

## 2 Timothy 1:15-18

### The Fickle & The Faithful

*Friends may fail me ...*

#### I. Paul's Companions

A. Supporters

B. Deserters

#### II. Jesus' Sympathy

A. Assisted

B. Abandoned

#### III. Our Experience

A. Processing Loss

B. Appreciating Friendship

*... He my Savior makes me whole.*

### **Children, Listen ...**

1. Paul had some good friends. But what did he say about some people he used to work with in Asia?

2. Why was Paul thankful for his friend Onesiphorus?

3. Can you name three things good Christian friends do for each other?

## Friends, Failures, and Forgiveness

True, faithful friendship is something to be cherished. But sadly, some relationships that were once valuable can come to an end, sometimes abruptly. Paul had many companions and comrades in the ministry. Many remained committed to him and the ministry to the end, others were separated from him by providential circumstances. There were others who simply abandoned him entirely. The apostle had to do his best to process such experiences in a godly fashion. Timothy needed to be aware of what Paul experienced, and if he hadn't already experienced it firsthand himself, he very likely would in time. Such is the nature of ministry, and alas, such is the way of life sometimes. We should be truly thankful for steady friends. But on the flip side, it is hard to process companions turning their backs on us, abandoning friendship, and fellowship. Jesus can sympathize with us as He dealt with this issue in an extreme manner. True, he had supporters, but when it came to the passion, he was left to Himself – He even felt forsaken by the Father. After the resurrection He graciously restored some who forsook Him, while others simply could not be reconciled. But here is food for thought: even on the cross our Savior uttered the astounding words, "Father forgive them, for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34.