

Often Overlooked Biblical Heroes and Zeroes

Demas: Defector Under Fire

1: What We Know about Demas

He is Commended by Paul during the 1st Roman Imprisonment (Summer 60-Summer 62AD)

- Luke the beloved physician sends you his greetings and also Demas. Col 4:14
- Epaphras, my fellow prisoner in Christ Jesus, greets you, *as do* Mark, Aristarchus, Demas and Luke, my fellow workers. Philemon v23-24

He is Censured by Paul Before His Execution in Rome (Fall 67AD...Winter 68AD)

- For Demas, having loved this present world has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica, Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 2 Timothy 4:10
- **DEMAS**, one of Paul's travelling companions and a friend of Luke (*Col. 4:14; Philem. 24*). ...later when Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he wrote to Timothy that Demas had deserted him (*2 Tim. 4:10* materialism was as much a draw for the early Christians as it is for many today. **New Intern'l Ency of Bible Characters**

2: What Christians Think We Know about Demas

View 1: "Believers" who defect and never return to the Lord were never really believers

View 2: Believers who defect and never return to the Lord lose their salvation

View 3: Believers who defect and never return to the Lord MAY have been professors and not possessors, but if they had truly trusted Christ/received eternal life...while they retain their spiritual connection to the Lord (Psalm 73), they will suffer discipline "the sin unto death" on earth. (1 Cor 11:30; 1 Jn 5; 1 Cor 3:14-15; the Exodus Generation)

3: What We Don't Know about Demas

He could have been a Judas...but he could have been a Prodigal Son, we simply do not have enough information to be dogmatic about him/this situation. Beyond that, let's commit not to major on minor matters in the Scripture but instead to focus the vast majority of our time/attention so as to major on the major matters (doctrinally/morally).

Take This To Heart

1: In light of our limited knowledge (as any good engineer will tell you "incomplete data can lead to crummy conclusions") about the "rest of the story" in this case, I suggest we remember the principle of 1 Corinthians 4:5 as we think about folks like Demas. We must remember that only God knows their/our hearts!

Also, we should be sobered by the fact that if human observers saw any of us (or in the case of Demas read about any of us) at our absolute worst moment(s) it would be hard to them to think we were believers. Think of Peter publicly denying Christ and cussing about it or 99% of the Exodus Generation refusing to take the Promised Land?!? The Point: real believers can experience really ginormous spiritual failures (David and Mark).

2: While it is easy to take on the mantle of self-appointed spiritual fruit inspectors and obsess over the spiritual status of other people who are involved in spiritual train wrecks...each of us are responsible under God to be (in thought, word and deed) our own #1 spiritual science project (which is a 24/7 assignment). As many have said over the years (including Paul McCartney in his song "Everybody Out There") there but for the grace of God goes I...

"Let him who thinks he stands, take heed lest he fall." 1 Corinthians 10:12