

2 Timothy 4 - Preach the Word!; The Move Away From Sound Doctrine; Do the Work of an Evangelist; Paul's Final Words; Concluding Comments

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2 Timothy 4

- (f) Evaluation of ministry at the Bema (4:1b)
- (g) Paul's charge to Timothy (4:1a,2)

1 I solemnly exhort *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:

1 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:

1 In the presence of God and the Messiah Jesus, who is going to judge those who are living and those who are dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly appeal to you

1 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

- "...solemnly exhort *you*" - *diamartyromai*, where we get the word "martyr"; means to "charge" someone, or even better, "a charge or command at the highest level of intensity". This is why the NASB translates it as "solemnly" exhort/charge because simply "to charge" does not accurately convey the intensity of the charge.

— It's the same word used by the rich man in Hades in Luke 16:28 when he was begging Abraham to send Lazarus back to "warn" [*martyromai*] his five brothers of the torment he was experiencing.

— Paul uses this in the context of exhorting Timothy to the most important task he could charge Timothy with: to preach the Word of God.

- "...in the presence of" - Paul tells Timothy that God and Christ Jesus are carefully observing what you are doing. What you are doing is in their presence because they are omnipresent, everywhere at one time.

— So Timothy, in your church, when you're preaching, God and Christ Jesus are there, listening to you, watching you, hearing you.

- "...judge the living and the dead" - Jesus Christ will judge every human being who has ever lived. For Timothy, and all believers, that judgment will not determine heaven or hell (that has already been determined). That judgment will be of his (our) works, for the purpose of giving rewards.

— Every person who has died, believers and unbelievers, are also awaiting judgment. Believers who have died are also awaiting a judgment for rewards, although their souls are currently already in heaven.

— Since the Bible tells us that we as believers will receive a performance review of our life, we should be cognizant of our works, our attitudes, and our behaviors every day. In just the same way we would if we were a student coming up on a test, or an employee awaiting a performance review.

- "...appearing" - *epiphaneia*, not speaking of the Rapture, but of the Second Coming of Jesus Christ at the end of the Tribulation period

Nine Reasons Why Timothy Must Continue to Preach the Word

1. Impact of God's Word on people (3:14)
2. Impact on salvation/justification (3:15)
3. Divine origin (3:16a)
4. Impact on sanctification (3:16b)
5. Impact on equipping (3:17)
6. Paul's charge to Timothy (4:1a,2)
7. Timothy's evaluation at the Bema Seat (4:1b)
8. Preference of men to avoid the Word (4:3-4)
9. Need to complete Timothy's ministry (4:5-8)

2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and exhort, with great patience and instruction.

2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

2 to proclaim the message. Be ready to do this whether or not the time is convenient. Refute, warn, and encourage with the utmost patience when you teach.

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine

- There are five imperatives in this verse alone. These are commands from God to Paul, who gives them to Timothy and by extension to every spiritual leader/teacher who reads this book.

— These are the things that the church is to occupy itself with while the kingdom is in postponement

- "preach" - *kēryssō*, to proclaim, to herald, to announce. This command speaks to the method used. Preaching is God's method to distribute His Word (Cf. Matt 3:2; 4:17; 10:7; 24:14; Mark 16:20; Acts 8:5; 19:20; 1 Peter 3:19; Rev 5:2).

- "...the word" - the content of the preaching/proclamation/announcement. We are not commanded to tell people about the Bible, refer to the Bible or allude to the Bible, or

paraphrase or summarize something in the Bible. We're to preach to them the Bible itself.

— Many pastors love to lift a text from the Bible, then weave a sermon around that text. This is not what Paul means when He says "preach the word". This is the primary responsibility of every leader of God's people (Cf. 1:14; 1 Tim 6:20).

— *We are not to preach about the Word, or from the Word of God, but we are to preach the Word of God itself.* [J. Vernon McGee]

- "...be ready" - *ephistēmi*, always prepared, always ready, no matter the timing or the way the societal winds are blowing

- "...in season *and* out of season" - there will be times when preaching the Bible will be "in season" and there will be times where preaching it will be "out of season."

— We're commanded to preach the word when the Bible is respected, acknowledged, and readily heard, and during the times when it is rejected, mocked, and ignored. When it is convenient and when it is inconvenient. Paul explained the reason for this in 3:16-17.

- "...correct" - *elegchō*, to reprove; when Timothy preaches the Word, it does the job of reproving or correcting people (Cf. 3:16). It is an appeal to emotion, it makes people feel bad for sin.

— If you can sit under the preaching of the Word of God week after week and never feel a tinge of guilt, you must have arrived at glorification. Or more likely, the preaching is not being faithful to the message because the Word of God is designed to bring reproof/correction and guilt into our lives.

— Many Christians today go to church to have their "ears tickled." They don't want to be corrected, they want to be affirmed in what they already believe or think. But the Bible is not designed to affirm us, it's designed to rebuke our worldly thinking, and give us correct instruction on how to think.

— After Peter preached a sermon at Pentecost, his hearers were "pierced to the heart" and asked Peter what they needed to do (Acts 2:37)

- "...rebuke" - *epitimaō*, to "chide" or "admonish"; it is to admonish people to do what is honorable and pleasing to God, and admonish people to not do what is not honoring and pleasing to God.

