

## 2 Timothy 4

- Tonight we conclude our study of 2 Timothy, our 17th New Testament book study at VBVM!
  - To this point, we could summarize Paul's letter as an in-depth examination of a single problem – a certain weakness in the church at Ephesus
    - This problem may have also been a personal weakness for the pastor in Ephesus, Timothy
    - The problem?
    - Moving away from a ministry of clear, bold teaching and preaching of the word of God, in order to avoid persecution
  - As we've learned over several weeks, the church in Ephesus was a difficult assignment for a man like Timothy
    - It was pagan, worldly, and untrained in the Jewish scriptures
    - It was vexed by false teachers who sought to undermine the true Gospel
    - It was led by a young, relatively inexperienced pastor and teacher
    - And now the church was experiencing the beginnings of Roman persecution under Nero
  - Under those circumstances, many leaders in the church in Asia were already retreating from their public witness and ministry
    - Paul mentioned a number of men who had ruined their testimonies by shrinking back to save their skin
    - And Paul's comments to Timothy have strongly suggested Paul was concerned that Timothy might follow them
- So from Chapter 1 to 3, Paul has worked to reinforce the faith and diligence of Timothy
  - Paul's asked Timothy to follow his example of suffering for the Gospel
    - He's told Timothy not to neglect the gift God gave him for the purpose of fulfilling his ministry

- He reassured Timothy he has a spirit of power and courage, which will strengthen him if he walks by the Spirit
- Paul drew on numerous examples like soldiers, athletes and farmers to explain the need for perseverance
  - Paul emphasized self-discipline, patience and an enduring hardship knowing our rewards come at the end
  - And even if we should suffer persecution to the point of death, this is merely walking in Christ's footsteps
  - In the end, the Lord will remain faithful to us no matter what
- Finally, Paul put into perspective the false teaching and persecution Timothy was facing in Ephesus
  - He said Timothy had to avoid distractions
  - Steer clear of men who seek to move the church away from the the foundations of the faith
  - Some of God's bondservants will fall prey to temptations, but that isn't the last word
  - A faithful servant of God like Timothy can be useful to God in rescuing those who oppose the truth
- And persecution wasn't cause for excessive alarm either
  - The church was living in difficult times
  - Mankind is destined to progress from bad to worse, deceiving the weak in the church
  - And in the midst of these days, the church will be a target for persecution
- Yet it will prosper, so long as it holds fast to what gives it strength
  - So long as the church continues in what it learns from scripture
  - And so long as it continues to teach it
- That last point leads us into Chapter 4 where Paul concludes his letter with an everlasting charge to Timothy and the Church universal

[2Tim. 4:1](#) 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:

[2Tim. 4:2](#) preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.

[2Tim. 4:3](#) 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,

[2Tim. 4:4](#) and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

- You rarely find Paul giving instruction in his letters using such formal language
  - To solely charge means to declare or testify something under an oath
    - Paul says he issues this charge as a testimony from the Lord
    - In a sense, Paul says he's not playing around here
    - He's saying that his instructions to follow are specific directions from God Almighty to Timothy
    - And since they were recorded in scripture, then we know the Lord intended these words also be direction to the church
  - Moreover, Paul says his charge to Timothy is witnessed by God and Christ, the One Who will Judge the living and the dead
    - Paul is reminding Timothy that his faithfulness to this solemn charge will be evaluated one day by Christ
    - Notice there are two groups of people being judged: the living and the dead
    - And there are two moments mentioned: His appearing and at His kingdom
  - These pairs are linked intentionally
    - The living are the saved, and they will be judged at Christ's appearing for the Church
    - This moment is commonly called the Rapture, when Christ appears to claim His Bride and call Her home
    - Following the Rapture, comes the judgment seat of Christ, when believers receive their rewards

- But then the dead will be judged at the end of Christ's kingdom
  - That judgment will be for the unbelievers
  - Which results in a penalty of the second death
- So Timothy needs to consider carefully what Paul is about to say
  - He can't dismiss it merely as good advice or optional
    - He is on notice
    - The Lord will remind Timothy at the judgment that he was told
    - And if Timothy isn't faithful to this charge, there will be consequences
  - Of course, if he is faithful, then there will be rewards
    - The only thing Timothy won't be able to do is claim he didn't know
    - And likewise, anyone in the church working in a similar ministry role is similarly on notice
- So then what is this charge? Three words...
  - In v.2 Paul says preach the word
    - Timothy's charge is to preach the word of God
    - This the climactic verse of Paul's letter
  - After all has been said about the problems in Ephesus and the risks of shrinking back, it comes down to one simple solution
    - The solution to dealing with false teaching: preach the word
    - The solution to misguided or deceived believers: preach the word
    - The solution to persecution: preach the word
    - The solution to apostasy in the church: preach the word
- Let's look more carefully at what Paul is charging Timothy to do
  - Paul said to preach the word

