

(23) Crescens

Moving on we find that the twenty-third person in our list of thirty-four people mentioned by name in Paul's last three epistles is **Crescens**, who is also found mentioned in 2 TIMOTHY 4:10 *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.* The question arises, have we heard or studied about **Crescens** before in this study, and the answer is no, for this scripture is the only mention of **Crescens** in scripture. **Crescens** name means: "growing." 2 PETER 3:18 tells us: *But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* With the little information we have on **Crescens**, and the meaning of his name, we must assume that **Crescens** did grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ through the ministry of the Apostle Paul. Where **Crescens** came from, or when he first met the Apostle Paul we are not told in scripture. Perhaps he was from Galatia, and if so, perhaps he was well acquainted with **Timothy**, and possibly even knew **Timothy's** mother **Eunice**, and grandmother **Lois**. Whether **Crescens** knew **Timothy's** family, or not, he certainly knew **Timothy**, and **Timothy** knew **Crescens**, otherwise Paul would not have mentioned **Crescens'** name to **Timothy** in the first place. From our text here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:10 we find that **Crescens** departed from Paul here at Rome, and went unto Galatia. Please don't make the assumption that **Crescens** forsook Paul like **Demas** did.

Our text does not indicate that **Crescens** forsook Paul at all, but rather departed unto Galatia. Since **Timothy** was from the region of Galatia, he would be most interested in learning that **Crescens** had set a course for Galatia. No doubt **Timothy** received this as good news, though sad news too. Sad that **Crescens** had left Paul at this time in Rome, but glad that someone was headed for Galatia who could help them too ...*grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.* Perhaps these three, Paul, and **Timothy**, and **Crescens** at one time had prayed together for the Saints in Galatia, requesting that the Lord send someone their way who could help them further learn the gospel message of Paul, and reinforce the doctrinal principles Paul had already taught them, and wrote them about. Recall what Paul wrote in GALATIANS 3:1 *O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth, ...* . Do you think Paul prayed for the Galatians? Of course he did, and he did so daily, and he did so constantly. God didn't send him to that region back in ACTS 14 to do a fundraiser, but rather to preach the gospel message that was given him. **Timothy** was a product of that missionary journey, added to Paul's ministry later in ACTS 16. Several years after that time in his life Paul wrote these words concerning what was constantly on his heart and mind in 2 CORINTHIANS 11:28 *Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.* To the Saints at Colosse Paul wrote in COLOSSIANS 1:3 *We give thanks to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you.* To the Ephesians Paul wrote how to pray, and who to pray for in EPHESIANS 6:18, which reads: *Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints.* Let's go back and review a prayer recorded of Paul found in EPHESIANS 3. EPHESIANS 3:14 *For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. 20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.* This prayer even reaches down to you and me, so obviously Paul prayed constantly for the churches of Galatia, just as much as he prayed for all of the other Christian churches everywhere. So when we read 2 TIMOTHY 4:10 *For Demas hath*

forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia... we can not only think of this as information written unto **Timothy**, but as also a prayer request for **Demas**, and those of Thessalonica, and **Crescens**, and those of Galatia, and **Titus**, and those of Dalmatia. Certainly **Timothy** must have thought of Paul's words this way.

So back to our thoughts on this Brother in the Lord named **Crescens**, whom we know nothing else about than what we read of him in 2 TIMOTHY 4:10, what should we think of him? Obviously Paul thought enough of **Crescens** to mention him to **Timothy** in a prayer request fashion. **Timothy** wasn't warned of **Crescens** by Paul, but rather was better informed about him. Instead of forming a negative opinion on **Crescens**, whose name again means "growing," look on him as Paul did, who requested prayer for him in his endeavor to spread the gospel to those of Galatia. There may have been feelings of disappointment from Paul as **Crescens** left Paul in Rome, but on the other hand Paul knew **Crescens** was also in the tender loving care of the Lord. So Paul prayed for him as **Crescens** departed for Galatia knowing that he certainly needed it. Recall what Paul wrote in 1 CORINTHIANS 3. 1 CORINTHIANS 3:5 *Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? 6 I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. 7 So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase.* Think of it this way concerning **Crescens**; some twenty years have passed since Paul and Barnabas first visited the region of Galatia. The churches they had established at that time had seen many come and go through these twenty years. Paul had probably himself visited these very same churches on at least three different occasions as he made his missionary journeys. Paul had written them an epistle called GALATIANS in the mean time. Perhaps some of the other Apostles, such as Barnabas and Apollos and Timothy, had visited the churches of Galatia during the last twenty years too. Perhaps **Crescens** had followed Paul as a result of any one of these visits. It was God's business to send someone their way; someone who could help them, and encourage them with the gospel message of Paul. **Crescens** must have felt this calling on his life, since it is God that gives the increase, we leave it with the Lord as to what happened to **Crescens**, and those of Galatia as a result of his ministry. Irregardless the fact remains, it is *...God that giveth the increase...* 1 CORINTHIANS 3:7.