— If *elegchō* (correct) is an appeal to emotions, *epitimaō* (rebuke) is an appeal to the mind.

- "...exhort" - *parakaleō*, to encourage; it is the idea of rallying people or getting their attention for their own good. This is encouragement to those who are living rightly. It is an appeal to the will.

— The Word of God does not just tear down in reproof/correction, it exhorts/encourages those who are living rightly.

- "...great patience" - how easy it is for us to pursue ministry for the Lord, but then be impatient with the slow progress of people
- It's easy to win an argument but lose a heart. The Word of God is full of instruction, and can be used to reprove/correct people, but it must be done with "great" patience.
- May God never show me how many people I alienated from the cause of Christ in the course of my life, not based on what I told them but how I said it (Cf. Eph 4:15). How many Christians say the right things in the wrong way. 1 Cor 13 tells us that we're nothing more than an irritating, clanging gong if we're only monitoring content and not monitoring attitude and presentation.
- "...instruction" - *didachē*, similar word to *didaskalia* ("teaching") in 3:16. The Word of God instructs us, teaches us about what is pleasing to God. It lays a foundation for our lives.
- The Word of God wants to correct us when we step out of line or have wrong thinking on something and it wants to encourage us as we submit ourselves to it. All of this is not through some type of experience, but through instruction.

(h) The preference of men to avoid the word (4:3-4)

Throughout this epistle, Paul is encouraging Timothy to persevere in ministry, giving him numerous reasons why he should do so, as well as how to do so. He tells Timothy that the task of ministry is not always easy, and cheer up, it's going to get worse because he makes a prediction about the last days. He gets specific about what the fickle and ever-changing human mind will start to demand of their spiritual leaders in the last days.

3 For ***the time*** will come when **they** will not **tolerate sound doctrine**; but *wanting* to have **their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers** in accordance with **their own desires**,

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but *wanting* to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires,

3 For the time will come when people will not tolerate healthy doctrine, but with itching ears will surround themselves with teachers who cater to their people's own desires.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;

- This verse describes what people in the last days will turn away from: sound doctrine.

— The most common type of unsound doctrine today is a works-based gospel (Calvinism or Arminianism). The fact that the church today would fall in love with a

works-based gospel is predicted in these verses. Lost and sinful people love works-based theology because it gives them something to boast about.

— With the pure gospel of grace, all bragging rights are gone (Rom 3:27; Eph 2:8-9). This is why Gal 5:11 calls the gospel "an offense" to human beings, because we have nothing to brag about. All we have to brag about is what Jesus did, not at all what we have done.

- "...*the* time" - *kairos*, Paul used the same word for "in season" [*eukairōs*] and "out of season" [*akairōs*] in v2. The use of this word here falls in line nicely as Paul begins to describe what it looks like when the teaching of the Word will fall out of popularity.

— The definite article "*the*" before *kairōs* was added by the translators for clarity. It describes a specific time in history when the church will move into the last days just before the Rapture.

— This is the third time in Paul's two epistles to Timothy that he addresses this specific period of time in history (Cf. 1 Tim 4:1; 2 Tim 3:1). In Peter's last book (2 Peter), he also provided warnings for this specific period of time (Cf. 2 Peter 2:1; 3:3).

- "...they" [2x] - some want to interpret this pronoun to refer to unbelievers who have infiltrated the church, but that doesn't fit the context or the purpose of 2 Timothy. When have unbelievers ever tolerated sound doctrine? The world has never endured sound doctrine because the world has no doctrine from which they can depart from (v4; Cf. John 15:18-19).

— So when Paul says they will "turn away from the truth" (v4), it can't be referring to the world or unbelievers because they have no truth to depart from.

— "They" here refers to the church, believers in Christ, who are either babes in Christ without time to mature yet, or they are believers who have never matured in their faith. They are the seeds that fell on the rocky soil or among the thorns.

- "...tolerate" - *anechō*, endure; to put up with; sustain. How do you "endure" sound doctrine? To "endure" means to expend energy for or toward something.

— We are commanded in Jude 3 to "earnestly contend for the faith." In Gal 6:6, we are told to financially support the teaching of sound doctrine. Both of these things require effort and energy directed toward sound doctrine. It requires endurance and energy to simply study sound doctrine (2:15) and it takes energy/effort to listen to and take in sound doctrine (James 1:21).

— What Timothy is saying is that there is going to come a generation in history that simply says, We're not going to do that any more. We're not going to put up with it, we're not going to endure it, and we're not going to labor to sustain it. We're no longer interested in hearing truth, we want to hear what validates what I already believe. What I already believe is truth (my truth)

- "...sound" - a qualifier for doctrine; not all doctrine is sound (correct, accurate, healthy, not mixed with error). Just like with food, there is good, healthy food that nourishes your body, and there are processed, unhealthy foods that feel good going down, but that your body can't process or use.

— The same thing is true with doctrine. There are some (false) doctrines that sound good to the ears, but are not healthy for the body (of Christ). Then there are doctrines that, like some vegetables, may not be palatable initially, but once digested, fuel the body and provide lasting nourishment.

