

May 25/26, 2024

“Disappointment and Hope”

Pastor Jeff Manion



Beyond the
Weekend

SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2024 Challenge: Finding Jesus in the Old Testament

May: Read the story of David to see how situations and events point to Jesus

Day 1 **2 Timothy 4:9-10 | Don't Give Up**

Do your best to come to me quickly, for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia. 2 Timothy 4:9-10

Demas's departure is a significant loss to Paul. Demas was not just a run-of-the-mill member of Paul's church-planting team. Paul relied on him. In Colossians, Paul describes Demas as a “dear friend” ([Colossians 4:14](#)). But now, this dear friend “deserted” him, a military term that means to abandon your post. This desertion hurts Paul. Abandoned by Demas, Paul becomes isolated in a Roman prison, awaiting a trial that will lead to his execution. Paul grieves the loss of a valuable member of his team. Mr. Reliable became Mr. Unreliable.

It's likely we've experienced a loss like this too. These losses happen all too frequently, and they are always painful. A relationship heading for marriage suddenly ends. Pain-filled notes follow the wedding invitations. A business partner decides he is no longer interested in supporting the business. The operating budget is cut in half. The team's starting shortstop walks away just days before the state tournament. Dreams of a championship are crushed. While these losses hurt, pain doesn't mean we give up on everyone. We grieve, but we also continue to invest in relationships. God created us for relationships, even though some will result in pain and disappointment. We need to keep loving others and investing in the relationships God brings to us.

TODAY: If you're experiencing a Demas-like loss, make sure you grieve the loss. Do not ignore it. One way to grieve is by turning to God in lament. [Lament](#) is an honest and painful prayer that states exactly how we feel and asks God for help. Laments also end with trust. After grieving and lamenting, entrust the relationship to God, knowing that he is in the business of restoration.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 15-16](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus.

Day 2 **2 Timothy 4:11-13 | Relationship Restored**

Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he is helpful to me in my ministry. 2 Timothy 4:11

Paul did not always describe Mark as “helpful” to his ministry. In [Acts 15:36-41](#), Mark abandons Paul and his missionary team, which leads to Paul and Barnabas separating. Barnabas wanted Mark to rejoin them, but Paul wanted nothing to do with someone who walked away from the ministry. The pain of Mark's decision to leave is too much for Paul to overcome. So, Barnabas and Mark go one way, Paul and Silas go another. But now, even after this pain and disappointment, Paul wants Timothy to bring Mark to him. Restoration has occurred. How? Three things happened: time passed, Mark matured, and Paul forgave.

These are three important elements of how God restores a relationship. “Time passed” means that restoration often takes time. We cannot expect restoration to happen quickly. “Mark matured” means that people can, in fact, change. They aren't like they were in high school. They also can't be defined by one careless action or word. “Paul forgave” means the injured party bears the cost and pain of the wrong done. When all three of these are present, restoration has a good chance of success.

TODAY: Is there someone you could pray about reconciling with, someone you may have written off? Open your heart to the possibility of reconciliation through this prayer: “Heavenly Father, I confess my heart has hardened toward _____. Release me from feelings of anger and resentment. Give me eyes that see them as you do. When the time is right, allow my heart to be open to forgiveness and reconciliation. Amen.”

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 17-18](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Note David’s response to the loss of his son who had become his enemy.

Day 3 [2 Timothy 4:14-15](#) | Let God Repay

Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will repay him for what he has done. [2 Timothy 4:14](#)

Alexander the metalworker was more than just against Paul and his message. Somehow, Alexander hurt Paul so painfully that Paul thinks it is necessary to warn Timothy. He tells Timothy to stay away from him and to be “on his guard” whenever he is around. Alexander is one bad dude. Paul doesn’t tell Timothy to take vengeance against him. Instead, he tells Timothy to let God take care of Alexander. Paul’s instruction matches what he says in [Romans 12:19](#), “Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God’s wrath, for it is written [in [Deuteronomy 32:35](#)]: ‘It is mine to avenge; I will repay.’”

There are two things we need to note here. First, there are people we need to stay away from and love from afar because they can be hurtful. Second, we can give these people to the Lord when they hurt us. We don’t have to get even on our own. Taking this posture requires trusting God to handle it. It’s not our problem to fix. It’s God’s job to make sure it is taken care of. Because he is the all-knowing and all-wise God, we can trust he will.

TODAY: Has someone done something to you that you need to release to God? A situation you need to trust God to take care of? Pray a prayer like this one: “Father, I have held on to feelings of vengeance against _____ for too long. I pray for your Spirit to help me turn this situation over to you to have justice done. Amen.”

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 19-20](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus.

Day 4 [2 Timothy 4:16-18](#) | Jesus

At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. [2 Timothy 4:16-17](#)

What Paul describes as his “first defense” is probably a preliminary hearing to his upcoming trial. This hearing, to determine if the charges have merit, saw no one stand beside Paul and speak on his behalf. When the court asks for witnesses, there is complete silence. It’s not just that people are running late; no one is coming. But Paul knows that to stand in defense of someone accused of a capital offense in Rome is risky. As a result, he does not hold their absence against them. Regardless, Paul is not alone. Jesus is there with him, giving him the strength he needs in this perilous situation. He also helps Paul proclaim “the message” of the salvation Jesus offers.

As God was with Paul in this difficult moment, he is with us in ours. God’s promise of “Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you” ([Hebrews 13:5](#)) is as true for us as it was for Paul. In his presence, God does for us what he did for Paul—he gives us the strength to share the good news of Jesus. He helps us show the love of God and share the Jesus message even when life is challenging.

TODAY: Worship with Ada Bible Church’s worship team as they sing “[Great Are You Lord](#).” Use these lyrics, “You bring light to the darkness, You give hope, you restore,” to form the basis of a prayer of gratitude for God’s presence and help in your difficult moments.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 21-22](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Note David’s song and how it may point to Jesus.

Day 5 **2 Timothy 1:6** | Rekindle

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 2 Timothy 1:6

Paul knows his time is short. He believes his trial in Rome will result in his execution. So, Paul reminds Timothy of some important things. Paul wants the church Timothy leads to survive. Timothy is to use his spiritual gift wholeheartedly for the Lord. Using the analogy of stoking a fire, Paul encourages Timothy to stay loyal to the gospel and be mindful of who influences him. He needs to correctly handle and teach God's Word, and share the message of Jesus whether he feels like it or not. Timothy must accept this leadership mantle. If his faith is alive, it will multiply. Paul reminds Timothy that Jesus walks alongside him to sustain and empower him for ministry. He can lead with confidence that God will work through him to transform the lives of others.

These challenges are for us today. We must rekindle our spiritual gift, especially if it has been dormant for a while. The gospel needs to be the center of our lives, and we must recognize how easy it is for other things to take its place. We need to pay attention to the voices we listen to, including the music we hear and the podcasts to which we subscribe. We must also handle God's Word well because it is the foundation for the good news we are to share. All of this is to say that Paul's very personal letter to his understudy contains the encouragement we need today. Our lives, once fanned into flame for Christ, will radiate his love and grace.

TODAY: Re-read the entire letter of [2 Timothy](#), which will take about 12 minutes. Then, revisit a [sermon](#) from the past seven weeks.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 23-24](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider David's last words and recognition of how the Spirit was upon him and how the Spirit descends on Jesus