- Notice Paul said preach the word, not teach the word
- Merely teaching the word of God would not have been sufficient for Timothy to satisfy this charge
- And it's not enough for the church today
- Biblical preaching moves beyond teaching in two essential ways
  - First, the Greek word for preach means to proclaim
  - Preaching is a public proclamation of truth
  - We can also conduct teaching in a public setting
  - But usually teaching is delivered to students in semi-private settings
- Preaching is targeted at those who weren't necessarily looking for instruction
  - So Paul calls Timothy to proclaim the truth publicly
  - Remember, pressure was building for Timothy and other pastors to hide, to avoid public witnessing so as to avoid persecution
  - The last thing many of them wanted to do was speak publicly about Jesus
- Yet Paul says this is precisely what must be done
  - Proclaim the word of God
  - Whether on a street corner, in a synagogue or while standing before kings and authorities, give a public testimony to the truth
- Secondly, preaching includes a call for the hearer to respond
  - Like teaching, a truth is delivered to the ear
    - But unlike teaching, preaching demands a response from the heart
    - Preaching takes a teaching, proclaims it publicly and demands the audience come to a conclusion about what they hear
  - Paul wants Timothy to drive the people of Ephesus to make a personal response

- Here again, Timothy was leaning toward working only in safe places, with existing Christians where he could avoid rocking the boat
- A pastor thinking like that can “preach” to the converted or choose his moments to avoid drawing attention to himself
- But Paul demands that even as the culture was pressuring Timothy to be quiet, Timothy should pressure the culture to decide for Christ
- And the thing Timothy was to preach was the word, meaning to proclaim the scriptures
  - Timothy wasn’t free to preach whatever message he desired
    - He was called to preach the word of God
    - Paul’s saying that all good preaching is predicated on teaching the Bible
    - Any so-called preaching that does not unfold the meaning of scripture has no authority or power
    - It’s merely pontificating
    - It lacks the authority of scripture
  - Furthermore, the conclusions of that teaching must agree with scripture
    - A pastor’s interpretation must be exegetically sound
    - His conclusions must be those intended by scripture
    - The preacher is not free to invent his own message, his own theme, his own response
  - In short, the Lord doesn’t need men to repackage His word or to dress it up with gimmicks or distill it down to three perfectly aliterate points
    - Contriving a preaching style that places the attention on ourselves, rather than on the meaning of the text, only distracts people from the word of God
    - Honest preaching emphasizes the power of the text and leads the preacher to fade into the background

- Preaching the word means approaching the word of God honestly, dividing it rightly, and returning to it consistently
- Paul issued this charge to protect the church, but Paul knew his charge would not be popular
  - Many pastors wouldn't like the demands and risks that come with preaching the word amidst persecution
    - And many congregations won't be happy to sit under the word of God
    - Especially if the result was conviction or a call to suffer for Christ
  - Which is why Paul adds in v.2 that this charge must be kept "in season and out of season"
    - A season refers to a period of time, whether short or long
    - So in season means a period of time when preaching the word of God is acceptable, easy and approved
    - Conversely, out of season means a time when preaching the word is unacceptable, difficult, and likely to result in rejection or persecution
  - Timothy's charge – and the charge of all pastors – is to preach the word of God without interruption and without concern for how it will be received
    - Preach it in season means taking full advantage of those times when preaching the word is acceptable
    - Out of season means the opposite of course
  - The church has been enjoying a season when Bible teaching was acceptable, going back to the 18th century
    - Even today, most places in the world still allow the Bible to be taught
    - And some still desire to hear it
    - But that's changing

