming is a future event.

But it is something to which we look and in which we trust in the normal way of things we might expect to be called from hence to the Lord before he comes back.

[9 : 43] We don't know exactly when it will be. He might come back, of course. But the point is that Demas had forsaken me, having loved this present world. He wants jam today. He wants what he wants now.

He wants his tangible inheritance like the younger son in the prodigal son parable saying, Oh, Father, give me what's mine now. Give me my portion of the inheritance.

Turn it all into money and go and blow it. That's what I want. I want it and I want it now. And never mind the future. It's like somebody, if they were given a chance of what they wanted in their life, choosing to be like sort of the A-lister school royalty in fifth or sixth year old, who's so beautiful and good looking and so brilliant in sports and so top of the class that everybody wants to be around.

And we all know what these people were there and were like and so on. And everybody wanted to be there. But that status of the A-list kind of royalty at school, that only lasts for, what, two years maximum.

And then you all split your different directions to work or to college or whatever it might be. Be or going away or some staying still in the same vicinity. But everybody's scattered. You don't retain that celebrity status.

[10 : 58] But you had it for maybe a year, maybe two years where you were the most senior in the school and everyone loved you. But then you've got 30, 40, 50 years of life still ahead of you.

And it's like somebody choosing that year and a half, two years of celebrity glory over against, you know, potentially 40, 50 years of happiness or contentment or fulfillment in their life.

What are you going to choose? Somebody say, oh, I want this and I want it now. I want to be somebody special. Now, never mind the 40 years that's still to come. But rather, in terms of this world, even if you live to be 100, it's still gone in the blink of an eye.

Eternity with the Lord is that glory that he has laid up for them that love him. And love has appeared to be. Deavis, he doesn't want Paul now. He doesn't want the glory of the gospel because he has decided he loves this present world.

That's what he wants. He wants what he can see, what he can touch, what he can handle. He wants it and he wants it now. Whatever he thinks he's going to find in Thessalonica, that's where he's gone.

[12 : 05] Thessalonica is back into Greece. It's eastward from Rome, of course, across the Adriatic and back into Europe and then, no doubt, on into Asia. Crescens is only mentioned here.

We have no mention of him anywhere else in Scripture at all. We don't know who he was or where he was originally from. Perhaps the fact that he's gone to Galatia, that is the internal area of what is now Turkey, so the interior there of what is now Turkey.

Perhaps that's where he came from. And perhaps he's gone home. But we don't know anything else about it. Titus, it doesn't imply that Titus, that Crescens and Titus, of course, it doesn't imply desertion.

Titus, of course, Paul is writing to in the very next letter. We know from his letter to the Romans that Paul intended to go to Illyricum, which is the ancient Roman area of, roughly speaking, Albania, Yugoslavia, that sort of area.

And Titus, he writes to Titus in his next letter, or the letter that follows on. Of course, Titus was written before 2 Timothy, that he wants to meet him in Nicopolis.

[13 : 13] Now, Nicopolis is sort of from southern Greece. It's on the way up into Albania, Yugoslavia, that area. And the fact that Dalmatia is sort of the province kind of next to Illyricum or sometimes overlaps with it.

It's all that sort of area. Macedonia, Albania, Yugoslavia, that sort of area there. But Titus has gone there almost as if he's gone there already, waiting for Paul, expecting Paul to join him.

Maybe that's an act of faith. Maybe Paul would rather that he came to Rome. But the fact is, Titus isn't here. Titus, who's faithful and trusted and so on, but he's gone into Dalmatia.

Maybe he's not waiting for Paul. Maybe he's going on himself to carry on with the mission work. That's fine. Titus is faithful. Crescens, as far as we know, may be faithful.

Demas obviously has forsaken Paul. But the point here is that all these who were formerly with him, comforting him, strengthening him in the faith, they're gone.

[14 : 15] They're not there now. He wants Timothy to come. He wants the comfort, the consolation of his former protégé coming back to him. Because Paul, at the end of the day, is flesh and blood as well as spirit.

