



"...poured out."

- **2 Timothy 4**

**by Pastor Tim Dodson
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1 I charge [you] therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season [and] out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, [because] they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; 4 and they will turn [their] ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. 5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing. 9 Be diligent to come to me quickly; 10 for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica—Crescens for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry. 12 And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 13 Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come—and the books, especially the parchments. 14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works. 15 You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words. 16 At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them. 17 But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and [that] all the Gentiles might hear. And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. 18 And the Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve [me] for His heavenly kingdom. To Him [be] glory forever and ever. Amen! 19 Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. 20 Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick. 21 Do your

utmost to come before winter. Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren. 22 The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. amen.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 brings us to the end of the earthly road for Paul. This is it...the last chapter of his last letter. These are his parting shots...his last words...his final ‘throw down.’ How will he wrap it all up? How would you?

There certainly had been a lot of miles traveled. A lot of cold nights, difficult situations, trials, and perhaps times of despair. But there had also been incredible victories, ministerial fruit that would remain for centuries, glorious moments of the miraculous... awesome outpourings of God’s power! Such is the life of a true servant of God. And Paul was there for it all...up front and center! I never read or even get a feeling that Paul had a problem with boredom. I never see him struggling for meaning in his life or purpose in his path.

2 Corinthians 6:4-10 “In everything we do, we show that we are true ministers of God. We patiently endure troubles and hardships and calamities of every kind. We have been beaten, been put in prison, faced angry mobs, worked to exhaustion, endured sleepless nights, and gone without food. We prove ourselves by our purity, our understanding, our patience, our kindness, by the Holy Spirit within us, and by our sincere love. We faithfully preach the truth. God’s power is working in us. We use the weapons of righteousness in the right hand for attack and the left hand for defense. We serve God whether people honor us or despise us, whether they slander or praise us. We are honest, but they call us impostors. We are ignored, even though we are well known. We live close to death, but we are still alive. We have been beaten, but we have not been killed. Our hearts ache, but we always have joy. We are poor, but we give spiritual riches to others. We own nothing, and yet we have everything.”

Tozer once said that the mark of spiritual maturity is the guy “who wants to be holy more than he wants to be happy.” Such was this man Paul! What man can compare his life and ministry to that of Paul's? He stands alone. Yet he was not meant to. He was to be an *example...a model*, not a superhero. He was still...*just a man*. At one point in his life, Paul had had it all...the world by the tail...and then he gave it up...gave up the world...and in the process, gained not only eternal life, but secured a place in the history of the church that few have ever achieved. Truly Paul holds a special place in the Kingdom “Hall of Fame.”

And through it all, there is not even a hint of remorse. No regrets in the decisions he had made, the sacrifices he had endured, the life he had led. Even down to the end! How many of US will be able to finish with such a determined heart? A completed attitude? Paul never complains, is never whiny...is never bitter. No griping that he didn’t get to have a house and family. Nothing about not having a career, safe bank account or a comfortable retirement. There was instead just peace. In “seeking first the kingdom of God” ...all the rest was “added unto him.” He believed it, he lived it, and he took it to his grave.

4:1

Paul begins this chapter with a clear and emphatic throw down. What he had been saying and would *yet say*...was not meant to be merely suggestion or good council, but a charge before God. He also seems to be reminding Timothy that there will come a day that he (Timothy) would be judged by God on whether he was truly hearing what Paul was saying and would follow through in such.

Indeed, “charge” is a serious word. A charge has even more punch than a command, for a charge carries with it the moral obligation to be carried out. In the Greek it has legal meaning tied to it, and is used as “to testify under oath.”

As much as we shun the idea in today’s greater church, Christ’s appearing and His coming kingdom are presented by Paul as real motives for our faithful service. We must get over the idea that grace means laziness and mercy is a ‘free pass’ on all that we are being asked to adhere to in scripture! Whether we want to acknowledge such or not, there is a reckoning day for us all!