- Today, it's easy to find pastors and churches that have forgotten Paul's charge
  - Many claim to preach the word from the pulpit but do nothing of the sort
    - Some even have the phrase "bible church" in their name
    - Yet when you listen to what is actually preached on Sunday, you find very little true preaching and even less of the word
  - In other cases, churches have intentionally moved away from preaching the word
    - They will tell you they've done so intentionally
    - And their justifications are usually many of the same reasons why pastors in Timothy's day were retreating from doing so too
  - Some pastors will tell you their congregations won't tolerate the word, since they will likely be confused, offended or "turned off"
    - Others will tell you that they are more comfortable with topical, "light" sermons (usually they aren't qualified to divide the word)
    - Others don't see why teaching the Bible from the pulpit is necessary (another indication of biblical illiteracy)
    - Still others claim they do preach the word, but in reality their sermons don't meeting the biblical definition
  - What's most ironic about our situation is that Paul gave Timothy this charge to counteract those same situations in Ephesus
    - In Ephesus the church had those who wouldn't tolerate the word or were ready to persecute the church if it preached about Jesus
    - And there were those who preferred ear-tickling worldly chatter about myths or other favorable topics
    - And there were those who remain forever untaught though they were always pursuing some novel teaching
    - And there were those who taught falsely
  - This is the biggest shame in the church today

- Weak pastors who refuse to teach the word who are setting themselves up for a poor judgment having failed to keep this charge
- But even worse, their disobedience has resulted in generations of believers unequipped to serve Christ
- The apathy or outright apostasy of pastors has contributed to millions of believers entering Christ's presence poorly prepared for their own judgment
- In vs.3-4 Paul says this pattern will only grow worse as our age progresses
  - Paul says a time will come when the church itself will not endure sound teaching
    - The Greek word translated time is literally season
    - So a time will come when Bible teaching will be out of season
  - You'll know it when you see it because the church will be anti-doctrine but pro-myth and excitement
    - Believers won't just be disinterested or ignorant of doctrine
    - They will be *against* doctrine
    - They will call it divisive, boring, unnecessary, confusing, etc.
  - Instead, they will seek for other, more exciting teaching, which Paul calls ear-tickling teaching
    - The term tickling of ears is particularly revealing
    - Tickling produces laughter in a child
    - But it's counterfeit joy, because it's not coming from the inside
    - It's external stimulation, and once the stimulation stops, so does the joy
  - Tickling the ears refers to a satisfaction or joy that is temporary and external only
    - It's teaching that never penetrates the heart to create lasting impact
    - And its enjoyment or value ends the moment the preacher stops talking

- It's entertainment instead of edification
- When this season comes upon the church, congregations will gain the upper hand over their shepherds
  - Congregations will begin to seek for (or as Paul says, "accumulate" or collect) teachers that meet their desires
    - Collecting suggests people maintaining a stable of religious teachers, like the way we collect recipe books
  - The point is no one is truly submitted to authority in this area
    - If someone says something we don't like, we simple walk away
    - And we pick another teacher off the shelf
    - We only stick with the guys or gals that give us what we want
  - It's a key problem in the last days church...no one submits to authority
    - That's why Laodicea is the city Jesus chose to represent the last days period of the church
    - The name of the city means the people ruling themselves
    - So it is in the last days church with everyone collecting teachers that tell them only what they want to hear
  - Secondly, the word desires is literally translated lusts
    - The desires the last days church wants fulfilled are lustful desires, not spiritual desires
    - The church isn't seeking to collect strong theologians who advance their spiritual growth
    - Rather, they look for men who feed their desire for money, power, strength or other lusts
- Of course, a church that won't tolerate sound doctrine, and wants easy, feel-good entertainment, will embrace myths instead of the truth
  - The truth of scripture is always hard to hear because it challenges the sin of prideful hearts
    - No one's flesh likes to hear they aren't perfect and lovable as they think they are

- No one likes to hear they may face sufferings in this life
- Everyone finds doctrine difficult at first
- That's true because our flesh is in constant rebellion to God and His word
  - And those who follow the pattern Paul outlines here are Christians living in the flesh
  - No wonder our church has become such a fleshly, carnal community
- Paul said the antidote for this is to preach the word
  - Preach the word to build up your congregation's ability to hear and appreciate the wisdom of God
    - Preaching the word keeps pastors from falling into a lazy pattern of repeating ear-tickling, folk-wisdom sermons
    - Preaching the word will correct the church's shameful descent into biblical illiteracy
    - And preach the word to counter false teachers
  - Name a problem in the church and I'll name the solution: preach the word
    - This charge hasn't changed down through the centuries
    - When it's been observed, the church has been strengthened and prepared to serve Christ
    - It's been ready to rebuke false teaching
    - And it's been prepared to face persecution
  - But when this charge is set aside, ignored or forgotten, the church grows weak
    - Godliness wanes...
    - Faithfulness is in short supply...
    - And false teaching becomes endemic
  - We're watching a changing of seasons happening today

