

2 Timothy 4:19-22

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Paul asks that Timothy greet old friends Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. He repeats his request that Timothy try as hard as possible to visit him before his execution. He sends a few greetings from other believers, and encourages Timothy that the Lord is with him.

Now Paul ends his letter. He asks Timothy to *Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus*. *Prisca*, or Priscilla, and her husband *Aquila* were ministry partners Paul met while in Corinth. They were fellow Jews who had fled to Corinth from their home in Rome, and took Paul in since they were also tent makers (Acts 18:2-3). They became key ministers with Paul, and returned home to Rome, and were pivotal in founding the Church of Rome. They hosted a church in their home in Rome (Romans 16:3-5). Apparently they had now returned to minister in Ephesus, perhaps again due to a rise in persecution.

Onesiphorus was mentioned in chapter 1, where Paul prayed for God to grant mercy at the judgement seat of Christ by rewarding the house of Onesiphorus because he sought out Paul, while in Rome, and often refreshed Paul while he was in prison. Paul noted that Onesiphorus was not ashamed, or afraid of his chains.

Paul notes that *Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus*. *Erastus* is mentioned in Acts 19:22 as being sent by Paul to Macedonia, along with Timothy, while Paul remained in Asia. *Erastus* appears to be another ministry partner that had stuck with Paul for roughly a decade of ministry. *Trophimus* is mentioned in Acts 21:29 as being a Gentile native of Ephesus who accompanied Paul to Jerusalem, just prior to his arrest. The Jews falsely accused Paul of illegally bringing Trophimus into the part of the temple where only Jews were allowed.

Paul then exhorts Timothy to *Make every effort to come to Rome to visit him in prison before winter*. Paul seems very eager to see Timothy in person before he dies. It might be that he expects his execution to take place *in winter*. Paul ends by noting that *Eubulus greets you, also Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren*. Paul had previously stated that only Luke remained with him in Rome (4:11). He must have been referring to their fellowship of ministers who had worked together for roughly a decade since Paul's missionary journeys, as recorded by Luke in the book of Acts. Because there are many *brethren* in Rome, as well as *Eubulus, Pudens, Linus and Claudia*. This is the only occurrence in scripture of these four people.

Paul's final wish for Timothy is that *The Lord be with your spirit*. Since Timothy is a believer, he is always indwelt by the Holy Spirit. This can also be translated "The Lord is with your spirit." *Grace be with you* can also be translated "Grace is with you." The difference would seem to be whether Paul is praying the Lord's presence and favor for Timothy, or whether Paul is summing up his admonition to Timothy by reminding him that God is always with him, and God's favor is upon him.

It would seem that Timothy took all this advice well, since he shared this letter with enough people such that it eventually was copied many times, and made it into the New Testament. This shows that Timothy did, indeed, embrace Paul's admonition to allow the scripture to be "profitable" to him "for teaching, for reproof, for correction" and "for training in righteousness." Timothy could easily have been offended by this letter. He was a senior minister, who had been faithful. And this letter is admonishing him as though he is flailing.

Apparently Timothy had the humility to realize that anyone can fall, and took these words to heart. We can be grateful that he shared this admonition with others, and can follow his example, and take Paul's admonitions to heart as well.

Biblical Text

¹⁹ Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.²⁰ Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.²¹ Make every effort to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren.

²² The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.