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### Paul's Farewell Message to the Ephesians

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## PAUL'S FAREWELL MESSAGE TO THE EPHESIANS

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS  
NUMBER 81  
EPHESIANS 6:21-24

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EPHESIANS 6:21-24 "But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts. Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

We are most often impressed by smart people and by people who have great ability and personality and know-how. Too often we discount the plodder, and we too often fail to appreciate the not-too-talented person who stays with the job and keeps plodding on. Daily plodding just doesn't appeal to too many people. But let us remember that it takes stability of character to keep on keeping on. It is not the smart person, the brilliant person, the one who can get things done the easy way that Paul mentions here in this closing paragraph of the Ephesian letter

### The Rabbit and the Tortoise

This is the story of the rabbit and the tortoise all over again. The rabbit had great speed but no determination, no plodding. But the plodding tortoise, to the amazement of everybody, crossed the line to win the race. The rabbit stood back and laughed at the short legs and the short steps taken by the tortoise. The rabbit loped off, but along the way got involved with other things and all the time the tortoise kept on plodding. I think, therefore, it is good that we end the book of Ephesians with an emphasis on faithfulness. Quite often a smart talented person falls before pride and before self-sufficiency. The plodding type, the faithful type, is the one on whom the Lord can depend

### The Failure of the Wise and the Self-Sufficient

Before we study this passage here, I think we ought to bring in another paragraph from the pen of Paul. To the Corinthians Paul had a great deal to say on this subject of faithfulness and stability. Look how he brings out this idea in these verses.

1 CORINTHIANS 1:26-29 "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence."

Now this is the way grace operates. Grace and pride cannot co-exist. Faithfulness is a gem and is too often overlooked in our emphasis on brilliance and native ability.

EPHESIANS 6:21 "But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:" This word "but" should be translated "now" or "in order that." "In order that you might come to know." The word "know" is a perfect, active, subjunctive of "oida" and it means to have the facts so you can know clearly what is going on. The words

here translated "my affairs" come from "ta kateme" and means "the thing pertaining to me" and is an idiom for one's circumstances. Then Paul adds "and how I do." This word "do" is a present, active, indicative of "prasso" and this is the word for plodding. Paul just kept on keeping on. Paul was on a chain, imprisoned in Rome, and yet he never gave up, never quit. Probably, as we look back on his long and amazing career, these letters he wrote while in prison were the crowning achievement of his life.

Tychicus was the bearer of this message. He was a member of Paul's team. We read this same thing in another passage.

COLOSSIANS 4:7-8 "All my state shall Tychicus declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister and fellowservant in the Lord: Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your estate, and comfort your hearts;"  
Tychicus was first associated with Paul on his third missionary journey

ACTS 20:4 "And there accompanied him into Asia Sopater of Berea; and of the Thessalonians, Aristarchus and Secundus; and Gaius of Derbe, and Timotheus; and of Asia, Tychicus and Trophimus."  
Naturally he was the one to take this letter for he lived in that area. He visited Paul while he was in his Roman imprisonment and is now going to carry these letters (Ephesians and Colossians) to those to whom Paul wrote. Later on Paul will send Tychicus to Crete and later on to Ephesus to bolster up Timothy who seemed to be in some kind of conflict with the WMU leaders of that church.

So the message of Paul here is this--"Whatever it takes, keep plugging along. Master it, no matter what it takes." This is a lesson we all need to learn for success in our daily living. When we play, play hard. When we work, work hard. Never tackle anything unless you expect to give it your best. If you undertake anything, stay with it until it is done.

#### Something For All Of Us

So here is a lesson for all of us. When once you undertake a task, then see it through to the finish. Self-discipline and plugging is the task of every Christian. We all take off our hats and admire the man who will not give up, even when the odds seem to be all against him. Don't listen to what others may say, just keep plodding on day after day. Stay with the Word of God and keep plugging on at the task. Paul called Tychicus a "beloved brother." This is a term meaning one who is worthy of confidence. This term does not connote emotional love but is a friendship built on admiration and respect. Then Paul said "kai pistos diakonos." It means "and also, even a faithful servant."

#### Please Notice This Amazing Word "Diakonos"

##### 1. A political connotation

Sometimes "diakonos" is used in a political sense. In these instances it is translated "ruler." It says "For the ruler of the state (diakonos) is of God. He does not carry the sword for nothing. In this sense diakonos means authority.

ROMANS 13:3-4 "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil."

