

Second Baptist Church of Doylestown

2 Timothy Chapter 4

7/8/15

Bible Study Notes

The Presence of God - Verses 1-7

¹I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; ²Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. ³For 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; ⁴And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. ⁵But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry. ⁶For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. ⁷I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: ⁸Henceforth 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.

4:1-2 It was important for Timothy to preach the gospel so that the Christian faith could spread throughout the world. We believe in Christ today because people like Timothy were faithful to their mission. It is still vitally important for believers to spread the gospel. Half the people who have ever lived are alive today, and most of them do not know Christ. He is coming soon, and he wants to find his faithful believers ready for him. It may be inconvenient to take a stand for Christ or to tell others about his love, but preaching the Word of God is the most important responsibility the church and its members have been given. Be prepared for, courageous in, and sensitive to God-given opportunities to tell the Good News. "Be prepared in season and out of season" means to always be ready to serve God in any situation, whether or not it is convenient. Be sensitive to the opportunities God gives you.

4:2 Paul told Timothy to "correct, rebuke and encourage." It is difficult to accept correction, to be told we have to change. But no matter how much the truth hurts, we must be willing to listen to it so we can more fully obey God.

4:3-5 Many speakers, teachers, and writers talk about the pursuit of knowledge. But often they don't want knowledge; they want power. Such people won't listen to "sound doctrine." Instead, they "turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths." You can see this everywhere—from liberal churches to university campuses.

People claiming to have a bit more enlightenment than what the dusty Bible has to say; people claiming to improve on God's words. Such people have several things in common: (1) They do not tolerate the truth. They have no interest or respect for absolute truth or any standard for judgment. (2) They reject truth for sensationalism. They want truth that fits their situation and makes sense for them. What they feel, what works for them, what seems compelling—that is their truth and they claim an absolute right to it. No one should even attempt to tell them differently. (3) They gather viewpoints to suit their selfish desires. Although they profess objectivity, their only defense for their viewpoints is that those viewpoints suit their desires.

Such teachers have a following because they are telling people "what their itching ears want to hear" These people are following myths. Be careful. False teaching can be found in many places—even inside the doors of some churches. Like Timothy, you must "keep your head in all situations" and seek God's Word for the truth.

4:5 To keep cool when you are jarred and jolted by people or circumstances, don't react quickly. In any work of ministry that you undertake, keeping a clear mind in every situation makes you morally alert to temptation, resistant to pressure, and vigilant when facing heavy responsibility.

4:6-8 As he neared the end of his life, Paul could confidently say that he had been faithful to his call. Thus, he faced death calmly, knowing that he would be rewarded by Christ. Is your life preparing you for death? Do you share Paul's confident expectation of meeting Christ? The good news is that the heavenly reward is not just for giants of the faith like Paul, but for all who are eagerly looking forward to Christ's second coming. Paul gave these words to encourage Timothy and us, so that no matter how difficult the fight seems, we can keep fighting. When we are with Jesus Christ, we will discover that it was all worth it.

4:8 In Roman athletic games, a laurel wreath would be given to each winner. A symbol of triumph and honor, it was the most coveted prize in ancient Rome. This is probably what Paul was referring to when he spoke of a "crown." But his would be a crown of righteousness. righteousness. See 2 Corinthians 5:10 for more on the rewards awaiting us for our faith and deeds. Although Paul would not receive an earthly reward, he would be rewarded in heaven. Whatever we may face—discouragement, persecution, or death—we know we will receive rewards with Christ in heaven.

Verses 9-17

⁹ Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me: ¹⁰ For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia. ¹¹ Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry. ¹² And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. ¹³ The cloke

that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments. ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works: ¹⁵ Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words. 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. 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.

