

# When People Fail Each Other

## 2 Timothy 4:9-18

### **2 Timothy 4:9-18 (NASB)**

<sup>9</sup>“Make every effort to come to me soon;

<sup>10</sup>for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

<sup>11</sup>Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

<sup>12</sup>But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

<sup>13</sup>When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments.

<sup>14</sup>Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds.

<sup>15</sup>Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching.

<sup>16</sup>At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them.

<sup>17</sup>But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth.

<sup>18</sup>The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.”

As a prisoner in a Roman jail, Paul felt disappointment over being deserted in his hour of great need. The apostle was defending himself before a tribunal and would be put to death if the court decided against him. Yet of the many people whose lives he had touched, not one was present to support him.

There are plenty of logical reasons to explain why Paul's friends and the converts he had won to the Lord were absent. For example, the witnesses in a Roman court were frequently counted as co-conspirators and shared the fate of the accused. No one wanted the death sentence that might result from standing up for Paul.

I think there was also a subtler (more subtle) cause, to which many modern believers can relate. When Paul's loved ones looked at him, they saw a spiritual giant whose faith could withstand any challenge. They may have thought to themselves, *He doesn't need my help or support.*

And don't we do the same thing when it comes to our pastors, Bible teachers, and other spiritual leaders? We judge the depth of someone else's faith and take for granted that such a mature Christian can face what lies ahead. However, every single person has human frailties and moments when his or her faith wavers. Paul knew that God would take care of him, but he still desired a friend's touch, words of encouragement, and the physical presence of loved ones. Do not assume that another person can do without your aid and friendship. Believers are called to minister to each other “**Therefore encourage one another and build up one another, just as you also are doing**” ([1 Thessalonians 5:11 NASB](#)).