Rev 20:12 –13 *And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books. The sea gave up the dead who were in it, and Death and Hades delivered up the dead who were in them. And they were judged, each one according to his works.*

This judgment is not for ultimate salvation and eternal life, for that is a free gift that was rendered by Christ at the cross. But we need to know this: God actually expects His love and blessing will be reciprocated in the form of our service and sacrifice. After all...as truly new creatures, supposedly our wants and dreams...our lifestyles, have actually changed and now we both desire and live different than the rest of the world. Not a little different, but VERY different!

We are told that during the 1000 year reign of Christ on this earth, those who have been faithful in this life will rule over ten cities. (Luke 19:17) May we all truly live in light of that coming day. May we remember that “To whom much is given much is required” (James 3:1).

2 Cor 5:10 *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.”*

4:2

This “charge” is one that is embraced by myself and many other pastors today as it was no doubt received by Timothy. Such a call is short and sweet, but also clear and without ambiguity!

Timothy is “charged” to not only preach but to “preach the Word.” Not philosophy, or morals, or politics. Not preach some of the Word, or preach from the Word. But preach “the WORD.” Precept upon precept, line upon line, **preach the Word**. All of the Word, not just selected passages that comfort us, but even that which warns, exhorts, and corrects us.

Preach it Timothy, and do so unflinchingly! For it is there that “all things that pertain to life” lay. The directions to eternal and abundant life. Be “instant” (gr) or “ready.” Such means “take a stand, carry on, and stick to it.” Preach it “in season or out.” In other words, preach it when it is easy or when it is hard, when there is fruit evident, and when there is not.

Timothy is to bring the Word to bear on the lives of the believers and non-believers alike. Correct, rebuke, and call the people forward into a life with Christ. It’s been said that the preacher is to “comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable!”

"Do this work with all fervency of spirit. Call upon those under [your] charge to take heed of sin, to do their duty: call upon them to repent, and believe, and live a holy life and this both in season and out of season...." We must do it in season, that is, let slip no opportunity; and do it out of season, that is, not shift off the duty, under pretense that it is out of season" (Matthew Henry's Commentary, Vol.5, p.848).

But to just whom is this call made? Just Timothy? Just those of us that are pastors? Or is this something that we all should hear...that we all should answer? We may not all be called to the position of the pastorate. For such is merely one place in the whole of the body of Christ...a body that needs all parts to function. But we are called to speak the word...to preach. I do it from a pulpit, but you may be called to do it from the family devotional time, the conversations with your workmates or your neighbors, through your relationships and contact with the lost and dying world.

1 Corinthians 9:16 *"... necessity is laid upon me; yes, woe is me if I do not preach the gospel!"*

Romans 10:14 *"How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"*

We are called through the Word of God, to convince...to exhort...even through our suffering to do so.

4:3-4

Paul was warning...prophesying really, that there would come a day when people would shun the scripture as it is written and would instead flock to a version of teaching that pleases their flesh, and allows for their lusts. A time when people would not be willing to receive the "pure" Word of God, but would rather gather to those who teach myth and fables, even just flat out lies, as long as it is palatable...as long as it is pleasing to the flesh. Such teaching that is focused on "modern politically correct thinking" and that feed our emotions...our self. Welcome to that time. A time when so many will "itch" the ears of those who want an "easy Jesus"...a "lite" version of the faith.

The fact that verse two says "they will turn away from the truth" leads us to understand that there will be those who are indeed being fed the truth and even *know* the truth, and will still ultimately walk away. The truth fell upon the "stony places," and though it was received with joy, it found no real root and endured only for a little while. When tribulation or persecution came, they walked away.

