

Continue Thou – 2 Timothy Series

The Preacher & His Pupil

Text: 2 Timothy 1:1-5

Introduction:

1. Title of series: **Continue Thou** (3:14). Strong emphasis in Epistle on encouraging Timothy to press on for the Lord, to be faithful and to take heart in the face of discouragement and difficulty.
2. Theme: Paul's last will and Testament to Timothy, his student in the ministry. Paul writes to put Timothy in remembrance of key things he has been taught by Paul as well as exhort and encourage him to faithfulness in the work of God.
3. Historical Background
 - a. Date: Written around A.D. 66. Paul martyred in A.D. 67. Paul is conscious that "the time of his departure is at hand" This Epistle is Paul's "dying letter" (Moule).
 - b. Written during Paul's second imprisonment. This imprisonment is clearly distinct from the one documented in Acts 28:30 where Paul was allowed a degree of comfort in his own "hired house". Paul's first imprisonment was instigated by the Jews on religious grounds. Paul's second imprisonment was instigated by the Romans on political grounds. At this point in time there was a great wave of violent persecution against Christians prompted by Nero's blaming of the believers for the great fire of Rome in July A.D. 64.
 - c. We get a sense for the conditions Paul is in during this imprisonment in 4:13. It seems Paul left Troas in haste and left some of his essential belongings behind (possibly arrested there). His mention of a cloak indicates he is suffering the cold and damp of the prison cell.
4. This lesson: Paul's introductory greeting to Timothy

I. The Penman of the Epistle (Vs. 1)

A. Paul's Office (1a)

1. "apostle of Jesus Christ" = Reference to His office as one of the Apostle's of Christ. To qualify as an apostle, you had to be an eyewitness of the resurrected Christ (Acts 1:22). There is no apostolic succession. The Apostolic ministry was a foundational ministry (Eph. 2:20)
2. "by the will of God" = Paul knew his calling came from God as a Divine appointment. He was not a self-appointed man. He was fulfilling the purpose for which God had saved him (Acts 26:12-18)

B. Paul's Objective (1b)

1. "according to the promise of life" = similar to Paul's salutation in Titus 1:2 "*In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.*" The propagation of the Gospel of eternal life was the objective & purpose of Paul's Apostleship.

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Primary reference to eternal life but also includes the abundant life of knowing Christ now (John 10:10)

2. “which is in Christ Jesus” = this eternal life is found in the Person of Christ. 1 John 5:12 *“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.”* John 17:3 *“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”*
3. Have you received Christ as your Saviour? If not, you don’t have life. (John 1:12)

II. The Pupil of the Apostle (Vs. 2)

A. Timothy’s Relationship to Paul (2a)

1. “dearly beloved son” = Timothy was Paul’s son in the faith (1. Tim. 1:2). He was likely lead to the Lord by Paul on his first missionary journey (Acts 14:8-21). It is of interest that Timothy was aware of the persecutions Paul had encountered at Lystra, his home town (3:10-11). Perhaps he witnessed some of those events as a young man.
2. “dearly beloved son” = Timothy was Paul’s son in the ministry. Timothy joined Paul’s missionary team during his second missionary journey (Acts 16:1-3). Timothy was “well reported of” by the believers in Lystra

B. Timothy’s Regard from Paul (2b)

1. “grace, mercy and peace” = the three blessings Paul desires for Timothy. These blessings experienced first in salvation but then continue to provide the believer with the resources needed to live the Christian life.
2. ‘from’ = these three blessings are viewed as coming from the Father and the Son

III. The Prayer of the Apostle (Vs. 3-5)

A. The Praise in his prayer (3a)

1. “I thank God” = thanksgiving a vital part of prayer and a key feature of the Apostle’s prayer life. Paul constantly possessed of a thankful spirit
2. “whom I serve from my forefathers” = the God Paul served was the same God as the patriarchs of Israel. Paul is often concerned to draw a line of continuity between the Old and New Testaments.
3. “with pure conscience” = Paul had nothing to hide. He was clear in his conscience towards God and towards man. Acts 24:16 *“And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men.”*

B. The Persistence of his prayer (3b)

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1. “without ceasing” = incessantly & persistently. Same Greek word was used by Jewish Historian Josephus for the continual hammering of the battering rams against the walls of Jerusalem in the Roman conquest of Jerusalem (Linguistic Key). Word used in N.T. times to refer to a cough. Not a single, unending cough but a series of coughs at brief intervals (H. Berry).
2. ‘prayers’ = Paul had regular seasons of prayer (note word is plural)
3. “night and day” = Paul prayed in both the day and night seasons.

C. The Prompting of his prayer (4-5)

1. A yearning to see Timothy (Vs. 4)
 - a. “greatly desiring to see thee...that I may be filled with joy” = Paul longed to see his junior in the Lord as this would bring him great joy and encouragement.
 - b. “being mindful of thy tears” = reveals Paul’s sympathy for Timothy. Paul understood the tears of the ministry and appreciated Timothy’s burdens. God’s men in Scripture knew what it was to weep. Examples: David (Ps. 119:136); Isaiah (22:4); Jeremiah (Lam. 3:48-49); Christ (John 11:35)
2. A remembrance of Timothy’s faith (Vs. 5)
 - a. “unfeigned” = unhypocritical; arising out of an inner reality of conviction. Timothy’s faith was genuine and sincere. ‘feigned’ comes from Greek word ‘hupocrinomai’ from which the English word ‘hypocrite’ is derived. Word was used of Greek actors. Refers to those who are insincere and fake (play actors).
 - b. The godly influence of Lois (Timothy’s grandmother) and Eunice (Timothy’s mother)
 - i. **The influence of godly grandmothers:** Grandmothers need to get a hold of the impact for godliness they can have in the lives of their grandchildren instead of capitulating to the 21st century mindset that says, “I’ve had my turn; been there done that!” Titus 2:3 exhorts older women - *“The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;”* Instead of spending your sunset years watching soapies, reading romance novels and indulging the flesh, invest those years in influencing the next generation for Christ so that you leave a legacy behind for God’s glory.
 - ii. **The influence of godly mothers:** Timothy’s father was not a believer (Acts 16:1) yet Eunice didn’t let that stop her from teaching her son the Scriptures. Chapter 3:15 indicates that these ladies were faithful in teaching Timothy the Word of God which laid the foundation for his salvation. Challenge: Even if you have an unsaved

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husband, or a spiritually weak husband, you can still impact the next generation by diligently instilling the truth of God's Word into the little ones.