— It's this latter type of doctrine, the "tough to swallow" doctrine, that will be rejected in the last days. People will begin to sit in judgment and reject not just doctrine in general, but doctrine they need in order to mature and grow, doctrine that is healthy.

- "...doctrine" - *didaskalia*, teaching or instruction; doctrine is simply teaching from God's Word that you can base your life on (Cf. Acts 2:42). It is truth that is verifiable and reliable, so much so, that you can use it as a foundation on which to base your life and all decisions.

- "...they will" - in lieu of or as a substitute for sound doctrine. This is what the church will resort to instead of enduring sound doctrine.

- "...their ears tickled" - one thing we need to understand about the Bible is that it is a sharp two-edged sword (Eph 6:17; Heb 4:12). And consequently once it is unleashed, it has a tendency to pierce us (Acts 2:37; 2 Tim 3:16). We are not here to sit in judgment on the Bible, the Bible is here to sit in judgment of us.

— What Paul is telling Timothy here is that there will come a day when people no longer want to be pierced by Scripture, they no longer want to be held to account to an all-powerful God, so they will begin to push the Bible out of the church.

— Christians get all upset that the humanists have pushed the Ten Commandments out of public schools and places, and rightly so, but Paul says there's going to be a time period where God's truth is kicked out of the church. Isn't that a bigger outrage than removing a manger scene from a public park?

- "...accumulate for themselves teachers" - a time will come (if it's not already here) where people will say that if I don't hear what I want to hear from this church, I'll just go to the church down the street and see if they will tickle my ears. My own ministerial calf-maker.

— Getting their "ears tickled" means that believers will begin flocking to assemblies that tell them what they want to hear. They will gravitate toward churches that reinforce the ideas they already have. They want to be proven right by their pastor to make them feel better because that "tickles their ears." But what you realize if you study the Word of God at all is that it doesn't reinforce man's viewpoint on things, it destroys it, tears it

down. The Bible is a wrecking ball that doesn't go after the building itself, it goes after and destroys the foundation of human thinking and reasoning.

- "...their own desires" - desires in and of themselves are not bad things. God places within us certain desires that motivate us to fulfill His will (Cf. Ps 37:4). However Paul here modifies these desires with "their own" [*idios*] referring not to the desires that God implants in them, but desires that they implant in themselves.

— It's interesting that Paul uses the modifier *idios* for desires [*epithymia*]. What he is saying is that when we become occupied with our own fleshly lusts, we become spiritual "idiots". The Bible literally teaches that as we reject the knowledge and teaching of God and pursue our own fleshly lusts, my intelligence decreases...I become stupider (Prov 1:7; Ps 14:1; Rom 1:23).

— So there will be a generation one day within the life of the church (maybe it's already here?) where people will be unsatisfied with God-centered desires. Their whole focus will be their own desires, and specifically the desires that emanate from the sin nature (Cf. John 8:44; Gal 5:16,24; 1 Tim 6:9; 2 Tim 2:22; 1 Peter 1:14). And as this mindset grows within the body of Christ, it will change the curriculum of the church.

— The church will veer away from being God-centered and become man-centered. Similar to the church at Laodicea. It will demand things, items, and teachings that appeal to man-centered lusts. Jesus will not be the center of this church, rather He will be standing outside the door knocking, just like in Laodicea (Rev 3:20).

— The reason why we see so many false teachers in the church today—prosperity gospel churches, Calvinist/Reformed churches, Arminian churches, charismatic churches, seeker-friendly churches, evangelical churches (get people saved, no doctrine), or ritualistic pseudo-Catholic churches, LGBTQIA+ churches—is because demand drives supply.

— When you stop supporting healthy doctrinal teaching and begin to promote false teaching, people step up to provide it. If people prefer a calf to worship, a ministerial calf-maker is readily found. We like to condemn false teachers, and rightly so, but Paul talks about false teachers in the last days being driven by the demands of the laity, who have forsaken and will not tolerate sound doctrine (Cf. Jer 5:30-31).

30 "An appalling and horrible thing Has happened in the land:

31 The prophets prophesy falsely, And the priests rule on their *own* authority; And **My people love it this way!** But what will you do when the end comes?

— So what will become the norm in the last days of the church is that people will flock to assemblies that tell them what they want to hear. Could you imagine going to a doctor or a lawyer only because they would tell you what you *wanted* to hear, not what you *needed* to hear? That professional would promptly lose their medical or legal

license for malpractice. But this is normal in the church. Consequently, what happens?
Amos 8:11-12:

11 "Behold, days are coming," declares the Lord GOD, "When I will send a famine on the land, Not a famine of bread or a thirst for water, But rather for **hearing the words of the LORD**.

12 "People will stagger from sea to sea And from the north even to the east; **They will roam about to seek the word of the LORD, But they will not find it.**

4 and they will **turn their ears away from the truth** and **will turn aside to myths**.

4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

4 They will refuse to listen to the truth and will turn to myths.

4 And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

- This verse describes what these people will turn toward (or demand) in the last days: false doctrine and myths.

- "...turn their ears away from" - *apostrophō*, apostasy, the departure from truth;

— Jesus perfectly described people who turn away from truth in John 3:19-20: because they do not want their evil thoughts and deeds to be exposed.