And this is something for us to remember. That if these giants in the faith were conscious of their frailty, conscious that they are flesh and blood, conscious that they are not supermen and superwomen, then how much more ought we to recognize?

That if they have need of human comfort, companionship, strengthening one of another, then not only should we recognize it, it's normal that we should need that too.

It's just human to need that as well. You know, even Jesus said to his inner circle and his three disciples, you know, Peter James said, Tarry you here while I go and pray, pray yonder.

You know, but he wanted them with him whilst he was sweating blood and tears in Gethsemane. He doesn't want to be completely alone. We are human.

[15 : 21] And if that is the case for our Lord and if that is the case for his apostles, it is no shame nor should it be a surprise if it's the case for us too. But it's not all one way.

We also have to recognize that we ourselves may need to give comfort or strength or encouragement to one another. Because just as we are human, they are human too.

We have need of their strength. They will have need of ours. And it's no use us saying, oh, well, what can I do? You know, they're much more spiritually giant and stronger than me. I'm the one that needs their help, not them needing ours.

You know, consider how much comfort, how much blessing, how much encouragement do we receive when a dumb animal takes a like to us.

If a dog got a cat, a cat comes up, curls up on your lap and it's ignoring everybody else. If a dog comes and whacks his tail and licks your hand, but he doesn't pay attention to it, he'll be a chuff. If you're pleased that a dog likes you.

[16 : 21] If a little child looks into your face and beams, or if it wants to take your hand, it can't give you money or power or wealth or anything.

But a little heart swirls up ready to burst. If a little toddler or a little child takes a shine to us, then we think, oh, isn't that nice that we feel good about it.

It can't enhance our power or influence or strength or anything. But we feel so blessed, so comforted, so encouraged because this helpless little creature, whether human or even an animal, this helpless creature chooses to bestow a little temporary affection on us.

So we who are, to use Jesus' phrase, worth much more than many sparrows. We are not just little toddlers. We are not dumb animals. We are fully grown human beings.

We have the power in us to bestow a little encouragement, a little strengthening, a little kindness, a little building up of one another in the faith of Christ.

[17 : 26] Because we are all human, just as Paul here is human and conscious of his frailty. Only Luke is with me. Take Mark. Bring him with thee, for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

This is a great sort of encouraging signing off. Remember, Mark is described in Colossians, of course, chapter 4, verse 10, I think it is, as a sister's son to Barnabas.

And, of course, this is one reason why at the end of Acts 15, you'll remember, Barnabas wanted to take Mark with them when they went on another missionary journey. And Paul said, no, he deserted us before. He went off and we would go with us to the work.

And so sharp was the contention between them, they separated. They split one from another and went in different directions. Why was Barnabas so loyal to Mark? Probably because he was his nephew. And Paul, we don't know what he thought about Mark in the meantime.

But other letters, he mentions Mark. And Marcus is one of his fellow workers. And here now, in this final letter, he says, bring him with you. He is profitable to me for the ministry.

[18 : 31] And we've almost got a sort of healing touch here in this final letter. The Tychicus I've sent to Ephesus. The cloak that I left at Troas with Carpus when thou comest bring with thee.

And the books, but especially the parchments. He wants whether to be reading or writing more scriptures or more letters or whatever. But also, why does he want the cloak? He wants a cloak because he's cold.

He wants a cloak because he hasn't got much in the way of possessions. Also, the fact that, why would he leave a cloak at Troas with Carpus? Why would he leave it there?

You know, if you're going on any journey, well, you take your cloak with you. The implication, some commentators have read into it, is that having been taken to Rome the first time, as we read at the end of Acts 28, that Paul was tried and released from whatever the charge was then.

But that he was rearrested later on another charge when the persecution against Christians increased. And the speculation, or the theory is, that he was arrested at Troas.

[19 : 37] And having been arrested sort of, you know, in mid-flight or just going about his daily tasks or whatever, he was arrested and didn't get a chance to go back for his cloak.

Didn't get a chance to go back to his lodgings. He didn't get, and it's just the clothes he stood up in. He was arrested and carted off. So that could be one reason why the cloak was left at Troas with Carpus.