- iii. **The quality of their faith:** The faith these ladies modeled was “unfeigned”. What sort of faith do we model for our children? Is it sincere and real or filled with hypocrisy?

Conclusion:

1. Have you received eternal life? Have you received Christ?
2. How is our prayer life? Are we cultivating a life of regular prayer? Do we pray for each other?
3. Are we investing in our children by training them in the Word of God?

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Be Steadfast

Text: 2 Timothy 1:6-18

Introduction:

1. Title of series: **Continue Thou** (3:14). Strong emphasis in Epistle on encouraging Timothy to press on for the Lord, to be faithful and to take heart in the face of discouragement and difficulty.
2. This lesson: Paul unleashes a series of powerful appeals to Timothy to encourage him to be faithful in four key areas.

I. Faithfulness in Service (Vs. 6-7)

A. The Gift to Serve (Vs. 6)

1. “remembrance” = Timothy already aware of these things but needs reminding
2. “stir up” = to kindle afresh, to stir up smoldering embers into a living flame. “To keep the flame blazing at white heat” (Hiebert). Fear has a tendency to smother the fires of service.
3. “gift of God” = Timothy had been gifted by God for the work of the ministry. Paul had already exhorted him previously to *“Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.”* (1 Tim. 4:14)
4. Each believer in the N.T. has been given a spiritual gift (See Rom. 12:6-8). These gifts need to be exercised for the Lord’s glory.

B. The Grace to Serve (Vs. 7)

- A. What God does not give – ‘fear’ (7a) ‘fear’ = timidity, cowardice
- B. What God does give – “power, love, sound mind” (7b)
 1. ‘power’ = Divine strength. *“...striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.”* (Col. 1:29)
 2. ‘love’ = Divine motivation. “That self-forgetting love to Christ, the church & souls of men.” (Hiebert)
 3. “sound mind” = a healthy, sober, self-controlled, disciplined mind
 4. These three graces would be needed by Timothy as he faced the tremendous hostility towards Christianity at that time.

II. Faithfulness in Suffering (Vs. 8-12)

A. The Attitude to Suffering (Vs. 8a)

1. Not ashamed of the Gospel message – “the testimony of our Lord”
 - a. John 15:18-19 *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”*
 - b. 1 John 3:13 *“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”*

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- c. Hebrews 13:13 *“Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.”*
2. Not ashamed of the Gospel messenger – “nor of me his prisoner”
 - a. The natural tendency of the human heart is to recoil from suffering reproach. The fear of man is in each one of us (Prov. 29:25)
 - b. It would be easy for Timothy to succumb to the pressure and not identify with Paul in his hour of reproach and suffering like many others (Vs. 16).

B. The Acceptance of Suffering (Vs. 8b)

1. ‘partaker’ = to share with, participate in; to suffer hardships together with one. Col. 1:24 *“Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:”*
2. “afflictions of the Gospel” = the trials connected with the Gospel ministry

C. The Assistance in Suffering (Vs. 8c)

1. “according to the power of God” = enduring the trials of the ministry and the Christian life in general is through the power of God.
2. Illustrations: Sergei Kourdakov (Forgive me Natasha); Adoniram & Ann Judson

D. The Anchors in Suffering (Vs. 9-12)

1. The Experience of Salvation (Vs. 9-10)
 - a. The source of salvation (Vs. 9)
 - i. “who hath saved us” = past tense. We are as surely saved as if we were already in heaven!
 - ii. “not according to our works” = human works have nothing to do with salvation. Rom. 11:6 *“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.”*
 - iii. “his own purpose and grace” = salvation was God’s plan, originating in Himself
 - iv. “before the world began” = God exists outside of time. In fact, He created time (Gen. 1:1). This salvation which we have experience was given to us in Christ before the world came into existence.
 - b. The revelation of salvation (Vs. 10)
 - i. “manifest...appearing” = both come from the same root word. Means to make visible or plain; bring into view that which was previously hidden.
 - ii. “abolished death” = Christ is the destroyer of death. ‘abolished’ means to render powerless, idle, inoperative. Same word used in Rom. 6:6 – ‘destroyed’.

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- iii. “life and immortality” = Christ is the Revealer of life.
‘immortality’ means incorruptible, not subject to decay.
This eternal life has been illuminated through the Gospel.
2. The Example of Paul (Vs. 11-12)
- a. His calling (Vs. 11)
 - i. ‘preacher’ = a herald. Was used of those who publicly proclaimed the official messages of the Emperor. Their message would come with weight and authority. Their message could not be ignored.
 - ii. ‘apostle’ = an ambassador, messenger. Reminder of the authority behind his message.
 - iii. ‘teacher’ = an instructor. Faithfully preaching the Gospel involves teaching. “Go ye therefore and teach all nations...” (Matt. 28:19)
 - b. His confidence (Vs. 12)
 - i. “for the which cause I also suffer these things” = Paul’s sufferings were due to his calling to the Gospel ministry (See 2:9).
 - ii. “I am not ashamed” = Paul was an example of what he required of Timothy (Vs. 8)
 - iii. “for I know” = Secret to Paul’s steadfastness in the face of trials. He knew His God.
 - iv. “have believed and am persuaded” = both these words in perf. Tense. “Paul’s faith was settled and he had come to a settled persuasion regarding the matter and was fixed in an immovable position.” (Wuest)
 - v. “keep that which I have committed” = lit. the deposit. Possibly a reference to his soul. Paul was secure in the Lord, knowing he was kept by His power. He had unshaken confidence in the Lord’s ability to do what he trusted him to do.
 - vi. “against that day” = the Judgment Seat of Christ

III. Faithfulness to Sound words (Vs. 13-14)

A. The Pattern of Truth (Vs. 13)

- 1. ‘form’ = a pattern, outline, model. Root word ‘tupos’ meant a blow. It was used of the beat of horse’s hoofs; the impression left by a seal, an engraved mark; hence, a pattern, a model. The word speaks of a pattern by which one can maintain the sameness of a thing. The N.T. doctrinal standard by which teaching is to be tried and tested.
- 2. ‘sound’ = literally means “healthful”. Pure doctrine is spiritually beneficial to the believer. False doctrine is like a disease (2:17)