19 **And this is the judgment, that the Light has come into the world, and people loved the darkness rather than the Light; for their deeds were evil.**

20 **For everyone who does evil hates the Light, and does not come to the Light, so that his deeds will not be exposed.**

- "...the truth" - note the definite article "the" before truth, indicating Paul is referring to a specific truth, God's truth, the truth that is found in His Word.

— Truth is often hard to swallow, but truth is also liberating. Truth is a perfect picture of reality.

— In 1 Kings 22:8, the king of Israel told Jehoshaphat there remained only one man in Israel who spoke the truth, that he would inquire about God, but the king said, "I hate him, because he does not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." That person was Micaiah.

— The reason why the king hated Micaiah is because he prophesied truth, he prophesied what the king desperately needed to hear.

- "...will turn aside to" - they will exchange the truth of God's Word for "myths". Nature abhors a vacuum: if you reject the truth of God's Word, you have to substitute it with something. When the children of Israel rejected a true knowledge of God and found a substitute in a golden calf (Cf. Rom 1:23).

- "...myths" - *mythos*, a legend, a tale, a story, or a fable, which is untrue. It's used almost always with a negative connotation in the NT (Cf. 1 Tim 1:4; 4:7; Titus 1:4; 2 Peter

1:16). This is what people will believe in when they can no longer stomach to hear the truth.

(i) The need for Timothy to complete his ministry (4:5-8)

(i) The charge (4:5)

5 But *as for* you, use self-restraint in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

5 But you must be clear-headed about everything. Endure suffering. Do the work of an evangelist. Devote yourself completely to your ministry.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

- "But *as for* you" - a contrast with what Paul has just told Timothy in v3-4: that there will come a time when people (believers) will not endure sound doctrine. The contrast is that others will derail away from sound doctrine, but you Timothy need to stay on the rails of sound doctrine.

— Then Paul gives Timothy four commands (imperatives in Greek): "use," "endure," "do," and "fulfill"

- "...use self-restraint" - "be sober"; it means to be cool-headed, under self-control, wide awake. Paul says we need to be this way because we'll be living amongst a group of people who won't (Cf. 3:2-4).

- "...endure hardship" - living the Christian life is not easy; we are promised that if we're walking with Him, we will encounter persecution (Cf. 3:12; John 16:33)

- "...do the work of an evangelist" - Paul warns Timothy to not be so focused on preaching and teaching that he forgets about evangelism.

— Notice that Paul doesn't say that if you don't have the spiritual gift of evangelism, you don't have to do it. You have an excuse, a hall pass, for not sharing the gospel with others. Instead he says that we all should do the work of an evangelist, even though we may not have the gift of evangelism.

— The gospel is free, but someone has to put in the work, the effort, to communicate it to lost souls in a simple, uncluttered manner. It's so easy to clutter the gospel with things a person has to do as part of being saved. We always want a checklist, a to do list, so that we know when we've accomplished something. But that's not how the gospel works...there is one condition to receiving eternal life: belief.

— Many Christians are waiting to hear a voice from God before they share the gospel with their neighbor, friend, or co-worker. This verse, "do the work of an evangelist!" is the voice from God you're waiting for.

- "...fulfill your ministry" - God saved us to accomplish good works through us. When God saved me, He didn't have me in mind but rather all of the people that I would touch and bless as I lived my life according to His will, connected to Him.
- Acts 13:36 says that after David had fulfilled the purpose of God, he fell asleep.
- Rev 3:2, in His letter to the church at Sardis, Jesus said: "...for I have not found your deeds completed in the sight of My God." Sardis evidently lost sight of the need to stay connected to the vine in order to bear fruit (Cf. John 15:5).
- The list of Bible characters who served God but didn't finish well is long...Noah, Lot, Moses, Samson, Solomon, and Demas (v10), among many others. The salvation of these men is not in question, but it is evident from the biblical record that their faith waivered at the end.
- Paul is urging Timothy to persist in his ministry, to fulfill the purpose for which the Lord saved him in the first place, to finish well.
- When we're tempted to lapse in our ministry due to temptation, due to busyness, due to overwhelming stress, due to weariness, we need to keep in mind Paul's commands to Timothy here: use self-restraint (be sober), endure hardship, work like an evangelist, and fulfill your ministry.

(ii) The reason: Paul's coming absence (4:6-8)

- 6** For I am already being poured out as a **drink offering**, and the **time of my departure** has come.
- 6** For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.
- 6** I am already being poured out as an offering, and the time for my departure has come.
- 6** For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.
- The reason why Paul is so concerned about Timothy taking the baton of truth and running with it is because Paul is about to die. He's at the end of his life. He's currently in his second Roman imprisonment, in Mamertine Prison in Rome.
- Paul's second imprisonment was nothing like his first Roman imprisonment, when he was under house arrest and knew that he would be released.
- Paul now uses two images to show Timothy that it was his turn to take the baton of truth and run with it, because his life would soon come to an end:
 - "...drink offering" - after the Jewish priest offered an animal sacrifice, he poured wine beside the altar. This was the last act of the sacrificial ceremony, all of which symbolized the dedication of the believer to God in worship (Cf. Lev 23:10-14; Num 15:1-10; 28:4-7).

