

THE POWER TO SEE IT THROUGH

2Tim 4:6-10

INTRODUCTION:

- A. World glorifies speed (tortoise & hare; rockets, cars, runners)
- B. But there is something to be said for "plodders" who see the job through. Surely there are extremes to avoid in this example (speed can be good and plodders can be bad)
- C. We need to see the "race is not always to swift." Eccl 9:11
- D. For whatever cause, Demas did not see job through til end.
 - 1. Phle 24: "Demas, Luke, my fellow-workers"
 - 2. Col 4:14: "Luke, beloved physician & Demas salute you"
 - 3. Text: "Demas hath forsaken me"
- E. Did it happen suddenly? Were there any signs indicating his change of heart? Was he worldly or just decide he had no interest in religion? Have you seen people like Demas?

DISCUSSION:

I. RELATION OF STARTING POWER TO STAYING POWER

- A. These powers are never same: (starter & motor in car)
 - 1. Marriage: promise moon, won't take out trash; wants you to bear his children, won't help with their needs; laves for someone else because honeymoon is over.
 - 2. An athlete: burst of energy, then pace for long race. Look at finish line and conserve energy to reach it.
 - 3. An engine in train, ship, car: Has to have thrust of engine to overcome inertia, but must apply brakes to stop. Different attitude between beginning and ending; different approach. See Heb 6:1-3
- B. Each of us must see whole picture of life and prepare to be effective at the end even as at the beginning.
 - 1. No matter how beautiful a beginning is, it does not count if we do not finish.
 - 2. Many successful men are remembered, not for their success, but for their failure at the end.
 - 3. Jesus had to finish his task or all His works would have been for nought. What if he had given in to the agony of Gethsemane and denied cross Jhn 19:30
 - 4. Our faithfulness today will be nothing if we stop short of the goal, giving in like Demas.

II. THE CAUSE OF DEMAS' DESERTION

- A. "Having loved the present world"
- B. This could mean a number of things:
 - 1. Demas could have been a fornicator, murderer, etc.
 - 2. He may not have done anything inherently evil: he might have decided that there was no retirement plan for preachers; he might have wanted to go into a legitimate business.

- 3. He might have turned to athletics; he might have missed his family; he might have gotten discouraged and quit. Regardless, the result is the same. Lk 8:14; Phil 3:18,19; 1Jhn 2:15-17; Jas 4:4.

III. ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR SUCCESSFUL ENDING

- A. Personal integrity of conscience - Acts 23:1; 24:16
 - 1. This is MY battle; no one can do it for me.
 - 2. I want to be a faithful servant
 - 3. I want to finish the course; to live with myself
 - 4. There is peace of mind in knowing that you are doing what you believe is right, regardless of what others think or what the world considers to be successful.
 - 5. Regardless of the worldly praise, there will always be the knowledge inwardly, "I have failed."
- B. Recognition of the value of the cause which I serve
 - 1. People DIE for cause of Christ. Why? Because they know that there is something greater than life itself!
 - 2. Matt 22:37 - love God with heart, soul, mind
 - 3. Matt 24:8-13 (context dest. of Jer, but principle)
 - 4. Matt 6:33 Seek first kingdom of God
 - 5. Matt 10:37-39 it is of this ideal that martyrs are made.
 - 6. When there is that kind of commitment, Christ comes first. Without it, anything (sports, etc.) will be first.
- C. Recognition of place of faith in the life of the Christian.
 - 1. We understand the place of faith to the alien.
 - 2. Often fail to replenish faith in our lives as Christians.
 - 3. Demas left because his faith disappeared; others leave for the same reason. It could happen to me.
 - 4. Abraham's faith was lifelong; so must our's be
 - 5. It was by faith the heroes of faith finished the race Heb 11,12 (Heb. 10:39)
 - a. By faith we see the city - Heb. 11
 - b. By faith we persevere
 - c. By faith we see the end from the painful present
 - d. By faith we discover inner resources of strength the world cannot see in times of sorrow, stress....

CONCLUSION:

- A. Compare the closing statement of Paul's life, the crowning end of his life. 2Tim 4:6-10
 - 1. I have fought a good fight;
 - 2. I have finished my course;
 - 3. I have kept the faith
- B. Which would you rather be: Demas or Paul?
- C. Which does your life most closely represent?