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3. 'words' = the truth of God's Word is communicated in 'words' (Matt. 4:4). Note: This is why the modern versions omission of thousands of words and dynamic equivalency method of translation are so damnable. Example: The NIV removes the Saviour's name 178 times – "Lord" 39 times, "Christ" 52 times, and "Jesus" 87 times from the KJV N.T. (Keith Piper)
4. "which thou hast heard of me" = the source of these sound words – Paul (Apostolic truth).
5. "in faith and love" = the truth is to be accepted by faith (Heb. 11:3). Love will drive me to maintain a strong grip on the truth (Ps. 119:127) and to communicate it in love (Eph. 4:14-15)

B. The Protection of Truth (Vs. 14)

1. "committed unto thee" = Paul had been entrusted with the truth (1 Tim. 1:11) and he in turn had entrusted it to Timothy (1 Tim. 6:20) who was to then transmit it to faithful men (2:2).
2. 'keep' = to guard, protect. Timothy is to defend the truth (Jude 1:3)
3. "by the Holy Ghost" = the power to defend the truth comes from God. Note: With each of these commands, the Apostle points Timothy to the Lord as the source of his strength to obey them.

IV. Faithfulness to God's Servant (Vs. 15-18)

A. The Deserters of God's servant (Vs. 15)

1. 'all' = reveals the scale of the defection from the Apostle. Incredulous since humanly speaking, they owed their salvation to his faithful labors in the region.
2. 'Asia' = Asia Minor, a Roman province at the time. Same area as modern-day Turkey.
3. "turned away" = Could indicate apostasy or more likely, a desertion of the Apostle Paul in his hour of reproach and trial. Same word translated "turn away from" in Heb. 12:25. Same word used in 4:4 to describe those who turn away their ears from the truth.
4. "Phygellus and Hermogenes" = Paul named names in His Epistles! These men were obviously known to Timothy who was ministering in Asia Minor (Ephesus) at this time. They were likely church leaders who refused to stand with Paul in his hour of need.
5. Note: It is all too easy to forsake the preacher when he is under fire for standing for the truth, to stand aloof so as not to share in his reproach.

B. The Devoted to God's servant (Vs. 16-18)

1. Paul's prayer for the family of Onesiphorus (16a). Paul desires God's favor and blessing to be upon this family for their faithful support of him. He recognizes that the burden was shared not only by Onesiphorus but also his whole family.

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2. Paul's remembrance of the ministry of Onesiphorus (16b-17)
 - a. The name 'Onesiphorus' literally means "the help or profit bringer"
 - b. 'oft' = Onesiphorus was not a one hit wonder! His support was constant and regular.
 - c. "refreshed me" = to cool again, to cool off. The support of Onesiphorus was like cool water to a thirsty soul; it was like a breath of fresh air.
 - d. "not ashamed of my chain" = Onesiphorus was a living example of the command in Vs. 8 – "Be not thou therefore ashamed...of me his prisoner."

Conclusion: Are we being steadfast and faithful in these areas? Are we using our gifts for the Lord? Are we enduring afflictions with God's power? Are we standing for the Word of God? Are we supporting God's men in the ministry?

Endure Hardness (1)

Text: 2 Timothy 2:1-4

Introduction:

1. Previous lesson review: Timothy has been exhorted to be faithful to the Lord in a number of key areas. Theme of faithfulness continues through this section.
2. This section (Vs. 1-13): Timothy is to be strong and endure the rigors of the ministry faithfully, fulfilling the duties of the Christian life with courage and determination.
3. Outline: 1. The Empowerment for Endurance (Vs. 1) 2. The Examples of Endurance (Vs. 2-7) 3. The Encouragement for Endurance (Vs. 8-13)
4. This lesson: Study of the Empowerment for Endurance and the first two of the Examples of Endurance.

I. The Empowerment for Endurance (Vs. 1)

A. The Order to be Strong (Vs. 1a)

1. 'therefore' = builds on what has preceded. Paul and Onesiphorus were both examples of men who had demonstrated that God's grace was sufficient to empower them to endure their trials (Fairbairn)
2. "my son" = term of warm affection. Imagine what it must have been like for Timothy in his discouraged frame of mind to read these precious words from the Apostle.
3. "be strong" = literally "be made strong" or "be empowered". A frequent command in Scripture. Examples:
 - a. Joshua: Joshua 1:9 "Have not I commanded thee? **Be strong and of a good courage**; be not afraid, neither be thou dismayed: for the LORD thy God is with thee whithersoever thou goest."
 - b. Solomon: 1 Chr. 28:20 "And David said to Solomon his son, **Be strong and of good courage**, and do it: fear not, nor be dismayed: for the LORD God, even my God, will be with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee, until thou hast finished all the work for the service of the house of the LORD."
 - c. Daniel 10:19 "And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, **be strong, yea, be strong**. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me."

B. The Origin of Strength (Vs. 1b)

1. "in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" = the source of the strength (2.Cor. 9:8; 12:9). This strength is not something that Timothy works up in himself. It is a Divinely provided strength that Timothy is to consciously appropriate as he serves the Lord.
2. Eph. 6:10 "Finally, my brethren, be strong **in the Lord**, and in the

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power of his might.”

3. Charles Wesley Hymn: “Soldiers of Christ, arise, And put your armor on, **Strong in the strength which God supplies** Thru His eternal Son; **Strong in the Lord of hosts**, And **in His mighty pow’r**, **Who in the strength of Jesus** trusts Is more than conqueror. Stand then **in His great might**, With all **His strength** endued, And take, to arm you for the fight, the panoply of God; That having all things done, And all your conflicts past, Ye may overcome **through Christ alone**, And stand entire at last.”
4. Hudson Taylor: “It is not by trying to be faithful, but in looking to the Faithful One, that we win the victory.”

