

Onesiphorus, A Friend Indeed

Onesiphorus (help-bringer)

2 Timothy 1

I. Context, 15-16

15: widespread apostasy

- **Persecutions:** Nero, the madman
- **Defections:** Asia (Ephesus)
- **Phygellus and Hermogenes**
 - Ringleaders?
 - Run away at Paul's arrest?
 - Forsake him in prison?
 - Refuse to testify for him at trial?
- **Onesiphorus:** one exception; showed mercy to Paul – not ashamed (v.8, 12, 16)

I. Context, 15-16

II. Concern, 16, 18

16a: Paul asks for mercy for house (family) of Onesiphorus

- Did he appear at Paul's defense only to be arrested...?
- Was he still in Rome (separated from family)?
- Was he dead?

We don't know

18: did Paul pray for the dead?

- **Roman Catholic position** (2 Maccabees 12:44-45) ... uninspired; about 100 B.C.

Things to consider

1. How can this authorize praying for dead? We don't know that he was dead.
2. Paul does not utter a prayer; he expresses a hope. Cf. 1:2. (1 Co.1:16)
3. Where are instructions for such prayers?
4. The dead with Christ need no prayers.
5. Those who die lost, stay lost. Lk.16
6. Paul wished eternal blessings on the living.

I. Context, 15-16

II. Concern, 16, 18

III. Character, 16-18

Onesipheros, a friend indeed

16: a true friend, Pr.18:24. Mk.10:29-30.

16: moved by love, not fear. Gal.6:1

16: refreshing(16). Mt.20:26-28

16: not ashamed. Mt.21.

17: sought Paul zealously... Ct. Ac.28:30

17: self-motivated

17: just being himself (climax to life of loyalty;
willing to serve (18))

Conclusion

1. The point? Timothy: be an Ones. Mt.25:36.
2. Sacrificial service is always rewarded.
3. Paul *encourages* Timothy with one example, *warns* him with others. 1 Tim.4:12; 1 Pt.2:21.
4. Onesiphorous risked own life for Paul.
5. Paul could never repay him for his kindness.
6. 4:19, a memorial. Mt.5:16; Ph.2:15.
7. Like Onesiphorous, Christians need not fear the Neros of this world.