Or perhaps the truth fell amongst the thorns. The cares of the world and the deceitfulness of riches ultimately choked the word and it never found maturity and fruit. (Matthew 13)

"God deals in truth, but Satan traffics in lies. As a corollary God deals in faith, Satan traffics in fear. It follows that spiritual warfare is not a power struggle as much as it is a truth struggle and the battlefield is our mind. The only way to defeat the lie of the devil is with the truth of God and His Word. It therefore behooves all believers to make it their continual practice to take in the Word of Truth that we might be able to wage war with the deceiving Devil. Jesus is our model in this spiritual war with unseen forces of darkness, fending off the enemy's fiery missiles of temptation and lies with the Word of truth..." (Preceptaustin.org)

The fact is that man will accept doctrine that will stifle the conscience, harden the heart, flatter the mind— but damn the soul. Doctrine that is merely an illusion. A dream in the flesh that says ‘I can be a born again Christian and not receive and follow the written Word of God.’

4:5

“...but *YOU Timothy ...you be watchful in all things!*” Heads up Timothy. Be aware of the traps of the flesh, and the ways of Satan. A good shepherd has his eyes open, and a faithful servant has a healthy dose of skepticism.

Satan is no dummy. He is slick and he is patient. He will pick away at you and he will wait you out. He will play to your fears and feed your flesh. Such is not paranoia. He really *is* “out to get you!”

Timothy...and by way of the scriptural directives us also, are to “endure afflictions,” just like the “soldier” who was to endure hardship. Afflictions are a reality in service. It is the spiritual cost to “stepping up to the plate.” Service unto the Lord is not easy or comfortable. Jesus says “follow me...and I will give you a cross to carry.”

4:6

Paul is herein making reference to the “drink offering” of Old Testament Mosaic Law. Such an act was a symbolic offering before God. The pouring out of a drink offering is a metaphor for the blood Jesus spilled on the cross. Any offering was not complete until the drink offering was given and here Paul is using this terminology to show that his ministry is complete. What’s important in this is that a drink truly poured out, cannot be put back into the cup. It is “all in” in offering. It is a “no turning back” commitment and sacrifice. Those who turn back, only prove they were never poured out...

Very little has been taught about the significance of the drink offering, but it seems to speak much concerning our time. In an age of so much self-dealing, self-pampering, self-indulgence — we need to understand what God is saying to us in the drink offering. The Spirit of God is calling for the pouring out of our very lives as a sacrifice to Him. It is an invitation to empty ourselves and be poured out as a living sacrifice to Him — to stop hoarding and grabbing and gathering and getting — to quit squandering all the goodness of God on ourselves — to change our selfish ways of stuffing ourselves and sponging in all the blessings, and still lusting for more.

Paul’s final shot...his last duty, would be to give his physical life for the cause. He had given his life, and now he would give even his death. For Paul...his life was all God’s...every moment and every breath. Paul now refers to his death as a “departure.” Again, no remorse, no regret. He was a man truly blessed. He had found his calling, and had fulfilled God’s plan for him. He had obeyed, and by doing so had found that place of perfect peace in life and death.

4:7

What awesome parting words! Note also the clear picture of what this walk of faith truly is : *a fight*. No doubt about it. In the realm of the spirit, there is warfare. Are **you** in the battle? Many are quick to say “I will fight that fight” but they never really get around to it. And then one day their “departure” is “at hand” and they will realize that they never really got into the race at all. So for them, their departure will only be one of regret.

Paul had finished “his course.” Note: *HIS* course. Not someone else’s, but his own. He had traveled the road that was created for him before the foundations of the earth was laid, and he stood strong. He had kept the faith. He didn’t just end or stop...he actually “**FINISHED.**”

Acts 20:24 *"But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God."*

4:8

"There are two main words for crown in the New Testament; one refers to a royal crown, and the other refers to the victor's crown (the *stephanos*). Here, Paul is referring to the victor's crown - the crown that was essentially a trophy, recognizing that one has not only competed according to the rules, but has won the victory." (Guzik)

I can in truth speak with surety as to my own salvation. Paul too knew for sure about himself. Was he sure because he fought the fight? Or did he fight the fight, because he was sure? Are YOU sure today about where you stand? What is your tools of measurement? How many of us are coddling sin today and yet still believe that we are OK with God?