But bring it with you when you come. And the books, but especially the parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil. The Lord reward him according to his works of whom be thou aware also.

For he hath greatly withstood our words. And my first answer, no man stood with me. Now, we don't know whether this is connected in with the fact that no one stood with him. Alexander may be the same one that we read of in 1 Timothy.

In chapter 1, verse 16 I think it is. Verse 20, I beg your pardon. Hymenaeus and Alexander, of whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.

[20 : 39] Now, Hymenaeus, of course, appears in 2 Timothy, as we saw there in chapter 2, I think it is.

Yep, Hymenaeus and Philetus, chapter 2, verse 17. And here's Alexander appearing again in 2 Timothy, chapter 4, and verse 14. We don't know if it's the same Alexander. And we also don't know if it's the Alexander that we read of in Acts 19 in Ephesus, who was put forward by the Jews in the crowd when everybody was busy shouting out, you know, Great is Diana of the Ephesians.

And as soon as they knew he was a Jew, they wouldn't listen to him. And when he would have made his defence, they'd rather shout it out about the space of 2 hours. Great is Diana of the Ephesians. But, whether he's the same Alexander, the coppersmith, whether he's the Alexander and Hymenaeus, the fact is that clearly at one stage, he was meant to have been one who was with Paul.

And either has spoken against him to the other Christians and so undermined Paul's ministry, or perhaps has even colluded with the Romans in Paul's arrest and trial, or whatever the case may be.

Clearly, he did me much evil. Doesn't say much harm, perhaps. He hasn't made things worse for him. Trial wise, we don't know. But, of whom be thou aware also?

[22 : 04] He hath greatly withstood our words. That might almost imply that he's kind of bringing in a rival sort of heresy to the truth within the church, as opposed to simply being a persecutor from the outside.

Now, where Paul says the Lord rewards him according to his works, this is not vengeance. It's not Paul saying, well, I think the Lord grinds him down and judges him for what he's done.

After all, he was so bad to me. No, he's leaving judgment completely with the Lord. Because, although he knows that Alexander did him much harm, much evil, yet he doesn't know what the motives were.

He doesn't know what else he may have done. God knows Alexander perfectly. And so, the Lord reward him according to his works.

Means, I'm leaving it with the Lord. I'm leaving God to judge. He knows everything he did. He knows why he did it. He knows his motives. He knows what was in his heart.

[23 : 07] I've just turned him up to the Lord. I'm leaving it with the Lord. Now, it's almost like the evil version of what Nehemiah, we find, says repeatedly throughout the book of Nehemiah.

Chapter 5, verse 90, think upon me, my God, for good, according to all that I have done for this people. He's not saying, Lord, haven't I been good? Haven't I been great?

He's saying, Lord, remember me. Think of what I have tried to do. Judge me according to what you've seen me do. And judge me, yes, fairly, if I've had mixed motives or whatever, but you see what I've tried to do.

Chapter 13 of Nehemiah, verse 14, remember me, oh my God. I've got concerning this and wipe not out my good deeds that I have done for the house of my God and for the offices thereof.

Again, in chapter 13, verse 31, remember me, oh my God, for good. Now, it could simply be that Nehemiah is aware that sometimes the most good you do for people is the least appreciated.

[24 : 10] Ecclesiastes 9, verses 14 and 15, there was a little city and few men within it. And there came a great king against it and deceived it and built great bulwarks against it. Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city.

Yet no man remembered that same poor man. And it is possible that the most good that is done is often the least appreciated.

Nehemiah, they have been pleading against that. Paul, to take the opposite case, is saying, not, oh, grind him down, Lord, make sure you crush him for all the evil he did to me, but rather judge him according to his works.

Leave it with the Lord. You know his works perfectly. You know it inside out. Just you judge him according, reward him according to his works. But he's warning Timothy to be careful of him.

At my first answer, no man stood with me, but all pursued me. Now we know that his first answer doesn't mean, cannot mean, the first time he was arrested.

