

## **Come Before Winter**

The apostle Paul was in a Roman prison when he wrote the letter of Second Timothy to his “son in the faith,” Timothy. This is the last recorded letter Paul ever wrote. In 2 Timothy 4:9, 21, there are two statements made by Paul that greatly encouraged the younger evangelist to make every effort possible to come see him before it was too late. Paul wrote, “be diligent to come to me quickly” (v. 9) and “Do your utmost to come before winter...” (v. 12). There are two reasons implied in these statements for Timothy to make every effort to go to Paul as soon as possible. One is that winter would not be the time to travel by boat. The wintry storms made it very dangerous to travel on the seas. Paul had experienced shipwreck during that season of the year (Acts 27). No doubt, the most important reason for Timothy to make haste to come to him as quickly as possible is found in the words of Paul in verses 6-8. “For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand.” Should Timothy tarry too long, it would be too late to see Paul alive for his “departure” was at hand, that, his death was imminent.

In life, there are words we need to express and actions we should take before it is too late, that is, we should do them before “winter” comes. Husbands and wives should express daily their love for one another. There is always the possibility of a heart attack, a stroke or an accident that could take the life of your mate. The last words spoken to your husband or wife could be, “I love you.”

Parents need to express their love to their children, regardless of their age. They need to know you care for them, not only by the physical and material things you give them, but a hug and an “I love you” will give assurance to them that you really do love them. As a Christian, you desire that they live for Jesus Christ so the family can be together with God in eternity.

Children need to express their love and appreciation to their parents as well. They should respect and honor their parents (Ephesians 6:1-2). Aged parents, especially, desire to hear from their adult children who live long distances from them. Siblings should stay in contact with one another. Efforts should be made to be together when possible. It is very difficult to give up a brother or a sister to death.

Wishing that you had expressed your love and care for one another after death has separated you from a loved one is of no avail. That is why you need to do it before “winter” comes; otherwise, it will be too late. Also, brothers and sisters in Christ should express their love to one another. We are “children of God by faith in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26). We are to love one another as Christ has loved us (John 14:12). We are the family of God.

Those who have not given their lives to Christ and who have not obeyed the Gospel (Romans 1:16; Acts 2:36-38) should no longer tarry because “winter” (death) might overtake them (Hebrews 9:27), and they would pass into eternity without God. “Winter” (death) is coming to us all. Now is the time for us to express our heartfelt feelings to our loved ones, and it is time to do what we can to help others while we have the time and opportunity (John 9:4; Galatians 6:10).

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