



CAPITOL COMMISSION™

2 TIMOTHY 4

COLORADO

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Can you believe we are starting another new year? We can never know what the days ahead will hold, but in spite of what comes our way...may God be glorified in us and through us. And as we continue with our study in 2 Timothy may you be reminded of the unshakable truths of God given in His Word that will bring light to our path on this journey of life, and offer stability, hope and direction as we seek to live our lives set apart for God and His glory.

I. 2 TIMOTHY 1-3 IN REVIEW

In thinking back through the first three chapters of 2 Timothy, may I remind you of realities from which Paul lived his life and served God? The motivation for his life, his ministry always focused on Jesus Christ and the preeminence of Christ was the driving force behind his life and work. He understood the importance of keeping this truth in the forefront of life and work. It would enable Timothy and each of us to endure through hardships of every kind. Paul has reminded us that we must be single-minded in our devotion to Christ like a soldier who only wants to please his commander, disciplined as an athlete and labor like a hard working farmer. Live like this and we will have what's needed to be strong in grace guarding the treasure, disciplined through challenges, diligent throughout hardships and invested in lives for eternity's sake!¹

Just as Paul invites Timothy to be courageous, so too all believers are called to such action as we take the gospel to the world. As we remember Jesus Christ: the Son of God risen from the dead and the Son of Man descendant of David, may we have the same unshakable confidence in Him and willingness to suffer for His sake. Only by these truths of the gospel message can anyone be saved and reconciled to God. The power of the gospel cannot be restrained by opposition or censure. Nothing can ever keep the Word of God from going forth and accomplishing what God intends.

But God also wants us to know we live in dangerous times. From 2 Timothy 3:1-9, we must understand that the church is in spiritual warfare that will intensify till Christ returns. We must be doctrinally discerning, testing each message against God's Word as the Bereans did in Acts 17:11. We must be pure and holy vessels set apart for the Lord's use. (2 Timothy 2:21) We must be patient in difficult times, persevere and earnestly contend for the faith for the sake of the lost.² (Jude 3) We must remain faithful, courageously teach God's truth in spite of opposition and have as our ambition to please God! (2 Corinthians 5:9)

Satan will never give up on trying to destroy the faith of God's people. He is the adversary of our souls and there will always be evil

men. But, we must remain firm in our resolve, refusing to compromise and trust God for needed strength and grace.³ We must continue with Christ as Paul emphasizes in 2 Timothy 3:14, "You however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."

Paul continues with encouraging truth that gives testimony to the abiding character of Scripture from 2 Timothy 3:16-17; that it is inspired by God and profitable for all mankind. All Scripture is distinct because it is first of all and above all from God and about God. Scripture is not a collection of wisdom and insight of men, even godly men. It is God's truth, His own Word in His own words. All Scripture is inspired, breathed out by God Himself. Because all Scripture is inspired by God it is inerrant and infallible in all its words (completely without error). God's Word is free from any and all falsehood or mistakes. It is absolutely and completely true. And because all Scripture is breathed out by God, it is authoritative in all its words for all of life.⁴ God's Word is not only inspired and without error, but it is complete. All Scripture is sufficient and comprehensive. Scripture gives us doctrinal truths for a solid foundation in life. It is useful, beneficial and productive enabling us to be adequate and equipped for every good work. Paul writes this encouraging portion of Scripture for us to understand that the believer is "super" equipped by the Word of God as an abiding condition unto every good work.⁵ We are capable, proficient and completely furnished to do whatever God has called us to do as an enduring condition for the true believer in Jesus Christ. And such enablement is found in God's inspired and steadfast Word that is profitable for all believers and for all things pertaining to life and godliness. (2 Peter 1:3)

Do you not sense the crescendo swell as Paul writes these inspiring and promising words that give hope and motivating encouragement to Timothy in the face of persecution. Take heart, for you cannot fail because you have everything you need! And might these words not have been what strengthened Paul as he sat in the Roman dungeon awaiting his own execution for his faith in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, Paul issues one final, solemn charge to Timothy. These are quite possibly the last word of Paul to Timothy. "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word..." (2 Timothy 4:1-2a)

BIBLE STUDIES

LEGISLATORS, GOVERNOR & SPOUSES: TUESDAY AT 7:15AM, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

STAFF, LOBBYISTS, JOURNALISTS & SERGEANTS: TUESDAYS AT NOON, CAPITOL BASEMENT, ROOM 0109

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II. BUT WAIT... THINK ABOUT PAUL- 2 TIMOTHY 4:6