[25 : 12] He must have been arrested. That journey, the accumulation of Acts 28, where he's in his own house for two years. That cannot be the case that we're talking about. Because, if you think about Philippians, Philippians, where he is a prisoner in Rome, and he is writing it from Rome, Timothy is with him when that is written.

It begins, Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus, which are in Philippi. And at verse 13, that my bonds in Christ are manifest in all the palace, that is the praetorium, and in all other places.

At the end of chapter 4, verse 22, when he's giving greetings, he says, All the saints salute you, chiefly they that are of Caesar's household. So when he was a prisoner the first time, Timothy was with him.

So the first time that he's talking about here must mean a subsequent arrest. When he was tried, and when he was arraigned before the courts, and there was nobody.

Nobody stood up with him. Nobody was there to speak for him. And the implication is that there were Christians in Rome who could have stood with him, but they were keeping their heads down, or they were keeping a low profile, or they didn't want to get themselves into more sort of trouble.

[26 : 31] I pray God that it may not be made to their charge. At his first answer, no man stood with him. This must be a subsequent arrest. Now whether this is the same imprisonment, he's been on trial once, and then he's been put back to the cells, and when he's brought back the second time he's going to receive sentence, we don't know exactly how it pans out.

But we do know that he didn't have a single soul to speak for him. And we do know that he expects condemnation, execution, any time soon.

The fact that we think, you know, traditionally it's meant to have been around AD 64, that Paul was arrested or executed. That was the time of the great fire of Rome, which of course the Emperor Nero blamed on the Christians.

If Paul had been arrested and blamed along with the other Christians for that fire, he probably would not have been beheaded, despite being a Roman citizen.

He'd have been burned, which is what Nero did with the Christians. He set them alight, almost like to sort of punish them for having supposedly lit the fire of Rome, which of course Nero had started himself.

[27 : 45] But the fact is that Paul is still at large when that happens. And the secular history implies that Paul wasn't condemned for being a fire starter because he wasn't in Rome at the time.

So he's been arrested since then. The fact that he wasn't at Rome means he couldn't be condemned with those who supposedly were blamed for the great fire of Rome. So he's been arrested, presumably just for being a Christian.

And he's going to be executed soon. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me. That by me the preaching might be fully known and that all the Gentiles might hear that I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

So perhaps he was released after that time, then arrested again. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom. To him be glorious forever and ever.

Now this doesn't mean, I'm going to get released again. I expect to be released anytime soon. No, when he says the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, it means that as he says to the Philippines, for me to live as Christ to die is gain.

[28 : 52] If and when I'm executed, I will go to be with the Lord in glory. It's like, you know, a fortnight ago where we're looking at Daniel and Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and how they said, If it be, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fire of the furnace and he will deliver us out of thy hand, O King.

But that doesn't necessarily mean that we're going to be set free. It could just mean if he throws us into the fire of the furnace and if we die, we will be with the Lord. We will be delivered out of your hands, O King.

And this is the sense of it here. The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom. Even if I die here, I'll be taken to his heavenly kingdom, to whom be glory forever and ever.

Salud Prisca, Aquila, the household of Anesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth. Trophimus have I left at Miletum. Now, there's something for us to bear in mind with all these names that are being thrown about in this last chapter here.

It is common with Paul to list a whole lot of greetings at the end of his letters. It is common to name a whole lot of other people, all of whom we must take to be Christians in all the different places where he is writing.

[30 : 07] Priscilla and Aquila we already know from other parts of the New Testament. Erastus abode at Corinth. Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter.

That doesn't just mean so I get my cloak because it's going to be cold. But it also means the fact that as we see with the Acts of the Apostles, Paul was on his voyage, you know, it says the feast was, the fast was now past and sailing was dangerous beyond a certain time in the calendar.

If the winter set in, nobody could make any voyages because the sea was just too unpredictable. So nobody made any major seagoing voyages once the winter set in.

So what Paul means is make sure you come before winter because if you don't get here before winter, you won't get here until next year and I won't be around by then.