II. The Examples of Endurance (Vs. 2-6)

Timothy was to endure faithfully in a number of areas. He was to be:

A. A Teacher (Vs. 2)

1. The Subject to Teach (Vs. 2a)
 - a. Apostolic truth – “the things which thou hast heard of me”
 - i. The things mentioned in 1:13 “form of sound words”
 - ii. We are to transmit the doctrinal standard of the N.T. to the next generation.
 - iii. We are to teach the “whole council of God” and “all things” Christ commanded (Acts 20:27; Matt. 28:20)
 - b. Attested truth – “among many witnesses”
 - i. The truth by its very nature is open and transparent.
 - ii. Not secret, questionable doctrines (e.g. like the cults) but doctrines openly taught and received by credible witnesses. (See 3:10)
2. The Students to Teach (Vs. 2b)
 - a. ‘commit’ = to set before, entrust, deposit as a trust
 - b. “faithful men” = trustworthy, dependable, reliable, characterized men.
 - i. There is an order of priority here. While the preacher is there to be a servant to all of God’s people, he does have to allocate his time wisely so as to give priority to “faithful men”. Much reproach upon the Name of Christ will be avoided when we make sure that the men we place in leadership are men of spiritual character.
 - ii. Illustration: Neh. 7:2 *“That I gave my brother Hanani, and Hananiah the ruler of the palace, charge over Jerusalem: for he was a faithful man, and feared God above many.”*
 - iii. Paul surrounded himself with faithful men: E.g. Timothy (1 Cor. 4:17); Epaphras (Col. 1:17); Onesimus (Col. 4:9); Tychicus (Col. 4:7)
 - c. “able to teach others also” = men who are apt to teach and can be trusted to pass on the doctrines of the Word of God INTACT!
 - d. Note: There are four generations in this verse. Paul, Timothy, faithful men & others. God’s design is for the truth to be perpetuated.

B. A Soldier (Vs. 3-4)

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1. A Soldier's Faithfulness (Vs. 3)
 - a. "therefore" = on the basis of the preceding instruction. Hardship accompanies the man who faithfully seeks to transmit the truth to others.
 - b. "endure hardness" = what is bad, ill treatment, hardships. Same word translated in this same Epistle as "suffer trouble" (2:9) and "endure afflictions" (4:5).
 - i. Every preacher needs a hard head and a soft heart!
 - ii. Ezekiel 3:8-9 *"Behold, I have made thy face strong against their faces, and thy forehead strong against their foreheads. As an adamant harder than flint have I made thy forehead: fear them not, neither be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house."*
 - c. "as a good soldier" = a noble, excellent soldier
 - d. "of Jesus Christ" = every believer is a soldier under the leadership of Jesus Christ, the great Captain of our salvation.
2. A Soldier's Focus (Vs. 4)
 - a. "No man that warreth" = present tense. Describes a man in active duty. The Christian is not saved to a life of ease but to a life of bitter struggle against the powers of darkness (Eph. 6:11-12)
 - b. "entangleth himself" = to become intertwined with something. Webster: "To twist or interweave in such a manner as not to be easily separated; to make confused or disordered; as, thread, yarn or ropes may be entangled; to *entangle* the hair." Principle of separation highlighted.
 - c. "affairs of this life" = the ordinary affairs and occupations of a worldly calling (Fairbairn). Pursuits and occupations of civil life (Wuest). Note! There are no "reservists" in the Christian army; no part time soldiering for believers.
 - d. "that he may please him" = the primary concern for every Christian
 - e. "who hath chosen him to be a soldier" = we have been enlisted by Christ to do spiritual battle for him.
 - f. Illustration: Josephus' description of discipline and focus of the ancient Roman army:

"...they (Roman soldiers) do not begin to use their weapons first in time of war, nor do they then put their hands first into motion, while they avoided so to do in times of peace; but, as if their weapons did always cling to them, they have never any truce from warlike exercises; nor do they stay till times of war admonish them to use them; for their military exercises differ not at all from the real use of their arms, but every soldier is every day exercised, and that with great diligence, as if it were in time of war which is the reason why they bear the fatigue of battles so easily; for neither can any disorder remove them from their usual regularity, nor can fear affright them out of it, nor can labour tire them; which firmness of conduct makes them always to overcome those that have not the same firmness...the readiness of obeying their commanders is so great, that it is very ornamental in peace; but when they come to a battle, the whole army is but one body, so well coupled together are their ranks, so sudden are their turnings about, so sharp their hearing as to what orders are given them, so quick their hands when they set to work; whereby it comes to pass, that what they do is done quickly, and what they suffer they bear with the greatest patience." (*Wars of the Jews*, book III, chap. V)

Conclusion: Are we being reliable, dedicated & faithful servants of the Lord?

Endure Hardness (2)

Text: 2 Timothy 2:5-13

Introduction:

1. This section (Vs. 1-13): Timothy is to be strong and endure the rigors of the ministry faithfully, fulfilling the duties of the Christian life with courage and determination.
2. Outline: 1. The Empowerment for Endurance (Vs. 1) 2. The Examples of Endurance (Vs. 2-7) 3. The Encouragement for Endurance (Vs. 8-13)

I. The Empowerment for Endurance (Vs. 1)

A. The Order to be Strong (Vs. 1a)

B. The Origin of Strength (Vs. 1b)

II. The Examples of Endurance (Vs. 2-5)

Timothy was to endure faithfully in a number of areas. He was to be:

A. A Teacher (Vs. 2)

B. A Soldier (Vs. 3-4)

C. A Runner (Vs. 5)

1. “strive for masteries” = to contend in the public games. Greek word is ‘athleo’ (αθλεω). Our English words ‘athletics’ and ‘athlete’ come from this word.
2. “crowned” = the victors crown. In Roman times a wreath for the head usually woven of ivy, laurel, roses or oak leaves.
3. “except he strive lawfully” = obedience to the regulations governing the contest essential. “The athlete is to adhere strictly to the prescribed rules as this alone entitles him to obtain the crown of victory, even if his striving has been sincere and sacrificial.” (Fairbairn)
4. Challenge: The Christian athlete must run within the parameters of God’s Word in order to obtain eternal rewards. Sincerity and zeal, if not informed and governed by truth will not qualify the believer for a victor’s crown! Obedience is better than sacrifice (1 Sam. 15:22). The Bible contains plenty of examples of people who were sincere but who were punished by God for disobeying His Word – e.g. Uzza (1 Chr. 13:9-10).