— The pouring out of the wine picture the gradual ebbing away of Paul's life that had been a living sacrifice to God since his conversion.

- "...time of my departure" - Paul had boarded the plane and his seatbelt was fastened. It would soon be time for him to depart from his current city (Rome) for another city (heaven).

Paul's Two Roman Imprisonments Contrasted	
1ST IMPRISONMENT (ACTS 28:16-31)	2ND IMPRISONMENT (2 TIM)
▪ Wrote prison epistles ▪ Religious charges ▪ Local and sporadic persecutions (AD 60-63) ▪ Decent conditions (house) ▪ Many friends ▪ Evangelistic opportunities ▪ Optimistic for release (Phil 1:24-26)	▪ Wrote 2 Timothy ▪ Political charges ▪ Neronian persecution (AD 64-68) ▪ Poor conditions (dungeon) ▪ Virtually alone ▪ Opportunities restricted ▪ Execution anticipated (2 Tim 4:6)
Adapted from <i>Nelson's Complete Book of Charts and Maps</i> , 433.	

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

7 I have fought the good fight. I have completed the race. I have kept the faith.

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:

- What great words to be able to utter at the end of your life, just before you meet the Lord

- Every believer is going to heaven, but not every believer will be able to look back on their life and say these things about themselves. The Bible is filled with stories of people who are in heaven today, but who could not utter these words of Paul honestly.

— One of these people was Solomon, a man endowed with wisdom by God, who was used by God to build the temple. But Solomon had a problem with girls (1 Kings 11:1-8) and at the end of his life decided that the laws of God that applied to everyone else did not apply to him.

— What about Lot? Lot was saved (Cf. 2 Peter 2:7-8), but his life never demonstrated any good works or evidence of his faith. He wasted his life in Sodom, then after he got

out of Sodom, the last thing we hear about Lot was that he got drunk in a cave and had incest with his two daughters.

— Moses, after leading the Israelites out of Egypt and through the wilderness for 40 years, died without seeing the Promised Land due to disobedience.

— Ananias and Sapphira were slain by the Holy Spirit for lying about the proceeds of their real estate sale.

— The Lord gives us these stories in the Bible of people who didn't finish well as examples of what not to do. The Lord wants us to finish our lives well, to run the race to completion, so that we can look back honestly at our life and be satisfied about what God did in and through us.

— If you look back on your life, would you say that if you had to do it all over again, you would do it differently? This is where the warnings of the Bible speak to us because we can make choices and change now so we don't get to the end of our lives and find out the ladder we were climbing was against the wrong wall.

- It's interesting the Paul uses three metaphors in this verse to describe a life well spent. The first two are related to athletics, and the third is related to stewardship.

- "...fought the good fight" - the metaphor of a boxer engaged with life in the ring. Paul uses a boxing metaphor elsewhere (1 Cor 9:26) to describe the strategic effectiveness of his ministry. He didn't just work harder, he worked smarter. He made the talents that God gave him count. He had an eternal impact.

- "...finished the course" - Paul analogizes his Christian walk as a running race, as a race course. Paul says that he finished the course, he completed the race, he crossed the finish line.

— Many Christians don't realize that they are even in a race, or are aware of the course they are to run. Others don't view life at all as Paul did, as a race that they are to finish.

— Paul uses this metaphor to encourage Timothy, who was thinking about quitting the race, dropping out halfway through, because it was just too difficult.

- "...kept the faith" - what does it mean to "keep the faith"? The faith is the recognized body of Christian doctrine. Paul kept the faith by being obedient to it, and he passed it on as he received it. We are commanded to do the same thing: to obey what God has told us to do in His Word, and take every opportunity presented to us to pass that truth on to other people.

— The key to understand is that God will not judge us by our success, but rather by our faithfulness. How is use my "Three T's" throughout my life, my time, my talent, and my treasure, is what I will be judged on.

I spent my entire life climbing the ladder of success only to find out later that the ladder was leaning against the wrong wall. [Anonymous]

8 in the future there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

8 in the future there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day; and not only to me, but also to all who have loved His appearing.

8 The victor's crown of righteousness is now waiting for me, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on the day that he comes, and not only to me but also to all who eagerly wait for his appearing.

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

- Paul lived his life always knowing that there was a judgment coming. Not a judgment between heaven and hell, but a judgment of works to receive, or not receive, rewards.

- "...in the future" - Paul always thought about the future (Cf. v1). Others sometimes say, "You are so heavenly minded that you're no earthly good." The fact of the matter is that statement couldn't be more wrong. In fact, the opposite is true.

— The person who is most heavenly-minded is the most earthly good because they start understanding earthly priorities. They understand the things that will last on past the end of their life, the things that eternally matter, and they arrange their life according to those priorities.

- "...there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness" - this crown is not for all of those who are saved, it's for the saved who have earned it.

— There are five crowns described in the NT (see chart below) that are available to be given to believers.

— After describing these crowns throughout the NT, we're also told that we can lose crowns:

1 Cor 3:15: If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet *only* so as through fire.

2 John 8: Watch yourselves, that you do not lose what we have accomplished, but *that* you may receive a full reward.

Rev 3:11: **I am coming quickly; hold firmly to what you have, so that no one will take your crown.**

— Many believers are unaware that rewards even exist. They're satisfied with their get out of hell free card, and are just playing out the string until they get there. They may do a good work here or there, but they won't do any of the works that the NT says will earn them a crown.