4:9-10 Paul was virtually alone and probably lonely. No one had come to his trial to speak in his defense (4:16), and Demas had left the faith (4:10). Crescens and Titus had left, but not for the same reasons as Demas. Paul did not criticize or condemn them. Demas had been one of Paul's coworkers (Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24), but he had deserted Paul because he "loved this world." In other words, Demas loved worldly values and worldly pleasures. There are two ways to love the world. God loves the world as he created it and as it could be if it were rescued from evil. Others, like Demas, love the world as it is, sin and all. Do you love the world as it could be if justice were done, the hungry were fed, and people loved one another? Or do you love what the world has to offer—wealth, power, pleasure—even if gaining it means hurting people and neglecting the work God has given you to do?

4:11-12 Mentioning Demas reminded Paul of more faithful coworkers. Luke had traveled much with Paul, writing both the Gospel of Luke and the book of Acts (much of which is a firsthand account). Tychicus, one of his most trusted companions (Acts 20:4; Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 4:7; Titus 3:12), had already left for Ephesus. That Paul requested for Timothy to bring Mark might give us pause. Mark had left Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey, and this had greatly upset Paul (Acts 13:13; 15:36-41), causing a rift between Paul and Barnabas that was so severe that they parted company. Somewhere along the line, Paul had given Mark a second chance and Mark had proven to be a worthy helper. We don't have all the details in Mark's changed life or Paul's change of heart, but Paul realized that people can change.

There's a lesson in these few words. We should allow people to grow up and not hold them back from ministry or leadership for faults in the past that have now been corrected. When we encourage someone and open our minds to the possibility that he or she has changed and matured, we may be salvaging a significant ministry. Mark went on not only to be Paul's good friend and a trusted Christian leader (Colossians 4:10; Philemon 1:24), but he also wrote the Gospel of Mark.

4:13 Paul's arrest probably had occurred so suddenly that he had not been allowed to return home to gather his personal belongings. Because he was a prisoner in a damp and chilly dungeon, Paul asked Timothy to bring him his cloak. Even more than the cloak, Paul wanted his parchments. These may have included parts of the Old Testament, the Gospels, copies of his own letters, or other important documents.

4:14-15 Alexander may have been a witness against Paul at his trial. He may have been the Alexander mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20.

4:17 With his mentor in prison and his church in turmoil, Timothy was probably not feeling very brave. Paul may have been subtly telling Timothy that the Lord had called Timothy to preach and would give him the courage to continue to do so. God always gives us the strength to do what he has commanded. This strength may not be evident, however, until we step out in faith and actually begin doing the task.

Verses 18-22

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. ¹⁹ Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. ²¹ Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren. ²² The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

4:18 Here Paul was affirming his belief in eternal life after death. Paul knew the end was near, and he was ready for it. Paul was confident in God's power even as he faced death. Anyone facing a life-and-death struggle can be comforted knowing that God will bring each believer safely through death to his heavenly kingdom.

4:19-20 Priscilla and Aquila were fellow Christian leaders with whom Paul had lived and worked (Acts 18:2-3). Onesiphorus visited and encouraged Paul in jail. Erastus was one of Paul's trusted companions (Acts 19:22), as was Trophimus (Acts 20:4; 21:29).

4:19-22 Paul ended the final chapter in his book and in his life by greeting those who were closest to him. Although Paul had spent most of his life traveling, he had developed close and lasting friendships. Too often we rush through our days, barely touching anyone's life. Do you have a Paul—a mentor or teacher who provides leadership, accountability, and encouragement? Do you have a Priscilla or Aquila—a co-worker or peer who prays with you in times of stress, loves you, and supports you? Do you have a Timothy—a younger leader whom you are helping, encouraging, and discipling? Like Paul, we should take time to weave our lives into others' through close personal relationships.

4:22 As Paul reached the end of his life, he could look back and know he had been faithful to God's call. Now it was time to pass the torch to the next generation, preparing leaders to take his place so that the world would continue to hear the life-changing message of Jesus Christ. Timothy was Paul's living legacy, a product of Paul's faithful teaching, discipleship, and example. Because of Paul's work with many believers, including Timothy, the world is filled with believers today who are also carrying on the work. What legacy will you leave behind? Whom are you training to carry on your work? It is our responsibility to do all we can do to keep the gospel message alive for the next generation.