

# The Sad Story of Demas

One of the most obscure characters in the New Testament is a man named Demas. We don't really know very much about him; in fact, he is only mentioned in three verses. Those three verses, though, have a sad story to tell.

Demas is first mentioned in Paul's letter to the Colossians:

**Colossians 4:14:** "Luke, the beloved physician, and **Demas**, greet you."

When Paul wrote this letter he was being held in prison in Rome. Despite the dire circumstances Paul was not alone; Luke and Demas were with him. This means that Demas was not just a random person; he was someone who stood by Paul even when the apostle was in jail. In fact, in Paul's letter to Philemon the apostle called him a fellow laborer:

**Philemon 1:24:** "Marcus, Aristarchus, **Demas**, Lucas, **my fellowlabourers**."

That is high praise! Demas is one of three people that the apostle Paul singled out for a special commendation. Demas was standing by Paul, fighting the good fight and helping him in his ministry.

Demas is mentioned one more time in the Bible. This mention is found in Paul's second letter to Timothy, which was written toward the end of the apostle's life. This is what Paul had to say:

**2 Timothy 4:10:** "For **Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world**, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia,

Titus unto Dalmatia.”

Demas, who was once Paul's fellow laborer, had abandoned the apostle. Demas did not finish the race; instead he dropped out just when Paul was about to be martyred. He left Paul just when the apostle's need was greatest. We are even told why he did this: Demas loved this present world. He preferred the riches of this world over the sufferings of Christ. He chose the world over God because he loved the world more.

There is a cautionary tale in this. Demas started out strong but he failed to finish. In the end he fell away and abandoned God. While it is good to start out strong, we must *finish* strong as well. We need to keep the faith and hold on. If we don't then we will face dire consequences:

**Ezekiel 3:20: “Again, When a righteous man doth turn from his righteousness, and commit iniquity...he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he hath done shall not be remembered...”**

I don't know what great deeds Demas did. What I do know is that because Demas loved the things of this world more than the things of God, Demas forsook the Lord – and that is how he will be remembered.