2. A universal application to Christians.

Sometimes this word diakonos is used for every believer. It refers to our task as Christian servants.

2 CORINTHIANS 3:6 "Who also hath made us able ministers of the new testament; not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter, killeth, but the spirit giveth life.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:1 "Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not;"

3. This word has an administrative sense.

It refers to an administrator in a local church and it is always the masculine gender. There is no scriptural authority for deaconess.

4. The Pastor is a Deacon.

This means he is the servant of the congregation. He is a spiritual waiter and he serves spiritual food to the congregation.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:5 "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?"

EPHESIANS 3:7 "Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power."

COLOSSIANS 1:7 "As ye also learned of Epaphras our dear fellow-servant, who is for you a faithful minister of Christ;"

COLOSSIANS 1:23 "If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;"

5. Then there is an evil use of the word.

The devil always has his counterfeit to everything God does.

The devil has his "diakonos."

2 CORINTHIANS 11:13-15 "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

So Paul here called Tychicus a faithful deacon or a faithful servant.

Why Should One Plod Along?

1. Self-discipline is the key for capacity for life.

2. Everything the believer does, he should try to master it. Never give up.

3. Stability in life is more precious than silver or gold.

Plodding is compatible with grace. They go together. We plod along, knowing all the time that we can't do it by ourselves, then grace moves in and we do it by the help of God. Let us all remember the success in this church is not what I do or what you do, but it is what OUR GOD DOES. Now that's grace! God doesn't call his servants because they are smart or because they have good personalities. God requires faithfulness and he always rewards the plodder, the faithful servant. Plodding eliminated the weak and the unfaithful. A faithful minister will produce a faithful congregation.

#### My Own Experience

When I began a technical careful teaching and preaching program in this church seven or eight years ago, some thought that this would bring chaos in the church. But the opposite happened. For the first time in my ministerial life, I became a disciplined student. I confess it has meant plodding, day after day and week after week. I am not exaggerating when I say it has "kept my nose to the biblical grindstone." But it has added a new interest to our program and has caused thousands to look more closely at the plain teaching of the Word of God. I want to publically confess that it is a work of the grace of God.

Paul goes on to say "shall make known" and this is a future, active, indicative of "gnorizo" and this refers to careful and accurate teaching that Tychicus will do when he arrives.

So this verse should read, "Now, in order that you might come to know about my circumstances, what I am doing, Tychicus, and esteemed member of the royal family and faithful minister will make all these things known unto you."

Principle Faithfulness and stability go together. God only uses the faithful type. So, whatever you begin, stay with it. Keep on keeping on.

EPHESIANS 6:22 "Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts." "Whom I have sent" and this is an aorist, active, indicative of "pempo." This verb means that Paul had sent Tychicus because he was reliable and faithful. He was a plodder and he knew the plodding of grace. So Tychicus made the trip and carried these letters to their destination. "Unto you" is from "pros su" and means face to face with you. In other words, Tychicus would make them a face to face visit and give them a personal report about Paul and his Roman imprisonment. Paul wanted them to have accurate knowledge and Tychicus will take to them facts and doctrinal teaching. "The things concerning us" is from "periergos" and is a greek idiom for circumstances. So this verse says, "Whom I have sent face to face with you for this same purpose that you might know our circumstances and that he might encourage your hearts."

EPHESIANS 6:23-24 "Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen." This word "peace" is from the greek word "eirene" and it means prosperity, both spiritual and material. "Love with faith" and it means doctrine that is balanced with love.

Please notice that Paul says this wish is from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, but the Holy Spirit is omitted. The reason for this is explained in this verse of scripture.

JOHN 16:14 "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

The purpose of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ. So verse 23 says, "Prosperity, both spiritual and material, to those members of the royal family, who are super grace believers, and love with doctrine resident in the soul from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

The last verse says that all of this is possible because of grace.

#### The Conclusion

We have come a long journey through Ephesians. This is the 81st lesson I have presented to you from this book. Theologians and those who study the Bible diligently say that this is the supreme gift of Paul to the world. If this is all Paul had ever written, it would have put him among the great men of all time.

Paul was soon to leave that Roman imprisonment and was set free for a while. He traveled extensively, preaching and writing. But before too many years he was back in Rome, a prisoner again. The wicked Roman Empire could not tolerate the likes of Paul. And before they led him out on the Appian Way and severed his head, he would write in 2 Timothy 4:6-8 these amazing lines. 2 TIMOTHY 4:6-8 "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Thank God for the Apostle Paul!