

—Sermon Notes for September 19 2021 —

Ken Gennicks preaching

“THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO PAUL:  
‘Losing Interest in My Relationship with Christ’”  
(Philemon 24; Col. 4:14; 2 Tim. 4:10; Rev. 2:4)

INTRODUCTION

Our 2021 Bible study is *The Gospel According to Paul*, from Acts 8-28 and Paul’s letters: *Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, and maybe *Hebrews*. Today’s Bible study illustrates how one of Paul’s valued, Christian workers lost interest in his relationship with Christ and gradually wandered away from the faith:

I. Demas’ sad story in three verses

- A. Philemon 24: Paul’s valuable partner
- B. Colossians 4:14: Something has changed
- C. 2 Timothy 4:10: Demas has deserted

II. Signs of slipping spiritually

- A. A loss in my relationship with Jesus (Judges 16:20)
- B. Exchange of enthusiasm/commitment for lukewarmness (Re. 2:4; Heb. 2:1)
- C. A critical spirit in my view of others (Rom. 12:3)

III. The solution: spiritual growth and progress

- A. Hebrews 5:11: Careless people
- B. Heb. 5:12-13: Childish people
- C. Hebrews 5:14: Consecrated people

CONCLUSION

Few of us rebel and walk away suddenly from God’s presence. We just gradually lose interest, fade away, pursue something else. The Good News is when we wander away, Jesus, the *Good Shepherd*, comes seeking us once more!

## —Applying Today's Sermon to Your Life—

1. Our 2021 Bible study is *The Gospel According to Paul*, from the life and letters of the Apostle Paul in the New Testament. Our *Verse-of-the-Week* today is I Corinthians 10:12, *So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall*. How does this verse relate to the man, Demas, in today's Bible study?
2. Today's Bible study is about Paul's valued partner in the Gospel work, a man named Demas. Read the three times Demas is mentioned in the Bible: Philemon 24, Colossians 4:14, and 2 Timothy 4:10. What do you suppose happened?
3. After today's Bible study answer the following as True or False:
  - T F If Demas turned his back on Christ, his earlier faith had to be a sham.
  - T F I recognize the warning signs of growing lukewarm in my faith.
  - T F I once enjoyed spiritual enthusiasm that I've now lost.
  - T F Few people have it all together as well as me.
  - T F I recognize the possibility of my faith growing sour and lukewarm.
  - T F I'm impatient with people because they are so careless and childish.
  - T F I'm making every effort to stay vigilant and active in my faith.
  - T F My first priority in life is to walk closely with the Lord each day.
  - T F Finishing the Christian life well is just as important as how you start.
4. Ups and downs are a normal part of the Christian life in this world, so we shouldn't beat ourselves up about it. But what steps can you take to enjoy a more consistent Christian walk?
5. Read Hebrews 5:1-4. If these verses speak of three groups, careless people, childish people, and consecrated people, in which group would God most likely consider you? Why?
6. How can we help believers become more grounded in the faith, and keep them from losing interest and drifting away? How can the church do a better job? How will you help personally?
7. What other pursuits compete for your top devotion, for your first love? Why is helpful to know this and remember it? Ask God to show you any signs that you may be slipping spiritually. If the best defense is a good offense, what actions will you take now to avoid following the path of Demas?
8. Imagine living today without faith, without knowing Jesus, without knowing how to pray, and without a supportive church family. Now think about your neighbors, your coworkers, your relatives, your classmates, your friends, and people in your circle of acquaintance. Who needs your faith, your Jesus, your prayers, your church family? Will you ask Jesus to make His appeal to them through you?
9. I will put today's Bible study into action now by: