

Paul's Saddest Words

Introduction:

- A. Paul's words concerning himself were generally happy and upbeat (cf. Phil. 1:12, 18; 3:17; 4:15)
- B. Yet, Paul a few times wrote some things that, to me, are words of sadness:

Discussion:

I. **"I Am Not Meant to Be Called an Apostle" (1 Cor. 15:9)**

- A. Paul was so thankful for God's mercy and forgiveness (1 Tim. 1:12-16)
- B. Yet, he could not forget what he had done in the past – "Persecuted the church of God"
 - 1. He had a part in Stephen's death (Acts 7:58; 22:20)
 - 2. He had made havoc of the church (Acts 8:3; Gal. 1:13)
- C. Salvation does not erase memories and regrets.
 - 1. A reason to remember the Creator in days of youth.
 - 2. A reason to train children early in the right way.
 - 3. A reason not to put off obeying the gospel.

II. **"The More Abundantly I Love You, the less I Am Loved" (2 Cor. 12:15)**

- A. Paul had done so much for the Corinthians.
 - 1. They were saved by his preaching (1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:1-4)
 - 2. Preached gospel to them without charge (1 Cor. 9:18; 2 Cor. 11:8)
- B. Yet, evidently they did not appreciate it (cf. 2 Cor. 11:1-9)
- C. It is so sad when genuine love is not returned.
 - 1. Parents and children
 - 2. Husbands and wives.
 - 3. Friends and Friends
 - 4. God and us (Rom. 5:8)

III. **"No Man Stood with Me." (2 Tim. 4:16)**

- A. Paul was having troubles.
 - 1. Suffered great evil from Alexander (v. 14)
 - 2. Had to defend himself – not physically but verbally (v. 16)
- B. How sad these words: "No man stood with me, but all men forsook me."
 - 1. No Christian should have to bear a burden alone (Gal. 6:2; Rom. 15:1-4)
 - 2. Of course, he not really alone - Lord with him (2 Cor. 4:17)
 - 3. But, he needs support of fellow Christians as well.
- C. Cannot sit in our "ivory tower" and say that is his/her problem.
 - 1. It is true that we should mind our own business (1 Thess. 4:11 NKJ; cf. Prov. 26:17)
 - 2. It is not true that we should never "get involved."
 - a. When we see one doing harm to himself.
 - b. When we see one being harmed by others.
 - c. Sure, there is risk involved, but risk we must take.

Conclusion:

- A. If we had been there, would we have tried to cheer Paul in his time of sadness?
- B. But, we are here when some brother has other sad and trying times - are we there for him?