



## Paul's Last Charge

After many years of ministry work of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, Paul finds himself in prison (2 Tim 1:8, 16). He is also quite sure that he would soon be dead (4:6-8), so this letter to Timothy would be his final letter. This means that 2 Timothy would be saturated with what Paul would consider the most important lessons of his life and ministry. What would he say to Timothy as we come to the end of the letter?

We have already read through the first three chapters. In each of those chapters, the Gospel message of Christ is central. Paul calls Timothy to Gospel faithfulness and suffering in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 continues Paul's exhortation to Timothy to entrust this Gospel to reliable people who would do the same to others and warning Timothy about false teachers. Paul reminds Timothy of the characteristics of the last days and contrasts himself with these false teachers. In Chapter 4, Paul lays down his final charge to Timothy before he ends his letter. Let's see what Paul says.

### Launch

- 1) What would you like your final words to be? Why?

### PAUL'S LAST CHARGE

**Read 2 Timothy 4:1-8.**

- 2) In whose presence is Paul giving Timothy his last charge? (v1)
  - a. What do we know about this Christ Jesus through Paul's description in v1?
- 3) What is Paul's charge to Timothy? (v2)
  - a. How should Timothy be doing this charge? (v2)
  - b. How has Paul described God's word in 2 Tim 3:16-17?
- 4) Why should Timothy do all these things that Paul mentioned? (v3-4)

- a. How should Timothy be different? (v5)
  
  - b. In our day and age, where it is so easy for us to “gather around [us] a great number of teachers to say what [our] itching ears want to hear” through the internet, how should we avoid that?
- 5) How does Paul see the end of his life and ministry? (v6-8)
- a. How does knowing what Paul says in v6-8 help Timothy obey the commands in v5? (Notice that v6 begins with a “for”, providing a reason and basis for Paul’s commands)
- 6) With Paul’s last charge to Timothy, how should we think about our Christian ministry or our church leaders?
- 7) How can the words of Paul in v6-8 be an encouragement of our Christian life on earth?

## Conclusion

“Preach the word!” That was Paul’s final charge to Timothy before he died. This goes to show how important it is in Paul’s mind. Scriptures are the very words of God himself (cf. 2 Tim 3:16) given to us, “useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness”. If that is the case, then it is not surprising that preaching the word is the most important aspect of Timothy’s ministry as he leads the church. Timothy is to do that with “great patience and careful instruction”. He is to be patient because there will be people who will not be listening to him (v3-4). He is to do that carefully, because he is handling and teaching God’s word. But no matter what happens, Timothy should keep his head in all situations and be faithful to the calling he received, just as how Paul himself has done so throughout his life (v6-8).

There are great lessons for us in this passage. All of us who are disciples of Christ need to be sitting under church leaders who are preaching the word of God faithfully. In our world today, it is so easy for us to gather around us teachers that teach what we like through the internet. We turn our ears away from the truth, instead of being corrected, rebuked, and encouraged through our leaders in our local church. Paul worked hard all throughout his life to be faithful to God’s calling in preaching and teaching God’s word. At the end of his life, he recognises that his race is almost done and he looks forward to the day that he will be with Jesus (v7-8), wearing the crown of righteousness. That is a great encouragement and example for our own Christian life – faithful and steadfast to God, looking forward to the day where we will meet Jesus face to face.