2 TIMOTHY 4:10 *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.* Let's once again consider **Titus**. Recall that **Titus** was the seventh person on our list of thirty-four people whom Paul mentioned by name in his last three epistles. The epistle to TITUS was written prior to Paul writing **Timothy** his last letter. This means that **Titus** name here in 2 TIMOTHY 4:10 is the final time Paul writes his name. Paul's last instructions that we read to **Titus** were written in TITUS 3. TITUS 3:12 *When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter. 13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.* Paul's thinking at the time he wrote this to **Titus** was that he would spend the winter in Nicopolis, and perhaps he did. Somewhere along the way Paul once again was arrested, and sent to Rome. Two men mentioned in this text of TITUS 3:12 & 13 are also found mentioned in 2 TIMOTHY 4, **Titus** (verse 10) and **Tychicus** (verse 12). And Paul specifically naming them here in 2 TIMOTHY 4 gives us some more clues as to how Paul came to be in Rome once again. So let's review some very important things we have already talked about concerning Paul's final travels, {review page 1374 of these notes}, and begin placing these people in their proper place as Paul once again mentions them here in 2 TIMOTHY 4.

These very important clues we have previously discussed of Paul's travel itinerary in Paul's last three epistles of 1 TIMOTHY, TITUS, and 2 TIMOTHY start with what is said in 1 TIMOTHY 1:3, where Paul writes **Timothy** *...I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia...* . Here we found that Paul was once again at Ephesus, (where he previously had preached for three years in ACTS 19), and had now left **Timothy** in charge, here at Ephesus, as Paul

journeyed on to Macedonia. (**Timothy**, we assume is still in Ephesus as Paul writes him his second letter, 2 TIMOTHY.) The cities of Macedonia included Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea. From Macedonia Paul writes **Timothy** the epistle of 1 TIMOTHY, where Paul indicates in 1 TIMOTHY 4:13 his plans of returning to Ephesus. 1 TIMOTHY 4:13 *Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.* After leaving Macedonia it seems that Paul travels back to Ephesus by way of Troas, another place Paul has visited several times over the years, (ACTS 16:8-11; 20:5 & 6; and 2 CORINTHIANS 2:12). While at Troas Paul leaves his cloke, some books, and some very important parchments with a man named Carpus, probably with the intention of returning before winter to retrieve them, or having Carpus bring them to Ephesus soon there after. 2 TIMOTHY 4:13 gives us this information, and reads: *The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.* (We will discuss Carpus shortly in this study, Lord willing.) It seems from Troas that Paul then made a brief visit to Ephesus, and then with **Titus** being with him, he set sail for Crete. Paul left **Titus** in Crete to ...*set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders in every city...* TITUS 1:5. After a short time in Crete, Paul leaves **Titus** behind, and according to the research of Conybeare and Howson, returns once again to Ephesus where he writes the epistle unto TITUS. As we discussed previously Paul writes **Titus** his intention to go to Nicopolis having ...*determined there to winter...* according to TITUS 3:12. So we can see that from Ephesus Paul proceeded towards Nicopolis by way of Miletum (Miletus) one of Ephesus sea ports, where he left Trophimus an Ephesian (ACTS 21:29) sick according to 2 TIMOTHY 4:20 ...*Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.* (We also will discuss more about Trophimus a few pages later in this study, Lord willing.) From Miletum Paul sails by ship to the ports of Corinth where he left Erastus, (another man we will talk some about later, Lord willing.) From Corinth Paul then travels to Nicopolis where he expected to winter, and await the arrival of **Titus**. TITUS 3:12 *When I shall send Artemas unto thee, or Tychicus, be diligent to come unto me to Nicopolis: for I have determined there to winter. 13 Bring Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their journey diligently, that nothing be wanting unto them.*

We now come to our text of 2 TIMOTHY 4:10 and find **Titus** had again been with Paul for a while, but is now once again departed. 2 TIMOTHY 4:10 *For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.* So was it from Rome with Paul that **Titus** has now departed to Dalmatia, or was it previous to this? The scripture isn't real clear on this, but both **Titus** and **Tychicus** had been in recent contact with Paul, for Paul knows where they went, and as he writes **Timothy** his knowledge of both of these men. 2 TIMOTHY 4:10 ...*Titus* {is departed} *unto Dalmatia.*, and 2 TIMOTHY 4:12 *And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.* It is quite possible that both **Titus** and **Tychicus** left Paul for these destinations after meeting up with him again at Nicopolis. It is also possible that **Titus** and **Tychicus**, one, or both, may have traveled to Rome with Paul, and then departed. The Lord knows when and why they left the company of Paul. **Titus**, Paul's son in the faith, we do know went to Dalmatia, which is up the coast from Nicopolis. And **Tychicus** went to Ephesus at the request of Paul. Perhaps it was **Tychicus** who rushed the letter of 2 TIMOTHY back to **Timothy** in Ephesus, but once again we will have to wait until we get to heaven to know the answer as to who carried this letter back to **Timothy**. If it was **Tychicus** who carried the letter of 2 TIMOTHY back to **Timothy**, then he would have recently been with Paul in Rome. As we wrote previously, one thing we know for certain about **Tychicus**, he was ...*a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord...* as Paul noted without hesitation in EPHESIANS 6:12 and COLOSSIANS 4:7. May these very same qualities be found in each of us as we too follow Paul as he followed Christ. **Tychicus** was this kind of faithful follower of Christ.