

PART 4

EPILOGUE

Chapter Twelve

**THE MEASURE OF A LEADER'S
SUCCESS****THE TEAM HE BUILT***Timothy*

Timothy was unique in that regard. Paul likewise had written to the Philippians, “¹⁹ **But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition.** ²⁰ **For I have no one *else* of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare.**” ([Philippians 2:19–20 NASB](#)). Timothy more than anyone else had the heart of Paul. He had the habits of Paul. He had the theology of Paul. He was Paul reproduced—the faithful son.

Therefore, as Paul sat in that cold, dark dungeon, he longed to see his dear friend and beloved son in the faith. He began [2 Timothy](#) by writing, “³ **I thank God, whom I serve with a clear conscience the way my forefathers did, as I constantly remember you in my prayers night and day,** ⁴ **longing to see you, even as I recall your tears, so that I may be filled with joy.**” ([2 Timothy 1:3–4 NASB](#)). Although Paul’s work was finished, there was much work yet to be done in the churches. No doubt Paul had much more to say to Timothy in person before Timothy took the mantle of leadership. He had things to say that could not be set down in a brief epistle. So he urged his faithful son to come.

He said, “**Be diligent to come...quickly.**” There’s an urgency in the plea. Time was of the essence. Paul would be executed soon. Winter was approaching ([v. 21](#)), after which travel would be impossible because the seas would be too rough. There was much yet to say, and Paul wanted Timothy by his side as soon as possible.

[2 Timothy 4:21 \(NASB\)](#)

²¹ “**Make every effort to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren.**”



Most great men owe their leadership skills to the influence of a mentor. They learn from someone whose heart they desire to emulate. For Timothy it was Paul. And Timothy was Paul's number one son in the faith. Mutually they had bound their lives together by God's wonderful grace and had found strength in one another.

One of the richest joys we will ever know as a leader in ministry occurs when God gives us the privilege of raising up Timothies, those who not only desire to hear what we say but who also emulate our example. As a young man, Timothy had struggled with fear and timidity, but he turned out to be a faithful son in every way. Like Paul, he was even imprisoned for his faithfulness ([Hebrews 13:23](#)). He became everything Paul had hoped.

[Hebrews 13:23 \(NASB\)](#)

²³“Take notice that our brother Timothy has been released, with whom, if he comes soon, I will see you.”

Every true leader can thank God when by His Grace He gives us spiritual children who are like Timothy, reproductions of ourselves. In the best cases, they become even better than we are, more devoted than we are, godlier than we are. But they catch the vision of our hearts and make the commitment to live to the glory of God and carry on the work to which we have devoted our lives.

Timothy contrasted starkly with Demas, whom we'll discuss shortly. Demas, as we shall see, proved to be as unfaithful as Timothy was faithful. Virtually everyone who is in leadership for any amount of time will eventually suffer the disappointment of a Demas. But faithful souls like Timothy are the true backbone of the team.

Skipping Demas for the moment, notice the next two names Paul mentions: **“For Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.”** ([2 Timothy 4:10 NASB](#)).

Crescens

Nothing is known about Crescens except for this mention of his name. Don't assume because he is named in the same verse as Demas that he falls into the same category of unfaithfulness. If that were the case, Titus wouldn't also be grouped with them. We know that Titus, like Timothy, was regarded by Paul as **“a true son in our common faith”** ([Titus 1:4](#)).

[Titus 1:4 \(NASB\)](#)

⁴“To Titus, my true child in a common faith: Grace and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior.”

Therefore, in this context, Paul was simply reporting how his friends had been dispersed into various regions of Asia Minor. He expressly stated that Demas had abandoned him. He said no such thing about Crescens or Titus.

Crescens had gone to Galatia—probably at the behest of Paul himself—to care for the troubled church there. Evidently Crescens was a capable and trustworthy man, or Paul would never have sent him to Galatia. Galatia was a region where Paul had labored extensively. He

went there on each of his three missionary journeys. Each time, he did evangelistic work, founded churches, and began the process of building church leaders.

Paul's epistle to the Galatians reveals that the churches in that region had been subsequently ravaged by legalistic false teachers, known as the *Judaizers*, who corrupted the gospel by teaching that circumcision and other practices borrowed from Old Testament ceremonial law were essential for salvation. Paul's epistle to the Galatians answered those errors but also revealed that the false teaching had become deeply rooted in the Galatian churches.

The fact that Crescens had been sent to such a strategic and difficult field of ministry as Galatia probably indicates that he was a man of great spiritual strength and experience. He was trusted by Paul to give leadership and teaching and to represent Paul in that region where false teachers had already done so much to undermine Paul's influence.