— These believers don't care about rewards. They'll say, "My reward is going to heaven one day." But there are two reasons why you ought to care about rewards:

1. The NT clearly spells out a doctrine of rewards, and we're held accountable to know about it.
2. When we're in heaven, we will cast our crowns before the Lord (Rev 4:10). Rewards that we "earn" over the course of our life here on earth are a capacity to worship God in heaven. Rewards don't give us higher standing before God, they give us a greater ability to draw attention to the glory of Jesus Christ.

— What we will do with the rewards we "earned" are like what Mary did in John 12:3 when she took very expensive perfume and anointed Jesus' feet with it, using her hair. This was a tremendous act of worship, which mirrors what we're going to do with our crowns when we stand before Him.

- "...which the Lord, the righteous Judge" - we need to think about now who we will stand before in the future: Jesus Christ, the righteous Judge

- "...will award to me" - how we respond to this coming judgment is a barometer, either an affirmation from the Holy Spirit or a warning from the Holy Spirit. An exam in school or a performance appraisal at work is an enjoyable experience if you have been diligent in your studies or in your job performance.

— But if you haven't been diligent, if you were lackadaisical in your approach to the exam, or daily in your job, then the exam or performance appraisal are not pleasant experiences. Same is true of our "final exam" at the Bema Seat judgment of rewards.

1 John 2:28: Now, little children, remain in Him, so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not draw back from Him in shame at His coming.

- "...on that day" - also called "the day of Christ" (Phil 1:10); this refers to the Rapture of the church to heaven. This is a very different "day" than the "day of the LORD" referred to throughout the Bible (Cf. 1 Thess 5:2), which is a day when God's wrath is poured out on unbelieving planet earth.

- "...not only to me, but also to all" - the Bema Seat judgment of believers is not something you can opt out of. He says the same thing in 2 Cor 5:10: For **we must all** appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that **each one** may receive compensation for his deeds *done* through the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad.

- "...who have loved His appearing" - those who are yearning for the appearing of Jesus Christ to take His body (the church) home to heaven. Why would Paul say that those who loved His appearing receive a reward? Because we are living in a world system that is constantly seeking to alienate our attention from God back to the world.

— This is part of the "good fight" (v7) that we're engaged in. The believer that resists this allurements from the world and can't wait to be taken to heaven and have pure fellowship with our Savior will be rewarded.

<u>Scripture</u>	<u>Crown</u>	<u>Purpose</u>
1 Cor 9:24-27	Incorruptible	Gaining mastery over the flesh
1 Thess 2:19-20	Rejoicing	Soul winning
James 1:12; Rev 2:10	Life	Enduring trials
1 Peter 5:2-4	Glory	Shepherding God's people
2 Tim 4:8	Righteousness	Longing for His appearing

IV. Conclusion: How God met six needs in Paul's life (2 Tim 4:9-22)

While many pastors will skip over this section of 2 Timothy, the doctrine of verbal plenary inspiration does not allow us to do that. Verbal plenary inspiration is the belief that every word in Scripture is put there for a specific purpose, to meet specific needs, and to teach us something. Therefore, this section has just as much relevance to us as any other passage of Scripture, and it should not be ignored.

When Paul wrote this passage, he was at a time in his life where he was most desperate for God. He had been imprisoned for a second time, this time in a dungeon rather than house arrest, he was isolated and alone, in terrible living conditions, with little opportunity to preach the gospel or ministry to others.

Nero was the emperor in Rome, and he was about to burn it to the ground and blame Christians for it, so he would have moral cover to persecute them. This would launch the first wave of Roman imperial persecution against Christians throughout the Roman Empire. This was a time more than any other time in Paul's life where he needed to see the faithful hand of God.

In this last passage of this epistle, Paul articulates that at the time when he was at the low-point of his life, in the valley of darkness just before his death, that Paul says God

showcased His faithfulness. Paul will outline for Timothy that at the most desperate point in his life, God came through for him in six tangible ways:

1. Loneliness
2. Deliverance
3. Persecution
4. Spiritual hunger
5. Physical needs
6. Relational needs

Paul wants Timothy (and US!) to understand that he had no corner on God. What God did for Paul during this desperate time, God will be faithful for you at that time also. When we are faithless, God is faithful (Cf. 2:13). God is in the business of meeting needs in our life (Ps 37:25; Phil 4:19).

Paul's Two Roman Imprisonments Contrasted	
First Imprisonment (Acts 28:16-31)	Second Imprisonment (2 Tim)
Wrote prison epistles	Wrote 2 Timothy
Religious charges	Political charges
Local and sporadic persecutions (60-63 AD)	Neronian persecution (64-68 AD)
Decent conditions (house)	Poor conditions (dungeon)
Many friends	Virtually alone
Evangelistic opportunities	Opportunities restricted
Optimistic for release (Phil 1:24-26)	Execution anticipated (2 Tim 4:6)
Adapted from <i>Nelson's Complete Book of Charts and Maps</i> , 433.	

