

2 Timothy 4:10

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

Analysis

For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. Paul explains his loneliness. "Demas hath forsaken me" (Dēmas gar me enkatelipen, Δημᾶς γάρ με ἐγκατέλειπεν). Enkatalepō (ἐγκαταλείπω) means abandon, desert, leave behind—same word Christ quotes from Psalm 22:1 on the cross ("Why have you forsaken me?"). Demas, previously Paul's coworker (Colossians 4:14, Philemon 24), has abandoned him.

The reason: "having loved this present world" (agapēsas ton nyn aiōna, ἀγαπήσας τὸν νῦν αἰῶνα). Agapaō (ἀγαπάω) means love deeply—Demas loved the world more than Christ. Nyn aiōna (νῦν αἰῶνα, "present age") refers to this temporary, fallen world system with its pleasures, comforts, and approval. When following Paul meant persecution and death, Demas chose worldly safety over faithful suffering. This is apostasy—not doctrinal error but practical abandonment when Christianity becomes costly.

Paul mentions others who left but without Demas's condemnation: "Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia." These apparently left on legitimate ministry assignments, not desertion. The contrast matters: not every departure is abandonment. Crescens and Titus served elsewhere; Demas fled persecution. Paul's pain is evident—trusted coworker became deserter. Yet there's no bitterness, just sober assessment and warning. Demas stands as cautionary

example throughout church history: those who love this world more than Christ will abandon ship when storms come.

Historical Context

Demas appears in three letters: helpful coworker in Colossians and Philemon, deserter in 2 Timothy. What changed? Persecution intensified. When Christianity meant social acceptance and minimal cost, Demas participated. When it meant imprisonment and execution, he fled. History repeats: nominal Christians abandon faith under persecution. Only those truly born again endure (1 John 2:19). Thessalonica, Demas's destination, was safer than Rome—farther from persecution's center. His story warns against loving this age's comfort, approval, and pleasure more than Christ and eternity.

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. What aspects of 'this present world'—comfort, security, approval, pleasure, success—tempt you toward compromise or desertion when following Christ becomes costly?
2. How can you guard against Demas-like desertion by cultivating deeper love for Christ and eternal realities than temporal pleasures?
3. When facing pressure to abandon biblical convictions or distance yourself from suffering believers, will you remain faithful or follow Demas's path?

Interlinear Text

Δημᾶς	γάρ	με	ἐγκατέλιπεν	ἀγαπήσας	τὸν	νῦν
Demas	For	G3165	hath forsaken	me having loved	G3588	this present
G1214	G1063		G1459	G25		G3568
αἰῶνα	καὶ	ἐπορεύθη	εἰς	Θεσσαλονίκην	Κρήσκης	εἰς
world	and	is departed	to	Thessalonica	Crescens	to
G165	G2532	G4198	G1519	G2332	G2913	G1519
Γαλατίαν	Τίτος	εἰς	Δαλματίαν·			
Galatia	Titus	to	Dalmatia			
G1053	G5103	G1519	G1149			

Additional Cross-References

2 Timothy 1:15 (Parallel theme): This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

Acts 16:6 (Parallel theme): Now when they had gone throughout Phrygia and the region of Galatia, and were forbidden of the Holy Ghost to preach the word in Asia,

2 Corinthians 2:13 (Parallel theme): I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.

Acts 17:1 (Parallel theme): Now when they had passed through Amphipolis and Apollonia, they came to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue of the Jews:

2 Corinthians 7:6 (Parallel theme): Nevertheless God, that comforteth those that are cast down, comforted us by the coming of Titus;

2 Timothy 4:16 (Parallel theme): At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

Philemon 1:24 (Parallel theme): Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.