D. A Farmer (Vs. 6)

1. ‘husbandman’ = the tiller of the soil
2. ‘laboureth’ = toils to the point of weariness
3. “first partaker of the fruits” = he first partakes somewhat like the ox that treadeth out the corn (1 Tim. 5:18). He has first right to the fruits of his labour (1 Cor. 9:7). “Those who endure hardship and sacrifice for God’s work, enjoy blessings that others know not.” (Fairbairn)

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III. The Encouragement for Endurance (Vs. 6-13)

A. Meditation on the Word (Vs. 7)

In this verse we have the twofold process for understanding the Word – the human & the Divine.

1. “consider what I say” = the human side. We are to diligently think and ponder upon the Word of God (Joshua 1:8; Psalm 1). This is not an Eastern form of meditation where an attempt is made to disengage and “clear” the mind. Rather, it is the mind being exercised upon the truth. Note: Christian meditation is largely a forgotten art in our day of digital saturation.
2. “the Lord give thee understanding” = the Divine side. As we are diligent to exercise our minds upon the truth, God illuminates us, giving us understanding and insight (1 John 2:27)
3. Note: This dispels the notion that we do not need to diligently study the Word of God.

B. The Memory of Christ’s Resurrection (Vs. 8)

1. “seed of David” = reminder of Christ’s Messianic credentials. He was the promised One who came of the line of David
2. “raised from the dead” = remembering that he served a risen Saviour would help fill Timothy’s heart with courage to face the battles. “The vision of a risen Lord is held up before Timothy.” (Hiebert)
3. “my Gospel” = the Gospel revealed to the Apostle Paul and passed on to Timothy

C. The Mentor Paul (Vs. 9-10)

1. The details of Paul’s sufferings (Vs. 9)
 - a. ‘wherein’ = the Gospel mentioned in previous verse
 - b. “suffer trouble” = endure hardness/affliction (2:3; 4:5). Paul points to himself as an example of endurance to encourage Timothy. Being a humble servant of the Gospel can get you into a lot of trouble!
 - c. ‘evil doer’ = malefactor. Same word used to describe the criminals crucified alongside the Lord Jesus (Luke 23). Paul is suffering the shame and disgrace of a common, condemned criminal.
 - d. “even unto bonds” = the extent of his sufferings. He was imprisoned and chained.
 - e. “but the Word of God is not bound” = God’s messengers can be chained and imprisoned but the Word of God is unstoppable! It is a sharp two-edged sword, a burning fire and a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces (Heb. 4:12; Jer. 23:29).
2. The purpose of Paul’s sufferings (Vs. 10)
 - a. “therefore” = on the basis of the fact that God’s Word cannot be bound
 - b. “I endure all things” = Paul exemplified what he required of Timothy in Vs. 3
 - c. “for the elect’s sakes” = the salvation of precious souls was what helped Paul to keep on enduring the hardships of the Gospel ministry. Paul knew there was a purpose to his sufferings.

D. The Motivation of Rewards (Vs. 11-13)

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1. We will live with Christ (Vs. 11)
 - a. “It is a faithful saying” = a key statement in the pastoral Epistles. Means that what is about to be said is trustworthy and reliable.
 - b. “if we be dead with him” = lit. “if we died with him”. Reference to our union with Christ in His death through salvation.
 - c. “we shall also live with him” = we will share in His resurrection power and life
2. We will reign with Christ (Vs. 12a)
 - a. “if we suffer” = patiently undergo trials and hardships with him in his cause and service
 - b. “reign with him” = we will reign with Christ
3. We can lose rewards (Vs. 12b)
 - a. “if we deny him” = if we are ashamed of Christ in this life, He will be ashamed of us when we see him.
 - b. “he also will deny us”
 - i. Matt. 10:33 *“But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.”*
 - ii. Mark 8:38 *“Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”*
4. We can rest in God’s faithfulness (Vs. 13)
 - a. “if we believe not, yet he abideth faithful” = Christ remains faithful to us even when we are unfaithful to him at times
 - b. “he cannot deny himself” = God cannot be unfaithful as it would go against His character

**Conclusion: Are we being reliable, dedicated & faithful servants of the Lord?
Are we living in obedience to God’s Word?**

A God-Approved Workman

Text: 2 Timothy 2:14-18

Introduction:

1. This section (2:14-4:8): Paul's focus turns to the need for doctrinal soundness in view of the heresies appearing in the church (Hiebert)
2. This lesson (Vs. 14-18): How Timothy is to respond to the heresies confronting him in the church at Ephesus. He is to be a diligent student of the Word of God, faithfully instructing those under his watch care in the truth. He is to both warn against error and separate from it.
3. The N.T. is replete with exhortations to faithfulness in doctrine. We need to make much of what God makes much of and value what He values.

I. Declaration of the Truth (Vs. 14)

There are two parts to declaring the truth; one positive and one negative:

A. Teaching (Vs. 14a)

1. "these things" = the things previously taught in the Epistle, particularly the immediate statements of Vs. 11-13 that impress upon us the gravity of our future in eternity
2. "put them in remembrance" = repetition is the key to learning! Much of our teaching involves this ministry of reminding God's people of things they already know to be true. 1 Tim. 4:6 *"If thou **put the brethren in remembrance of these things**, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained."*
3. A faithful teaching & preaching ministry is one of the best antidotes to doctrinal error. It helps vaccinate the believer against apostasy. Part of the Great Commission given by Christ is to teach "all things" Christ has commanded (Matt. 28:20).

B. Warning (Vs. 14b)

1. "charging them" = a solemn warning against error
2. "before the Lord" = 'before' means "in the presence of". The people of God are to sense their accountability to God in this matter.
3. 'strive' = contention; word-wars, word-fighting
4. "words to no profit" = error has no lasting value. See Titus 3:8-9
5. 'subverting' = to turn upside down. Greek word is καταστροφή from which or English word 'catastrophe' is derived. Same word is translated 'overthrow' in 2 Peter 2:6. False teaching has a destructive influence on people.
6. Note: The maintenance of doctrinal purity in the local church requires active oversight and monitoring by the man of God. False doctrine is not to be dealt with in a passive manner!