- Congregations are increasingly intolerant of in-depth Bible teaching
- They demand ear-tickling messages from the stage
- So many pastors are moving their preaching in that direction to keep and attract larger audiences
- We're entering a time when the word is decidedly out of season, which is all the most reason why we need pastors to reprove, rebuke, exhort and instruct their congregations with the word
  - To reprove is to convict a person of sin by an appeal to their emotions (an emotional appeal for repentance)
    - To rebuke is also to convict but through an appeal to the intellect by explaining why a change is needed
    - To exhort is to encourage action in response to the preaching
  - To get people to move away from the wrong things and toward the right things, we need a fulcrum capable of dislodging their disobedient hearts
    - And the word of God is that divinely appointed tool
    - So when they don't want to hear the word, that's when they most need to hear it
  - That's why Paul adds it must be done with instruction and patience
    - You have to teach people from the word to prepare their hearts to understand and obey it
    - And you need patience for that process, especially in times when people don't want to sit for the word
    - Like a parent trying to get a young child to eat their vegetables
    - They won't like it at first, but if you stick with it, they will come to appreciate the benefits
- Then Paul turns again to encouraging Timothy to do better

**2Tim. 4:5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.**

- Paul gives Timothy three steps to fulfilling his call in ministry
  - First be sober
  - To be sober means to be level-headed, ready for whatever comes
  - So don't live naively without an awareness of the dangers and trends
- Secondly, endure hardship
  - Don't take the responsibility of pastoring without appreciating that it comes with difficulties
  - Pastors who take the path of least resistance, or whatever makes their congregations happy, aren't fulfilling their ministries
- Finally, do the work of an evangelist
  - Timothy probably wasn't an evangelist, but Paul is saying his pastoral ministry must not forget it's evangelistic potential
  - A pastor is always an evangelist if they work their ministry properly
  - That is by preaching the word publicly and with a call to repentance
- This is the call for every minister, but Paul is particularly concerned that Timothy takes up this role

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

**2Tim. 4:7** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;

**2Tim. 4:8** 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.

- Paul uses two euphemisms from the daily Jewish life to speak about his impending death
  - First Paul says he is being poured out as a drink offering
    - Every day priests performed daily sacrifices in the temple

- The final act of the sacrifice was to pour out a drink offering on the ground
- Paul compares his life of service to the Lord as the contents of that offering cup
  - His entire service was like that precious liquid being poured out
  - Eventually, the cup goes empty, and so it will be for Paul's earthly life
  - Like the liquid, Paul's life will be a sacrifice given to honor the Lord
- Secondly, Paul was preparing to depart from the earth
  - Departures were a common occurrence in ancient life
  - Journeys were required for commerce, religious observance, family visits, etc.
  - And journeys took significant time, requiring separation for a time
  - So Paul is implying he will be separated from Timothy soon but only for a while
- In both examples, Paul is referring to a death he must of known was coming soon
  - In Acts 9 Jesus says He would show Paul what he must suffer for the sake of Christ
  - So I presume Paul may have known when and how he would die
  - And therefore, he had insight to know his death was coming soon
- So to encourage Timothy, Paul shares his state of mind as he faced death in Nero's prison
  - Paul was reflecting on his testimony of service
    - He says he fought the good fight, that is the fight for the Gospel
    - He finished his course, which means he fulfilled his mission and calling as revealed to him by the Spirit