2 Timothy 4:6- "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come."

For Paul, at the time of writing this book, death was imminent. He writes in 2 Timothy 4:13 requesting his coat for he was in a cold, dark prison cell. We know he was chained and imprisoned with other criminals and there was no hope of deliverance. (2 Timothy 2:9) And Paul reveals that he was abandoned by almost all at his arrest. No one stood with him, only Luke. (2 Timothy 1:15, 4:9-12, 16) And so Paul, the Apostle who had been used by God to proclaim the gospel and start many churches across the known world now finds himself in a cold cell, chained with other criminals and condemned to die. He was alone, he was deserted and what does this man write about? Does Paul spend the last letter he ever writes complaining, disillusioned with his faith and his God because of his incredible harsh circumstances? Does he feel sorry for himself because of his lot after serving the Lord so faithfully? After all, Paul had given his life as a missionary for Jesus Christ for over 30 years!! Is this where you think Paul should be at the end of his faithful life? Was his life a waste? Was it worth it? Would he be considered successful? You wouldn't expect God's ambassador to come to such an end...would you?

III. AND WHAT ABOUT TIMOTHY?

Timothy was the young pastor serving the church at Ephesus. It was a church where some had begun to defect from the faith, including men in church leadership just as Paul had predicted from Acts 20:28-31. Persecution of Christians throughout the entire Roman Empire was well under way and probably because of the persecution believers faced, that caused much of the defection when commitment to Christ became costly.⁶ Tradition has it that Timothy remained in Ephesus pastoring for many years. We know about 30 years later from Revelation 2:2-7, John records Jesus words to Ephesus regarding their condition, *"I know your deeds, your hard work and your perseverance. I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles, but are not, and have found them false. You have persevered and have endured hardships for my name, and have not grown weary. Yet I hold this against you. You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first. If you do not repent, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place..."* Timothy could be the lampstand that was removed in these verses. It is thought that late in the first century, there was a public celebration held in Ephesus for the god Dionysius that involved public sinful acts. Timothy's heart was broken by these events and he stood up and started shouting in opposition to the public display of sin. When he

did, the mob became enraged and picked up clubs and stones, beating him till he died. What an end to such a faithful life. He took God's mandate seriously to *"Preach the word"* and it eventually cost him his life. Is this how Timothy's life should have ended? Was he successful? Or was his life a waste in the end?

IV. AND WHAT ABOUT THIS LIFE?

He was born in a barn. His father probably died when he was young. He never settled on a career. He never married or had a family. And he was executed on a cross before he reached the age of forty. Was He successful? Answer that and I will tell you if you have understood 2 Timothy. Answer that and I will tell you if you understand Christmas, or even life.⁷

V. AND WHAT ABOUT YOUR LIFE?

Maybe you don't find yourself where you thought you would be in life or should be? Maybe you have suffered loss. Maybe you suffer great criticism for your faith in Jesus Christ. But most importantly, could you say you have kept the faith regardless of the cost? That's a life of no regrets. That's a life of purpose. That's a journey of serving and pleasing God. He has a plan, a purpose and a course for your life. Fight the good fight for it is a noble one worth contending for, finish the course, though hard and painful, finish the race God has planned for you. Finish well. That's what this study is about. It's about Paul, his words and his life so that you too may be able to say, *"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith"* when God calls you home! (2 Timothy 4:7) That's a successful life!

There is no sacrifice, mockery, alienation, rejection, desertion, imprisonment or even death too high a price to pay to put everything on the line for Christ. The importance and the rewards of a faithful life and ministry, not to mention the honor and glory of the Lord we trust and serve, far outweigh any personal sacrifice our trust and service may require.⁸ May this be our passion and pursuit as we live each day we are given in this New Year!

¹Hughes, R. Kent and Chapell, Bryan, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus; To Guard the Deposit*. Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 2000. Pg. 197.

²MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.122.

³Williams, Peter, *Opening Up 2 Timothy*. One Day Publications: Ryelands Road, Leominster, New Zealand, 2007. Pg. 78.

⁴MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.143.

⁵Hughes, R. Kent and Chapell, Bryan, *1 and 2 Timothy and Titus; To Guard the Deposit*. Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 2000. Pg. 239.

⁶MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.165-166.

⁷Dever, Mark, *The Message of the New Testament: Promises Kept*. Crossway: Wheaton, Illinois, 2005. Pg. 372-373

⁸MacArthur, John, *MacArthur Commentary on 2 Timothy*. Moody Press: Chicago, 1998. Pg.54-55.