How many of us are dealing with bitterness, or gossip, or a divisive heart? We fail to love Him first. We fail to serve Him...or righteously worship Him...to love Him are above all others, and that includes ourselves. We hold back our time, our money, our passions from Him...and still claim we are born again and "conformed into the image of Christ." We still feed our anger. We still feed our lusts. We live for pleasure and we reject His Lordship. The truth is, we have not really "loved His appearing" at all.

4:9-11

Despite his very dire predicament, Paul is still hoping to see Timothy one more time. Maybe he did...we do not know for sure. It's interesting that the only thing that he seems to be going to miss is his friends. But he knows that even that will only be for a short time, and then they would be together again...forever.

Paul was not saying everything that is said in this chapter merely in terms of philosophy or possibility. He *did* lose friends. He *had* even been stabbed in the back by some of them. He carried the pain of these losses as we all do. Demas was mentioned in Paul's earlier letters as a fellow worker - but now he had walked away from both Jesus and Paul. That "M.O." *by the way*, is usually the case. When they leave you they generally leave the true faith too. It's a hard truth, but you know that it's true...

Luke was a true friend indeed. We find him there early in Acts, way back at the beginning, and we find him here by Paul's side in the closing days of his life. Note here too, that Mark is mentioned. This is the same Mark that Paul wanted nothing further to do with after he had dropped the ministry "ball" back in Acts 15. But Paul knew that God was the God of the thousandth chance, and we see that such a heart carried over into his own ministry. Paul had clearly not forgotten the forgiveness that he himself had received...

4:12-13

Suddenly the letter gets very personal as he heads into his closing. We can't help but realize that we are reading someone else's mail... written so very long ago. But the intimacy of it spills over even today. Clearly we know that God meant it's delivery to come to more than just Timothy.

Paul...the student and disciple to the end, asks for Timothy to bring the books and parchments. Ready to die today, and prepared to live for tomorrow!

4:14-15

We don't have any other info on this guy, unless he is one in the same as the Alexander that Paul had "delivered unto Satan" in 1 Timothy. I guess the absence of a positive record speaks for itself. This is Alexander's 'epitaph.' This is how *he* will be remembered. Alexander was trouble, and Paul was not only warning Timothy concerning him, but as was often his practice, Paul named names.

And for those of us that have not been redeemed...who have not received the covering of the blood of Jesus...the end payment will be "according to our works." And no matter how much 'good stuff' we perceive as having done, I promise you, it will never be enough. The point of all of Paul's life is this: **John 3:3** "*Jesus answered and said to him, 'Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.'*"

4:16-18

Paul knew early in his ministry what we all come to know sooner or later. And that is, no matter who lets us down...no matter who leaves us when the going gets tough, the Lord will never fail us. He will always stand with His children. Paul knew that if he didn't make it out this time, (and he wouldn't) it was not due to the lack of power in God's hands. Paul trusted God no matter what. **Do you?**

Paul knew that the Lord **WOULD** deliver him. But that delivery, for all of us, may occur by His leaving us here, or His taking us out of here.

4:19-21

Tell everyone hello. Tell everyone "good-bye!" Paul ends this letter, and departs this life with salutations to his friends and fellow-servants. Those who had fought bravely beside him throughout his life and ministry. Those that he fully intended to see again, and no doubt is in the company with today...

4:22

Paul's imprisonment in the Mamertine prison lasted until he was beheaded under Nero outside Rome's Ostian Gate at a place called "Three Fountains." The Mamertine is a bleak building still standing in Rome, built 100 years before Paul's imprisonment for those who were political enemies of Rome.

Paul wanted one thing more than anything upon his parting this world. And that was that the work would continue. That the Word would continue to be taught. That the gospel would continue to go forth. That Timothy, and thus us also, would be able to say "I *too* have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." I understand that sentiment...for I want the same for us.