- And he kept the faith, meaning he has kept the very same charge he put before Timothy
- Notice these phrases tie back to the metaphors Paul used in the previous chapter
  - He told Timothy to think like a soldier or an athlete
  - And here he says he knows he has fought and run as he should
  - That's the best any servant of God can hope to know at the end of a life
  - That our testimony is a testimony of faithful execution of our duties
- That's the call Paul is placing on Timothy, hoping to inspire him to an equally good testimony
  - If Paul had reason to believe that Timothy could emulate Paul, then certainly any of us have the same potential
  - Don't ever believe the lie that Paul was special and the rest of us stand no chance to do as well
  - What Paul received he has given us in scripture
  - So if we take advantage of what we've received in the word, then we too have potential to equal his testimony
- When we do, we might also equal his reward
  - Paul says that there is a crown of righteousness laid up for him in Heaven
    - This crown refers to Paul's reward for fulfilling his ministry
    - The Bible often speaks of our eternal rewards as crowns of one kind or another
    - We see believers in the throne room in Heaven casting their crowns before the throne

**Rev. 4:10 the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying,**

**Rev. 4:11**      “Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created.”

- But scripture also says our rewards are tangible gifts in the Kingdom on earth
  - Our reward will be a portion of Christ's inheritance of land in the Kingdom
  - And it will be an opportunity to reign with Him
- So where do crowns fit in?
  - The answer is that crowns are the symbols of our reward
  - We receive the crowns like badges of honor while we are in the throne room waiting for the Kingdom on earth to begin
  - Once the Kingdom begins, we move from Heaven back to the Earth with Christ
  - At that point, we will receive the tangible rewards represented by our crowns
- Notice Paul says that this crown will not be his exclusively
  - It will be shared by all who loved His appearing
    - This is a subtle way of referring to a life of faithful ministry
    - A person who “loves His appearing” is a person living with eyes for eternity
    - It describes someone who was focused on that moment all the days of their walk on earth
  - So Christians who live their lives with an expectation for the Lord's return and all that it brings will be motivated to serve Him well, as Paul did
    - In that faithful service they will be well-rewarded
    - That's Paul testimony
    - And it can be ours as well
    - It's not out of reach...it's not too late

- We have this book to motivate that outcome, so use it as it was intended
- Now the letter comes to a close with Paul giving final instructions concerning men who he knew or worked with in ministry

[2Tim. 4:9](#) Make every effort to come to me soon;

[2Tim. 4:10](#) for Demas, having loved this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia.

[2Tim. 4:11](#) Only Luke is with me. Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.

[2Tim. 4:12](#) But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus.

[2Tim. 4:13](#) When you come bring the cloak which I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments.

[2Tim. 4:14](#) Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds.

[2Tim. 4:15](#) Be on guard against him yourself, for he vigorously opposed our teaching.

- Paul begins asking Timothy to visit him in Rome before he dies
  - Evidently, he didn't expect to live much longer
    - We don't know if Timothy made it or not
    - When Paul did die, he would have died the death reserved for Roman citizens
  - Roman citizens were not crucified
    - But that hardly means they died easily
    - As Walter Lock explains:

The constitutional method of inflicting capital punishment on a Roman citizen was by the lictor's axe. The criminal was tied to a stake; cruelly scourged with the rods, and then beheaded.

- Next Paul gives Timothy instructions concerning a number of people, probably to remind Timothy what was at stake
  - These men were probably other leaders in Asia, perhaps the men Paul mentioned earlier in the letter
    - He seems to have wanted Timothy to understand how high the stakes were

- So as to give him added motivation to stay the course
- First, Demas was a Christian who chased after the pleasures of the world
  - He deserted Paul as we read, running to Thessalonica
  - Others, Crescens and Titus (not the same as the book) did the same fleeing to Galatia and Dalmatia
  - The word flee suggests that Paul's arrest was cause for all three of these men to flee
- Paul says Luke remained, which is a strong testimony to Luke's faithfulness
  - As a result of staying so close to Paul, Luke was able to write the Gospel by his name and the book of Acts
  - Luke's primary source for both books would have been Paul
  - Faithfulness leaves open a door for the Lord to accomplish great things through us
- After Luke, Paul mentioned another interesting name
  - Mark had previously abandoned Paul and Barnabas during an earlier missionary journey, which Luke records in Acts 13
    - Now Paul asks Timothy to bring Mark with him to Rome
    - Because Mark can be useful to Paul
    - A simple example that a moment of unfaithfulness doesn't have to be the last work in our testimony
    - Pick up and move on in faithfulness and you too can be useful again to the Lord
  - Paul then mentions Tychicus was coming to Ephesus to see Timothy, perhaps to accompany him to Rome
    - And when you come, bring a cloak Paul says
    - The cloak was left at Troas with a man named Carpus and perhaps Paul was enduring cold weather in prison
    - It's the closest Paul comes to letting on about his suffering in his circumstances

