

Apply The Word

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Message Info

Title:

Stand

Speaker:

Peter Privitera

Date:

December 31, 2023

Scriptures:

2 Timothy 4:9-22

Theme: Stand for the Lord and you will find that you never stand alone.

Introduction: We all recognize and respect the courage that is evident when one man stands against a hostile crowd. In fallen world where compromise with evil is the norm more than the exception, we are encouraged to see someone who does not go along with the tide. Paul evidences such courage and conviction at the very end of his life. Writing from the misery of a Roman dungeon, his final recorded words instruct us in standing firm to the end.

Paul shows us 2 truths in his example:

1. Paul stands to the end

Paul knows he's at the end of his life. He is suffering and death is approaching. He urges Timothy to come soon because he wants to see him before he passes. Yet Paul stands in the midst of all his trials. He does not despair or quit, even though he is in a miserable prison and feels entirely alone. His pain is heightened by two betrayals. Demas, "in love with the world," has abandoned him. A former coworker has given in to the spirit of the age.

2. And he does not stand alone

Paul is also betrayed by Alexander the coppersmith. He is probably the false teacher of 1 Tim 1, who Paul turned over to Satan. Yet even in his weakness and suffering, Paul knows that the Lord is at hand. He writes, "the Lord will repay him according to his deeds." Even when he was deserted at his trial, Paul was not alone. "But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me" (v. 17). In Paul's word and example we see the truth that we are never alone. The Lord is always with his people and he will never fail to do so. Paul also knows that the Lord is at work in the world. His own suffering has not turned him to self-pity. He closes his letter with greetings to his beloved brothers and sisters, and he works to see them strengthened in grace.

Questions:

1. How are you tempted to compromise the truth to: a) avoid pain, or b) gain the world's approval?
2. Who is with you in your fight against evil?
3. What burdens are you entrusting to the Lord in prayer?