

Order of Worship

Announcements

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Scripture

Lord's Supper

Contribution

Sermon

Closing Prayer



Sunday Morning

Bible Classes 9 a.m.

Worship 10 a.m.

Sunday Evening

Worship 5:30 p.m.

Wednesday Evening

Bible Classes 7 p.m.



New York Avenue CHURCH OF CHRIST

May 24, 2026

The Devil Never Quits

When Paul wrote 2 Timothy, he was in a Roman prison and knew he would not leave alive. (4:6) He writes to Timothy, his long-time ministry companion and mentee. Paul is passing the torch. Paul wants very much for Timothy to come to him (4:9). Except for Luke, all his other companions have left him for various reasons. (4:10, 11) It appears that when Paul was arrested somewhere in Asia (Minor), the brethren abandoned him including two seemingly well-known brothers, Phygelus and Hermogenes. (1:15) In other words, for the most part, in his darkest moments Paul is alone. Can you imagine?

We can understand Paul being abandoned by non-Christians. To them, he had been the source of constant trouble. You can go through various synagogues visited by Paul on his missionary journeys and find members who would grumble and complain about Paul. You could also find a lot of local civic and pagan religious leaders and Roman officials who would not have nice things to say about him either. They remember dealing with the popular unrest and even riots in Paul's wake.

Sadly, Paul also had his share of bad press among the brethren. Jewish brethren, saved, but still committed to a Jewish lifestyle accused Paul of not teaching the "entire" gospel. (He left out circumcision and keeping the Law of Moses – just read Galatians!) So, he was attacked doctrinally. That's bad enough, but Paul also had to endure brethren attacking him personally. Just reading through Galatians and 2 Corinthians (and even parts of Romans), you find brethren were imputing bad motives to Paul, accusing him of hypocrisy and duplicity (being one way with Gentiles and one way with Jews, as one example), of pretending to be a "tough guy" in his letters but being weak in person, to just name a few things.

Paul had to remind and warn Timothy of these things as well. (2 Timothy 3:1-9)

You know, Jesus offered the solution to these things.

"23 So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, 24 leave your gift there before the altar and go. First be reconciled to your brother, and then come and offer your gift." (Matthew 5:23, 24 (ESV))

"15 "If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church. And if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector." (Matthew 18:15-18 (ESV))

Jesus wanted brethren to love one another (John 13:34, 35). One of the ways we show love when we have a problem with a brother is to do what Jesus said: go to the brother and talk to him about it. Work toward being reconciled and only bring in others when you can't solve the problem between yourselves.

Now think about this: when a brother resorts to gossip, slander, fault-finding, and consistent negative criticism of his brother – all without ever talking to the brother about the "problem"! – what is that brother trying to accomplish? Is he trying to establish his superiority? his 'greater knowledge'? his 'greater' righteousness? Those things were exactly what motivated many of Paul's critics. They certainly weren't obeying Jesus and seeking reconciliation! Instead, they were seeking a following through sowing discord. They themselves now become subject to censure: "10 As for a person who stirs up division, after warning him once and then twice, have nothing more to do with him, 11 knowing that such a person is warped and sinful; he is self-condemned." (Titus 3:10, 11 (ESV))

Yet we see this continue to happen in the church – among brethren who know all these scriptures! - and still continue to ignore them. What does that mean? Their hearts are hardened.

Brethren, instead let us have this heart towards one another: "... walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Ephesians 4:1-3 (ESV)) ~ Terry

Daily Bible Reading



How, then, can they call on the one they have not believed in? And how can they believe in the one whom they have not heard? And how can they hear without someone preaching to them?

~ Romans 10:14 NKJV