- He also desired books or scriptures
  - These would have been Old Testament books that Paul wanted to read
  - Imagine Paul, a man who probably had the scriptures memorized, still wanting to read God's word as he faced death?
  - It's perhaps the best example in all his writings of how much Paul valued the word of God
  - One commentator observed:

There is an interesting historical parallel to Paul's request. William Tyndale, who translated the first New Testament printed in English, was imprisoned in Vilvorde Castle near Brussels before his execution in 1536. In the year preceding his death he wrote to the governor, begging for warmer clothing, a woolen shirt, and above all his Hebrew Bible, grammar, and dictionary.

- Then Paul warns Timothy about Alexander
  - He's probably the same Alexander mentioned in 1 Timothy 1
  - He did much harm to Paul, and we might guess it was either false teaching or maligning Paul's character
  - Either way, Paul warns Timothy to steer clear of the man but asks for no retaliation or punishment
  - The Lord is judge and that man would see the consequence of his actions
- Lastly, Paul wraps up the letter with a few instructions

**2Tim. 4:16** At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them.

**2Tim. 4:17** 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.

**2Tim. 4:18** 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.

**2Tim. 4:19** Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

**2Tim. 4:20** Erastus remained at Corinth, but Trophimus I left sick at Miletus.

**2Tim. 4:21** Make every effort to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, also Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brethren.

**2Tim. 4:22** The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

- These are the last recorded words of the Apostle Paul
  - He sums up the desertions as “no one” supported him, but he doesn’t want the offense counted against them
    - Paul’s words are similar to Christ’s situation at death
    - No one was with Him and yet He asked that their offense be forgiven
  - Paul reflected Christ’s heart even as he reflected his death
    - Including knowing the Lord stood with him in his suffering
    - And more importantly, Paul knew that the Lord was at work accomplishing eternal things through Paul’s sufferings
    - Paul was able to preach his message in Rome again and write a few more letters
  - Paul makes an intriguing reference to being rescued out of a lion’s mouth
    - It was probably meant metaphorically, drawing from the book of Daniel
    - A prophet persecuted by a godless ruler, yet God uses the situation to bring Himself glory
    - So it has been with Paul for many years as he ministered in and around the Empire to Gentiles
    - But eventually every prophet dies, even Jesus
- The ultimate rescue, of course, is our rescue from the second death
  - So that as we pass from this life we enter a new eternal life
    - In v.18 Paul talks of that rescue
    - That kept Paul’s spirits up and gave him the strength and courage to face death without denying the faith or concealing the message
  - This testimony of how he was preparing for death must have strengthened a young pastor worried about persecution

- The seeds of the faith have been watered by the blood of martyrs over the centuries
- And Paul's example illustrates how this works
- One man standing firm in the face of death inspires the next generation
- Not because we share a death wish, but because we share the same perspective of death
- It's a rescue from a fallen world and a sinful body to live in glory in an eternal Kingdom with Christ
- The letter concludes with greetings
  - Priscilla and Aquila were living in Ephesus leading a house church
  - They are mentioned in the book of Acts and were obviously important to Paul
  - And then Onesiphorus who is mentioned in Chapter 1
- Paul then informs Timothy of what came of two of Timothy's associates
  - Erastus remained at Corinth
  - But interestingly, Paul left Trophimus sick at Miletus
- Paul had the apostolic gift of healing, but he either didn't use it here or the Lord didn't allow him to heal
  - This reminds us that the apostolic gifts were intended to serve a greater ministry purpose
  - They were not ultimately to serve earthly needs
- Paul adds an urgent request for Timothy to travel before winter, when travel would have been harder and Paul would have been missing that cloak all the more
  - He adds greetings from a few men who were in the church of Rome and must have known Timothy from Ephesus
    - And most importantly, Paul tells Timothy that the Lord is with him in Spirit
    - The Holy Spirit living in each believer is the Lord living in us

- So while we await for the appearing of the Lord, He is literally present with you now
  - That's why Paul ended with grace be with you
  - You have been saved by the grace of God, but His grace didn't end there
  - The grace of God is with you, living in you, teaching you and leading you into righteousness
  - Lean on him for understanding and let him bring you to the end of your life one day with a similar outlook
  - And one day, we'll all be together with him, admiring each others' crowns