So what he means is come, come quickly. Come before winter. Come before all the traveling gets shut down, before all the voyages are ceased. You won't be able to travel by sea once the winter sets in and you certainly won't be able to travel by land over the mountain passes.

[31 : 13] So come before winter because he wants to see him. We can, of course, spiritualize that as well, can't we? And say, you know, make sure you come to the Lord before the winter of your life sets in.

Make sure you come before everything begins to shut down, before you no longer have your mind and faculties to focus and to choose for Christ. Make sure that before the winter of your life comes and there's so many aches and pains and joint difficulties in your body and distractions that mean you can't even think on the things of the Lord and on spiritual things.

It's just such a struggle to get through each day. When the winter comes in your life, you won't be able to think about anything else. Do thy diligence to come before winter. We could make a whole sermon out of that and we'll just mention it in passing.

Now, Linus, traditionally, however much story put by this, became one of the bishops of Rome in due course, according to tradition.

Pudence and Claudia are reckoned to have been a couple who became husband and wife in the fullness of time. The fact that they are parted here, they're split here with Linus in the middle, implies they're not a couple yet.

[32 : 38] According to Christian history and tradition from, you know, beyond scripture, Pudence was a Roman knight and Claudia was supposedly the daughter of a British, in the sense of Southern English, local chief who had cooperated with the Romans, who'd been a Roman ally.

She'd been sent to Rome for her education. She'd been put under the charge of Componia, who was the wife of the guy who became the governor of the Roman province of Britain.

Componia became a Christian. Claudia is thought to become a Christian under her sort of tutelage or under her protection. And so the Christians are being converted gradually here and there from all over the place.

We don't know exactly how reliable are these extra-biblical sources here. We can't say, oh yes, you can say authoritatively, there's definitely a connection with ancient Roman Britain here.

But according to sources, according to historical sources, according to Roman historians as well, who have no interest and no vested interest in pumping up the gospel account, they're just giving an account of a stacyate Roman history, that this Claudia was in fact the daughter of a British chieftain who had connections with the Roman Empire.

[33 : 59] Britain by then, or Southern Britain, was under Roman rule. And so there is a connection here. There is a connection with our own Great Britain. There is a connection with the country to which we belong.

There's a connection with the spread of the gospel into these British Isles. There is a connection with all the names that are being sprayed around here in this last chapter.

Some of them are people who have fallen away. Some of them are people who have remained faithful. But at the end of the day, these names that are named, and these souls who may either go back to Britain or other parts of the Roman Empire, taking the gospel with them, you see the point that as Paul wrote to Timothy in 1 Timothy, the word of God is not bad.

And so it goes on. The word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, be with thy spirit. Paul knows he is not long for this world. And he knows that Timothy may or may not reach him in time, but there's Prisca and Aquila, there's Eubulus and Linus and Claudia and Purins, there's Pychicus, there's all these others, and Titus going all over the place.

And the message and the work and the kingdom goes on when Paul himself is no longer there. And this, I would suggest to you, is like the finale of Paul's final letter.

[35 : 22] The knowledge that he himself will soon close his eyes, either in martyrdom or in natural death. We happen to know it was martyrdom. But the fact that he isn't long doesn't talk to the fact that the gospel and the onward march of the kingdom, in one sense, is only just beginning.

It is going on from strength to strength. And we see, however tentative, we see the connection with those who will take it out into the world. We see a connection tentatively even with these British Isles.

This is a message not just for dead Christians 2,000 years ago. This is a living word that speaks to us here, speaks to us now, that although Paul is gathered to his long home, though Timothy would follow him decades later, though each of these people named would not be forever in this world, the work of the kingdom goes on.

The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. Now when he says be with thy spirit, it's personal, it's singular, it's addressed to Timothy.

Grace be with you is plural. Paul is speaking not only to his beloved protege, he is speaking to all who may read this letter at any time in his day, in the days that follow, or 2,000 years later, because it is not simply Paul that speaks through this letter.

[36 : 55] It is Christ. Christ. Christ. Christ.