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II. Diligence with the Truth (Vs. 15)

Timothy is to be a personal example in his handling of the truth, in contrast to the false teachers:

A. The Responsibility to Study (15a)

1. 'study' = lit. means to give diligence, make haste, exert one's self. An accurate description of the discipline of study in the Word.
2. Note the word 'workman' in this verse. This denotes hard work and labor. We are to be laborers in the Word and doctrine (1 Tim. 5:17)
3. How much time do we give to the study of the Word of God in our lives?
4. What is our attitude towards preparation for the Gospel ministry?

B. The Reasons to Study (15b)

1. To be pleasing to God
 - a. "approved unto God" = we are to know and uphold the truth, seeking the approval of God, not men. Note: The preacher needs to be more concerned about his standing before God than his standing before men.
 - b. "needeth not to be ashamed" = a workman who has no cause for shame when his work is being inspected
2. To be accurate with the Word of God
 - a. "rightly dividing" = to cut evenly or in a straight line. Word was used in a number of ways:
 - i. To describe a stone mason cutting stones fair and straight to fit into their places in a building
 - ii. To describe the plowing of straight furrows in a field
 - iii. To describe cutting a line of road
 - iv. Means the word of God is to be handled accurately with precision, skill and care.
 - v. 2 Cor. 4:2 *"But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, **nor handling the word of God deceitfully**; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God."*
 - b. "the word of truth" = in contrast to "unprofitable words" (Vs. 14) and "their word" (Vs. 17)

III. Defense of the Truth (Vs. 16-18)

In addition to warning against error (Vs. 14), Timothy was to defend the truth by separating from error.

A. The Instruction concerning Error (Vs. 16a)

1. 'shun' = to turn oneself around, as for the purpose of avoiding something (Wuest). The Bible uses strong language concerning our required response to doctrinal error. E.g. 'reject' (Titus 3:10); "purge

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himself from these” (Vs. 21); “from such turn away” (3:5); ‘mark’ & ‘avoid’ (Rom. 16:17). Strict separation required from false doctrine.

2. ‘profane’ = unhallowed, common, irreverent. Word made up of “to step” and “threshold”, thus signifying something lawful to be trodden, commonplace, secular. (Wuest)
3. “vain babblings” = empty sounds/voices. Highlights the worthless nature of false teaching.

B. The Influence of Error (Vs. 16b-17a)

1. It promotes ungodliness (16b)
 - a. ‘increase’ = to go forward, advance, proceed. This is progress but progress towards that which is unholy!
 - b. “more ungodliness” = unholy teachings produce unholy lives. Corrupt doctrine produces corrupt deeds. False beliefs produce false behavior.
2. It spreads its destructive influence (17a)
 - a. “word will eat” = it will continue to increase in its destructive progress (See also Gal. 5:9 “a little leaven”)
 - b. “as doth a canker” = picture is of an infected ulcer or sore. Greek word is γάγγραινα (gangrene in English derived from this word). False doctrine is like an infectious disease that damages the spiritual health of the one infected with it. Sound doctrine on the other hand boosts the believer’s spiritual immune system and is good for spiritual health (See 1:13).
 - c. Hiebert: “Error is a diffusive poison which, unless effectively checked, spreads rapidly through the whole body and leads to sure destruction.”
3. Illustration: My experience with a nasty sore in the tropics

C. The Illustrations of Error (Vs. 17b-18)

Two men are named by the Apostle as examples of those spreading pernicious, destructive error.

1. Their identities (17b)
 - a. Paul named names in his Epistles! In the Epistles of 1 & 2 Timothy alone, Paul names false teachers and compromises 10 times (Cloud). Warning needs to be specific if it is to be of value to the people of God.
 - b. ‘Hymenaeus’ = likely the Hymenaeus mentioned in 1 Tim. 1:20 who had made shipwreck of his faith and was subsequently put under church discipline by the Apostle. Sadly, this man had not responded to the discipline with repentance.
 - c. ‘Philetus’ = no other mention of him in Scripture except here. Obviously, he was a prominent leader amongst the false teachers.
2. Their heresy (18)

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- a. 'erred' = to deviate from, miss the mark. Translated 'swerved' in 1 Tim. 1:6. They had deviated from the path of truth.
- b. "saying" = the content of their false teaching
- c. "the resurrection is past already" = they denied the truth of a future, literal, bodily resurrection, interpreting it rather as a spiritual event in the heart.
 - i. The truth of a bodily resurrection was disagreeable to the Greek way of thinking. This is why the Apostle Paul encountered mockery when he preached the resurrection to the Athenians on Mars Hill (Acts 17:22-34). False doctrine that makes the Christian faith seem more agreeable to secular thinking will always gain rapid popularity (e.g. Theistic evolution; Hell is not living up to your potential in this life)
 - ii. The future resurrection of the believer is in the category of prophetic things. This area of the Word of God is often relegated to a "non-essential" position by much of modern Evangelicalism.
 - iii. In denying the future resurrection of believers, they also undermined the past resurrection of Christ which is foundational and essential to the Christian faith (1 Cor. 15).
- d. "overthrow the faith of some" = to turn upside down. Highlights the damaging effect of their teachings, illustrating the warnings of the previous verses – 'subverting' (Vs. 14); "increase unto ungodliness" (Vs. 16); "eat as a canker" (Vs. 17)

Conclusion:

1. What is our attitude towards a faithful declaration of doctrine and warning against error? Do we have a biblical attitude or have we been affected by the 21st century "judge not" mood?
2. What level of priority do we place upon educating ourselves in the Word of God? Is personal Bible study important to us? Do we come to church with a heart to be instructed, a heart to learn?

A Vessel unto Honour

Text: 2 Timothy 2:19-26

Introduction:

1. This section (2:14-4:8): Paul's focus turns to the need for doctrinal soundness in view of the heresies appearing in the church (Hiebert)
2. The N.T. is replete with exhortations to faithfulness in doctrine. We need to make much of what God makes much of and value what He values.
3. This lesson (Vs. 19-26): Further instructions on how Timothy is to handle false teachers and false doctrine in the church. As Timothy is faithful to obey these instructions, he will be a vessel unto honor – one who receives the Lord's commendation and approval.

In order to be a vessel unto honor, Timothy needed to...