(1) Paul's fellow workers (4:9-13)

(A) Timothy is to come to Paul (4:9)

9 Make every effort to come to me soon;

9 Make every effort to come to me soon;

9 Do your best to come to me soon,

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

- Paul was alone, in a dark, wet dungeon of a Roman prison; he was hungry for fellowship. And those who he had trusted had deserted him (v10). Paul wanted Timothy to travel to Rome to him as soon as possible.

— Paul was needy for fellowship in the midst of loneliness. How did God faithfully meet this need in Paul's life? v17a.

— Verse 16 says that his first appearance in court, he was alone...everyone deserted him. In some cases, he dispatched his ministry associates to other cities to minister (Cf. Crescens and Titus, v10; Tychicus to Ephesus, v12). In other cases, his ministry associates simply threw in the towel and deserted him (Cf. Demas, v10).

- Fellowship is an important aspect of our Christian walk and ministry. In Gen 2:18, before sin entered the picture and while Adam was alone, but in perfect fellowship with the Father, God knew that Adam needed a helper, a companion, so he created Eve.

— Adam was in perfect fellowship with God, without sin, and God Himself said that was not enough. Adam needed someone "like him" to have fellowship with, other than God Himself (Cf. Eccl 4:9-12).

(B) Demas abandoned Paul (4:10a)

(C) Those Paul sent elsewhere (4:10b-12)

(a) Crescens (4:10b)

(b) Titus (4:10c-11)

10 for **Demas**, having **loved this present world**, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

10 for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens *has gone* to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

10 because Demas, having fallen in love with this present world, has abandoned me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia.

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

- "...Demas" - was with Paul for awhile, associated with his ministry, but at some point he was sucked away from the ministry because he "loved the world"

- "...loved this present world" - Demas is a good example of the seed falling among the thorns in the parable of the sower. He was born again spiritually, but the crop was choked by the "worries of the world" and the "deceitfulness of wealth" which "choked the word" and it became unfruitful.

— He is a good example of someone who was saved, but the lust of the world, lust of the flesh, and the pride of life choked out his motivation and priority, and he began living a carnal life

- Calvinism will convert Demas to an unbeliever in order to justify their doctrine of perseverance of the saints. They'll say he wasn't truly saved, but rather had "spurious" faith because if he was one of the "elect" he would've automatically persevered in good works until the end of his life.

— However, the problem with simply proclaiming Demas as unsaved is that Paul put him into his ministry (Cf. Col 4:14; Philemon 24). Do you really think Paul would put someone into his ministry if their salvation/justification was in doubt?

(D) Only Luke remains with Paul (4:11a)

(E) What Timothy is to bring (4:11b,13)

(a) Mark (4:11b)

11 Only Luke is with me. Take along **Mark** and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

11 Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

- "...Mark" - also called "John Mark"; Mark left Paul and Barnabas when they arrived in Perga in Pamphylia on their first missionary journey, and he returned to Jerusalem. We don't know why, but we know that Paul was none too happy with Mark's decision.

— On their second missionary journey, Barnabas wanted to bring Mark along with them, but Paul said, No way! Barnabas and Paul had a "sharp disagreement" that they split and both went their separate ways (Cf. Acts 15:39).

— Nothing else is said in Scripture about this disagreement between Paul and Barnabas, or about Mark, until this verse. What a turn around! Mark, whom Paul thought was useless for ministry thus didn't want him to travel along on his second missionary journey, had now become useful to Paul.

— The man that Paul had been alienated from, their relationship had now been restored. Mark went from useless to useful for Paul's purposes and ministry.

(c) Tychicus (4:12)

12 But I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

12 But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

12 I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

(b) Cloak (4:13a)

(c) Scrolls (4:13b)

(d) Parchments (4:13c)

13 When you come, **bring the overcoat** which I left at Troas with Carpus, and **the books**, especially **theparchments**.

13 When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments.

13 When you come, bring the coat I left with Carpus in Troas, as well as the scrolls and especially the parchments.

13 The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

- "...bring the overcoat" - Paul had physical needs...he was imprisoned in a dark dungeon and he was cold. We view this as minor, but Paul (and God) view this as major.

— Jesus promised that he would take care of our physical needs (Cf. Matt 6:26-34)

- "...the books" - *biblion*, used in Luke 4:17 of the Isaiah scroll; Paul is likely referring to the OT Scriptures

- "...the parchments" - papyrus scrolls; parchment was used for more precious documents, in this case this refers to Paul's personal copies of the OT.

— While in prison, Paul still wanted to study God's Word. We often think that once we've studied a book of the Bible once, maybe twice, that we don't need to study it again. If you think you've arrived after you've studied a book of the Bible once or twice, you're fooling yourself.

— There are always new things that God wants to teach us, and if we've studied the same book 100 times, there is still something new and useful that God can teach you the 101st time you study it. It is impossible to exhaust God's Word.

— Paul wanted these books and parchments because he still needed and desired to read and study God's Word. He wasn't too old, he wasn't too close to death, he didn't yet know everything he needed to learn. He still needed God's Word.

(2) Paul's opponent (4:14-15)

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me great **harm**; **the Lord will repay him according to his deeds**.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds.

