

Warrington
9/30/12

" I Am Persuaded"

Scripture Lesson: - II Timothy 1:

Text: - II Timothy 1: 12. "For I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day%

Introduction: - These words were spoken by a man who was a prisoner, locked up in a dingy jail. He is far away from friends, who were scattered over many lands, friends to whom he had preached the gospel. He is reflecting over the past years. He sees himself before he preached the gospel. He sees himself as the persecutor of the church. Then he sees the many journeys he made as a missionary, the cities, town and countryside where he preached the gospel, and he concludes that the years he spent with the gospel of Christ, were the best.

Let us look at the Scripture before us. "Which I have committed unto him against that day". The apostle Paul had deposited his soul, his body, and his future into the hands of Christ, his Redeemer. I think that he committed his time into the hands of Christ. Time has an infinite value. There should be time to eat, time to sleep, time to rest, and time to serve him. There should be time to pray to our Lord. Paul speaks of "Redeeming the time, because the days are evil". Time is short, when we consider that we are passing this way but once. Time is short also, when compared to the greatness of the task.

We should commit our bodies unto the Lord. We need strong bodies to render efficient service unto the Lord and to our fellow men. Then, our money should be committed unto the Lord. We should not overlook the importance of giving the Lord our mind, for our best thinking should be dedicated unto the Lord. Truly, our souls should be committed unto the Lord. Our soul should be in all we do. It should be more than lip service, it should be from the heart. Duty performed with no soul in it, is dry and uninteresting.

The great Apostle had deposited his all in the hands of the Master, but what was the basis of his persuasion? He declares that it was the one "in whom he had believed". Quite often we are forced to say, "I did not know the man whom I trusted". There are two ways in which we may know a person. Sometimes we can know a person through others. Then we can know a person by being personally introduced to him. There is a vast difference between the two ways of knowing a person. Paul knew Jesus personally. He had met him fact to face, he had heard his words of instruction, and he had received his sight again, when he had obeyed His words.

II.

How did the Apostle Paul come to know Jesus? I think he came into possession of this knowledge through the Scriptures. Every book of the Bible gives us a picture of Him. He is reflected on every page of the word of God.

Paul has a personal acquaintance with Jesus, "who appeared unto him in the way". Jesus appeared unto Paul, the last of all. Yes, he saved Him from all his sins. Paul knew Jesus when the furious mobs gathered around him, when the stones fell about him, and in prison, when the cold dark prison chilled him to the bone. He knew Jesus far out at sea, when the wild elements of nature drove him and his companions to shipwreck on the island of Malta.

He knew. "I know whom I have believed". He knew the peace of God through the Lord Jesus Christ. He had the assurance that he was a new creature in the Lord; he knew that old things had passed away, and that all things had become new. He knew that the Holy Spirit has come into his life. In the midst of this knowledge, the Apostle says, "I have believed". The marginal reading is "trusting". Of course, believing is trusting, and trusting is believing. The little boy has it right when he said, "I believe in my daddy".

III.

What were the expectations of this persuasion?

The Apostle says, "I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." Paul often used the word "Persuaded". The word, persuaded, refers to one's faith. It literally means, "It is settled, I am fixed, I have reached a final conclusion. He is able to keep us in time of temptation. Temptations may sweep in upon us, our soul may be assailed by the cohorts of hell, but he will keep us. No blast from Satan can destroy us. No lurking temptation from the regions of darkness can sink us, we are kept by the power of God through faith."

He will keep us through the misunderstandings of life. Life is filled with cruel misunderstandings and disappointments. Every person who walks the ways of life will meet the misunderstandings and disappointments. Sometimes friends misunderstand us. Our enemies are glad when they see something to make a misunderstanding of. But we need not be afraid. He will not slumber or sleep. And when we come to the end of the way, our Lord will not fail us then. He kept Paul when he came to the end of life's way, and will keep you.

IV.

Paul is reviewing the past. He says, "I have fought a good fight; I have kept the faith; I have finished my course: 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 of them also that love his appearing". As he looks toward the future, his eyes brighten, his bosom heaves, his heart expands, his hope enlarges, earth recedes, his surroundings are transformed, Christ appears, the executioners ax is welcomed as the key that opens Paradise, and Paul, the aged one sweeps through to wear a crown of righteousness.

It seems the Apostle underscored the words, "He is able". He is expressing the ability of God in the highest terms. True, Christ has the power to keep us in all the trying experiences of life. He is the one who is able to set to music all the discords of earth. He is able to heal our bodies, to

raise the dead, to undergird the faltering, to give grace to the tempted, and to comfort the dying. He will not fail us. Oh, let us cash in on his mighty power. We can have it for the asking. This power will strengthen our weakness, bolster our faithfulness, direct our faltering feet, and bring us out victoriously.

Conclusion:- The Apostle's committal carries him beyond this life. He says, "Against that day". He believed this keeping was for all eternity. This keeping will enable the Christian to stand before God at the last day. Without his power and grace we are not safe for one moment, but with his strong hand to lead, we can overcome temptations, wade through every misunderstanding, overcome the waters of death, and swing onward and upward forever. He will not desert us while living, nor forsake us when dying, nor forsake us in the day of judgment. He is available for the living, and will not forsake the dying, and will stand by us in that eternal day when men shall be judged. Paul had committed his all to him forever.

He is my choice for the present. He is my hope for tomorrow. How about you? Is he yours? You say, I hope to make him my choice. But not yet. There is still time. You do not have one minute of time. "Behold now is the accepted time, now is the day of salvation". Will you take him this morning? Will you come to this altar of prayer while we sing?