I. **Purge Himself (Vs. 19-21)**

There are two aspects to purging oneself from error:

A. **Separate from Error (Vs. 19)**

1. The illustration of the foundation (19a)
 - a. 'nevertheless' = notwithstanding, in opposition to.
 - b. "foundation of God standeth sure" = God's foundation is firm and immovable despite the fact the faith of individuals being overthrown by false teachers (Vs. 18)
 - c. "this seal" = mark of ownership, security and authenticity.
 - d. "the Lord knoweth them that are his" = God's true children, known from eternity past, are the proof of this unshakable foundation. "They are marked by God so as to be recognized by Him as His." (Wuest)
 - e. "depart from iniquity" = the personal responsibility of each believer who professes the Name of Christ.
2. The responsibility of the believer (19b)

B. **Segregate Error (Vs. 20-21)**

1. The illustration (Vs. 20)
 - a. "a great house" = picture of the church (See 1 Tim. 3:15)
 - b. "vessels of gold and silver" = picture of the true believers who are vessels of honor
 - c. "vessels of wood and of earth" = picture of spurious believers and false teachers like Hymenaeus & Philetus (Vs. 17) who are vessels of dishonor.
2. The application (Vs. 21)
 - a. 'therefore' = application of figure in previous verse

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- b. “purge himself” = to cleanse out, clean thoroughly. “Reference not merely to an inner moral separation but also to an outward separation. Involved is the obligation to refuse to fellowship with such enemies of the fundamentals of the faith.” (Hiebert)
- c. “from these” = the dishonorable vessels of Vs. 20.
- d. “he shall be” = the outcome and result of obedience to this command. He will become an honorable vessel with the following three qualities:
 - i. A holy vessel – ‘sanctified’ = set apart for special purposes
 - ii. A Useful vessel – ‘meet’ = usable, useful, profitable
 - iii. An Equipped vessel – ‘prepared’ = made ready, equipped. “every good work” = all types of Christian service
 - iv. Note! To be successful in ministry from God’s perspective means taking a strict line of separation from falsehood.

II. Pursue Holiness (Vs. 22)

Timothy is to pursue a life of personal purity amid doctrinal error. There are two aspects to this – one negative and the other positive:

A. Flee Sinfulness (Vs. 22a)

- 1. ‘flee’ = run away from! The opposite to the attitude that prevails today of seeing how close we can get to the edge of the cliff without falling off; the soft and careless approach to sin. We need to be like Joseph – “...and he left his garment in her hand, and fled, and got him out.” (Gen. 39:12)
- 2. “youthful lusts” = the sins often connected with the unrestrained passions of youth. Definitely points to sensual sins (immorality, immodesty) but also includes other youthful tendencies such as pride

B. Follow Holiness (Vs. 22b)

- 1. Note: “These are the two important aspects to Christian victory: avoiding sin and following righteousness. One without the other does not work. If I put evil things out of my life, I create a vacuum that must be filled with things that are godly.” (Cloud)
- 2. ‘follow’ = to pursue (like a hunter). Word translated ‘persecute’ 28 times in the N.T. Example: “Saul, Saul, why **persecutest** thou me?” (Acts 9:4)
- 3. ‘righteousness’ = that which is right; practical holiness
- 4. ‘faith’ = trust and confidence in God
- 5. ‘charity’ = Christian love
- 6. ‘peace’ = peace of heart and peace with other believers

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7. Fairbairn: “In short, maintain a character such as becomes the Gospel of Christ.”
8. “with them” = in company with. Timothy is to pursue the Lord in company with others who are also in pursuit of godliness. The people we associate closely with have a profound impact on our spiritual lives. Spending lots of time in God’s house with God’s people will help keep us out of mischief!
 - a. Prov. 13:20 *“He that walketh with wise men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed.”*
 - b. 1 Cor. 15:33 *“Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”* ‘communications’ = association, company. ‘manners’ comes from the Greek word ‘ethos’ that forms the basis of our English word ‘ethics’
 - c. It is interesting to note that one of the qualifications of a pastor is that he is to be “a lover of good men” (Titus 1:8)

III. Practice Humility (Vs. 23-26)

Timothy is to help those who are deceived and seek their salvation.

A. The Demeanor of God’s servant (Vs. 23-25a)

1. Avoid Fleshly Strife (Vs. 23-24a)
 - a. ‘foolish’ = stupid, senseless
 - b. ‘unlearned’ = ignorant, untrained
 - c. ‘avoid’ = to refuse, decline
 - d. ‘knowing’ = the understanding that underpins the decision not to engage in strife of this nature
 - e. “they do gender strifes” = they produce & beget quarrels, fights & disputes. “They give birth to bitter controversies.” (Hiebert)
 - f. Haldane: “Christians seldom argue one another into their views, and more frequently each is more confirmed in his own opinion.” (Pg. 594)
2. Display Christ-like Attitudes (24b-25a)
 - a. ‘gentle’ = opposite of harsh and irritable. He must be mild, benevolent & approachable. This includes those who oppose him (note “all men”) (Hiebert)
 - b. “apt to teach” = skillful in teaching (See Titus 1:9)
 - c. ‘patient’ = forbearing
 - d. ‘meekness’ = humble patience & forbearance (i.e. in the face of provocation & irritation)
 - e. ‘instructing’ = Greek word used of child discipline and training. “Such persons need to be firmly met, and brought under a corrective, wholesome administration, yet conducted with a meek and forbearing spirit.” (Fairbairn)

B. The Desire (aim) of God’s servant (Vs. 25b-26)

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The reason we treat those caught up in error in this manner is that we desire the following:

1. That God will give them repentance (Vs. 25b)
 - a. 'peradventure' = by chance, perhaps, it may be
 - b. "God will give them repentance" = Repentance presented here as a Divine gift. Only God can deliver someone ensnared by the devil in false doctrine. Repentance in Scripture is both a Divine gift and a responsibility on the part of the sinner (See Acts 17:30)
 - c. "to the acknowledgment of the truth" = full knowledge of the truth
2. That they will be recovered from Satan's snares (Vs. 26)
 - a. "recover themselves" = 'recover' means to return to soberness. "The parties in question are contemplated as having sunk into a kind of drunken or benumbed state, through the artful devices of the great adversary." (Fairbairn)
 - b. "snare of the devil" = what an ugly picture of false teaching! To be caught up in false doctrine is to be trapped in a Satanic trap (See 1 Tim. 4:1)
 - c. "taken captive by him at his will" = they are under the control and dominion of Satan

Conclusion:

1. How important is separation to us?
2. Are we actively pursuing a life of holiness and growth in Christlikeness in company with other believers of like mind?
3. How do we handle those ensnared in Satanic falsehood? Do we seek their deliverance through patient instruction or do we resort to fleshly contention?

