



WHEN LIFE GETS TOUGH

THEMES: Committed to the Purpose of God

2 Timothy 4:10 -*Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica.*

Jesus described four (4) different responses to the gospel in the Parable of the Four Soils (Mark 4:1-20). Demas was among those represented by the 3rd kind of soil, "*Still others, like seed sown among thorns, hear the word; but the worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful*" (Mark 4:18-19). Demas chose the world and may have lost his place in God's ministry. He left the apostle, Paul, when he was needed. Even more importantly, Demas may have lost his soul.

Our picture of Demas comes from very limited snapshots. He joined Paul sometime before the apostle's first visit to a Roman dungeon. Paul mentions him as a companion in the letters to the Colossians and to Philemon. However, neither his role nor character were described. We are not aware of his personality, talents or strengths. Only the length or difficulty of Paul's second imprisonment uncovered the limit of Demas's commitment. When the going got tough, *he quit*. Demas probably had less trouble and hardship by leaving Paul. But, sadly, Demas didn't finish his mission. Hardship eventually did for Demas....what it does for every believer. It forced him to count the cost to continue. Paul even gives a clue that Demas may have been preoccupied on something, some other place or someone else, more than serving God.

When difficulties come along, our commitment will be tested. The enemy of our soul will present life away from Jesus Christ as a new, easier attraction. Thankfully, there is instruction to keep us on the right path. In **Deuteronomy 10:12 (NKJV)**, the Lord instructed, "*And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul...*"

-What would you Gain by Quitting? More importantly, think of all you will Lose...if you Quit now. A quitter only has wasted effort, wasted time and abandoned relationships to show for their

trouble. So, don't give up now. Don't stop pursuing your dream. Do not give up on your relationship. And, Don't Ever Give Up on God. Your Heavenly Father is cheering you on! The Bible reveals that he's walking with you...every step of the way. God's leading you (Psalms 23:2-3); The Lord is instructing and comforting you on each side (Psalms 23:4); Your God is anointing your head from above (Psalms 23: 5); and God's following you with goodness and mercy....all the days of your life (Psalms 23:6). *The going will get tough; don't quit. It will get better and you will finish your mission for God.*

TWO CHALLENGES TO THE CHILD OF GOD:

- 1) Not to Allow Anything or Anyone to Distract you from the High Calling God has on your Life.
- 2) Not to Allow Trials or Tests to bring Bitterness and Resentment against God or toward Family.

Notice you can *allow* these things.....or keep your eyes lifted to your Savior.

DO YOU WANT TO GO DEEPER?

REFLECTION/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: In a hard situation, how do you typically react? (Calm, Emotional, Thoughtful, Intense, Active?) Have you felt like quitting something that really matters in your life? Has God ever failed you? Think of a difficult season God brought you through in the past. Aren't you glad that you didn't quit?

PRAY: *Lord, in every season, let me Fear You, Walk in all Your Ways, Love You, and Serve You with all My Heart.*

MORE SCRIPTURES: II Corinthians 4:8; II Timothy 2:1-4; Proverbs 13:15; Ruth 1:16

You Will Not Quit...You are Committed to the Cause