Yet Crescens is virtually unknown. There were undoubtedly many like him who were trusted fellow laborers behind the scenes with Paul, who are never explicitly mentioned in Scripture, but **"whose names are in the Book of Life"** ([Philippians 4:3](#)).

[Philippians 4:3 \(NASB\)](#)

³ **"Indeed, true companion, I ask you also to help these women who have shared my struggle in the cause of the gospel, together with Clement also and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life."**

No one today remembers their names, but God knows, and they will be fully rewarded for their work. Thus Crescens represents the quiet, unknown hero who comes along in godly maturity and spiritual strength to stand behind someone like Paul and work faithfully without human accolades. I thank the Lord for the multitudes like them who are gifted, called by God, and who in doing their duty are content to be unknown.

Titus

Titus, by contrast, is well-known. His name appears thirteen times in the New Testament. One of Paul's pastoral epistles was written to him and bears his name. Remember (as we saw in an earlier chapter) that Titus was the one who represented Paul in Corinth when the apostle was unable to visit there. Paul wrote of him,

[2 Corinthians 8:23 \(NASB\)](#)

²³ **"As for Titus, he is my partner and fellow worker among you; as for our brethren, they are messengers of the churches, a glory to Christ."**

Titus seemed to flourish in new and challenging circumstances. Paul had planted many churches across the Mediterranean region, and when he left to go to the next region, he would turn leadership of the church over to someone like Titus. Titus was an equipper, a builder, and a man who could train other leaders. In fact, when Paul wrote the epistle to Titus, Titus was on the island of Crete, where Paul had planted a church and left it in the capable hands of Titus.

Paul wrote to him, **"For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you"** ([Titus 1:5 NASB](#)).



Titus had been working with Paul for years. He was in close and intimate fellowship with the apostle. [Titus 3:12](#) indicates that Titus left Crete to meet Paul at Nicopolis (probably in northwest Greece).

[Titus 3:12 \(NASB\)](#)

¹²“When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there.”

He apparently went from there to Dalmatia at about the same time Paul was being taken to Rome in his final imprisonment. Dalmatia was part of Illyricum, a region on the eastern shore of the Adriatic Sea, north of Macedonia. (Dalmatia is part of modern Croatia and Albania.) Paul had preached in Illyricum, according to [Romans 15:19](#).

[Romans 15:19 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁹“In the power of signs and wonders, in the power of the Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and round about as far as Illyricum I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”

It was exactly the kind of setting where Titus could go and follow up Paul’s missionary work, strengthen the church, and build leaders.

Every person in spiritual service needs not only the quiet, behind-the-scenes helpers like Crescens, but also those (like Titus) who can take a place of prominence. People like Titus are strong builders of other leaders, equippers, reproducers.

Luke

The next name on Paul’s list is Luke, Paul’s constant and faithful companion. In [2 Timothy 4:11](#) Paul wrote, “Only Luke is with me.”

[2 Timothy 4:11 \(NASB\)](#)

¹¹“Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.”

Don’t get the idea that Paul was in any way depreciating the character or the importance of Luke. Quite the contrary. Luke was one of the closest and most beloved of Paul’s fellow workers. In [Colossians 4:14](#), Paul referred to him as “the beloved physician.”

[Colossians 4:14 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁴“Luke, the beloved physician, sends you his greetings, and also Demas.”

Although Luke’s name appears only three times in the New Testament, he is a dominant character in the early church, and especially in Paul’s ministry. He wrote the gospel that bears his name, which is the longest of all four Gospels. (Luke’s gospel has only twenty-four chapters and Matthew’s has twenty-eight, but Luke has more verses and more words than Matthew.)

Luke also wrote the entire book of Acts. So fifty-two chapters of the New Testament were penned by this faithful physician, who was also an able historian. He chronicled the life of Christ, and then he chronicled the life of the early church, all under the Holy Spirit’s inspiration.



But Luke was obviously humble, and thus he was content to come alongside a great apostle and labor in his shadow. He was a constant companion to Paul, faithfully at his side. He was with Paul on his second missionary journey at Troas and Philippi. He joined Paul at the end of the third missionary journey and went with him to Jerusalem. As we saw throughout the early part of our study, Luke was with Paul in the shipwreck recorded in [Acts 27](#). He remained with Paul through both of his imprisonments. His presence is indicated, starting in [Acts 16:10](#) with the pronoun *we*, indicating that he traveled with Paul from that point on.

[Acts 16:10 \(NASB\)](#)

¹⁰ **“When he had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go into Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.”**

Although Luke was an articulate, godly, educated, gifted man, he made himself Paul’s servant. His main ministry was to come alongside Paul and serve his personal needs. And if anybody ever needed a personal physician, Paul did. Beaten, stoned, whipped, shipwrecked, imprisoned, and suffering so much, Paul needed a first-rate physician and an intimate friend. That was the role Luke gladly embraced.