14 Alexander the metalworker did me a great deal of harm. The Lord will pay him back for what he did.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

- "...harm" - *kakos*, most often translated as "evil" (Cf. 1 Thess 5:15; 1 Tim 6:10; Titus 1:12). We don't know what Alexander did to Paul that caused him "great harm" but whatever it was it left a lasting impression on him.

— The "harm" did not just get under Paul's skin periodically, this man did something to Paul that caused a scar, a lasting mark or injury of some sort. We don't know if it was physical, emotional, relational, or something else, but this man wounded Paul to the point that he had a difficult time forgetting about it.

- "...the Lord will repay him according to his deeds" - Paul took Alexander off of his own hook and placed him on God's hook (Cf. Rom 12:17-19). He allowed room for God to judge him and pay him back for what he had done to Paul, and likely to the ministry of the gospel (v15).

— Paul knew that God would do a far better and more complete job judging Alexander the coppersmith than he could ever hope to do, so Paul released him to the custody, sovereignty, and authority of God.

— One of Paul's needs while he languished in prison for his wrongs to be made right. Because he couldn't do anything about them while inside a Roman prison, he left it up to the sovereignty and wisdom of God.

15 Be on guard against him yourself too, for he vigorously opposed our teaching.

15 Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching.

15 You, too, must watch out for him, for he violently opposed our message.

15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

- Alexander the coppersmith was such an issue that Paul even warns Timothy about him

(3) Results of first trial (4:16-18)

(A) Paul's friends deserted him (4:16)

16 At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them.

16 At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them.

16 At my first trial no one came to my defense. Everyone abandoned me. May it not be held against them!

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

(B) God's faithfulness to Paul (4:17-18)

17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I **was rescued out of the lion's mouth**.

17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth.

17 However, the Lord stood by me and gave me strength so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the gentiles could hear it. I was rescued out of a lion's mouth.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and that all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

- "But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me" - how the Lord was faithful to Paul during his loneliness in prison. Paul felt the Lord's presence and support as he languished in a cold dark prison.

— Even in the position Paul was in, God was still faithful to meet his most basic needs. Much of that need would be met by Timothy. But even before Timothy arrived, the Lord stood with Paul and strengthened him.

- "...I was rescued out of the lion's mouth" - in 1 Cor 15:32, Paul says that he fought with "wild beasts" in Ephesus. It could be that Paul used "wild beasts" there and "lions" here as metaphors for impossible problems. Problems that he had no chance of resolving or overcoming on his own, without God's intervention.

— In 2 Cor 1:8-9, Paul said that the persecution that he endured in Asia caused him to despair of life itself. The problems that Paul encountered were so big that he couldn't see his way out of them, and thought that the easiest way to get out of these problems was to die.

— God purposely puts these kinds of obstacles or trials into our lives to increase our dependence on Him. If I'm in a situation that is no bigger than me, and I can see my way out of it, why would I need to depend on the Lord? I don't, so I won't.

— But if I'm placed into a situation or circumstance that is greater than me, and through human manipulation and energy I can't see a way out of it, I'm forced to trust God. When Paul did that with his insurmountable problems, he was "rescued out of the lion's mouth."

- It's sometimes easy to have a Bible-based knowledge of God's deliverance, but not an experiential knowledge of it. We can read the story of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and the fiery furnace and think that's a great story.

— Prior to this event happening in the lives of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, they could have given a good Bible study on the faithfulness of God. But it's entirely different to experience the faithfulness of God. When they emerged from the fiery furnace, they didn't have an intellectual, Bible-based knowledge that God was faithful, they actually experienced His faithfulness. Their Bible study turned into a life-experience study.

— This is exactly what God wants to do in every believer's life. God is not content to simply have some kind of intellectual knowledge of God's faithfulness. He wants us to experience His faithfulness. And how can we ever experience the faithfulness of God unless God pushes us to our point of need. It wasn't until they were actually in the fire did they experience the faithfulness of God. If they were never thrown into the fire, they wouldn't have experienced God's faithfulness.

— When we are placed into the fire, it's so easy for us to be angry at God or panic when circumstances become too big for us. We don't see the situation or circumstance as the hand of God trying to broaden and deepen our understanding of God's faithfulness.

18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed, and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom; to Him *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will take me safely to his heavenly kingdom. Glory belongs to him forever and ever! Amen.

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

- On the need of Paul around loneliness, you get the impression from this verse that Paul was not only confident that faithful God could meet his past needs, but that faithful God will also meet his future needs.

(4) Additional information, greetings, instruction (4:19-21)

(A) Greetings to Priscilla, Aquila, Onesiphorus (4:19)

19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

19 Greet Prisca and Aquila and the family of Onesiphorus.

19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

(B) Information regarding Erastus and Trophimus (4:20)

- 20 Erastus remained at Corinth, but I left Trophimus sick at Miletus.
20 Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.
20 Erastus stayed in Corinth, and I left Trophimus in Miletus because he was sick.
20 Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

(C) Instruction to come before winter (4:21a)

(D) Greetings from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, brothers (4:21b)

- 21 Make every effort to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers *and sisters*.
21 Make every effort to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren.
21 Do your best to come to me before winter. Eubulus sends you greetings, as do Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers.
21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

(5) Benediction (4:22)

- 22** The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.
22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.
22 May the Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with all of you! Amen.
22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.