Dangerous Times are Coming (1)

Text: 2 Timothy 3:1-4

Introduction:

1. This section (2:14-4:8): Paul's focus turns to the need for doctrinal soundness in view of the heresies appearing in the church (Hiebert)
2. This chapter: Paul warns Timothy of the coming apostasy of the last days (Vs.1-9), cites his own example as a contrast to the apostates (Vs. 10-13) and then exhorts him to live a life distinct from the apostates in conformity to the Scriptures (Vs. 14-17).
3. Outline of Vs. 1-9
 - I. The Certainty of Perilous Times (Vs. 1)
 - II. The Depravity of Perilous Times (Vs. 2-4)
 - III. The Religiosity of Perilous Times (Vs. 5)
 - IV. The Immorality of Perilous Times (Vs. 6)
 - V. The Illiteracy of Perilous Times (Vs. 7)
 - VI. The Obstinacy of Perilous Times (Vs. 8-9)
4. This lesson: We will cover the first two of the above 6 points

I. The Certainty of Perilous Times (Vs. 1)

A. The Perceiving of Perilous Times (Vs. 1a)

1. "this know" = Paul wants Timothy to be alert and aware of this truth. It is vital that we understand the times in which we live (1 Chr. 12:32). Many believers today are asleep and are ignorant of what is happening around them. This is the opposite to the mindset required in this verse.
2. 'perilous' = hard, difficult, violent, fierce, wild, hazardous, dangerous. Examples of how we might use the word today – "the perilous journey" or "a perilous situation"

B. The Period of Perilous Times (Vs. 1b)

1. "last days" = time just preceding the rapture of the church
2. 'times' – seasons. These seasons have come down through the ages but intensify as we get closer to the return of Christ (Vs. 13)
3. "shall come" = future tense. A sure and certain fact.

II. The Depravity of Perilous Times (Vs. 2-4)

There are 18 characteristics of end time apostates listed in these verses:

A. Self-lovers = fond of self

1. Word made up of 'phileo' "to be affectionately fond of", and 'autos' meaning "self". (Wuest)
2. Illustration: 'Narcissism' is a term we use today to describe someone who is excessively self-admiring. The term originated

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from Greek mythology, where the young Narcissus fell in love with his own image reflected in a pool of water and eventually turned into a flower that bears his name, the narcissus (modern day daffodil or jonquil).

3. Illustration: The “selfie” generation
 - a. Internet Celebrity Face (Friday Church News Notes, December 15, 2017, www.wayoflife.org, fbns@wayoflife.org, 866-295-4143)

China has taken the selfie craze to a new level of vanity by means of apps that enhance one’s appearance. The most popular are produced by the multi-billion-dollar company Meitu. Its first photo-editing app, which appeared in 2008, bears the company’s name *Meitu* (“beautiful picture”). Other apps have followed, including *BeautyPlus* and *MakeupPlus*. They do things such as lighten the skin, smooth the complexion, remove freckles, whiten the teeth, enlarge the eyes, apply makeup and hair color, even slim and contour the face. Meitu’s apps are installed on more than a billion phones in China and across Asia and **generate six billion photos a month** (“China’s Selfie Obsession,” *The New Yorker*, Dec. 18 & 25, 2017). Meitu also sells smartphones that are designed specifically for selfies, with more powerful front-facing cameras and built-in beautifying apps “that start working their magic the moment a picture has been taken.” The name for the “new kind of face” produced by Meitu apps is *wang hong lian* (“Internet-celebrity face”). *Meitu* has actually become a verb in the Chinese lexicon, but it is an exercise in fantasy. It is purest vanity. Of those *billions* of selfies, how many are even looked at by anyone other than the photographer? Who cares? Where will those selfies be even in one week, not to speak of five years? It is narcissism and escapism, and it is a major sign of the times. We would warn God’s people not to be conformed to the vanity and foolishness of the world. Spend the precious hours of your fleeting life on things of eternal value.

- b. According to the U.K. Daily mail, estimates done in 2014 revealed that approximately 17 million selfies are uploaded to social media each week totally a staggering 884 million per year. Google reports that in 2015, 24 billion selfies were uploaded to its Photos app.
4. Fairbairn: “But in proportion as the spirit of selfishness should at any time prevail, the others might be expected in a corresponding ration to follow. That spirit fitly stands at the head of this black catalogue of moral evils, being in a manner the root-quality out of which the rest will, as circumstances admit, inevitably spring.”
5. Note: Self-love is the complete opposite to Christian discipleship – “...*If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me.*” (Luke 9:23)
- B. Covetous** = lit. a lover of silver (money). There’s nothing wrong with having money, so long as money doesn’t have you!
- C. Boasters** = braggers, making exaggerated claims about oneself
- D. Proud** = means “to show above”. Refers to one who shows himself to be above other people, haughty (Wuest).
- E. Blasphemers** = railing, abusive, slanderous speech. This can be directed towards God or man.
- F. Disobedient** = disrespect and rebellion against parental position and authority. From this disrespect of parental authority flows a disregard to all other authority.

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- G. Unthankful** = unappreciative of benefits and blessings received (Hiebert). How true this is of modern Christendom in our society! We live in one of the wealthiest times of human history yet we are shockingly ungrateful.
- H. Unholy** = wicked and sinful
- I. Unnatural** = without family love
1. E.g. the love that normally is exhibited between parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters.
 2. Illustration: The modern abortion industry. Worldwide, 55 million unborn children are killed every year. This makes for approx. 105 per minute.
 3. Illustration: The modern child care phenomenon
- J. Trucebreakers** = implacable. One who will not be appeased, mollified or pacified.
1. One who refuses to enter into a truce to terminate a state of hostilities. 'truce' = a suspension of arms by agreement, cessation of hostilities.
 2. Same word is used to describe the unsaved world in Romans 1:31. Translated 'implacable'
 3. "They resist all efforts to reconciliation." (Hiebert Pg. 84)
- K. False accusers** = slanderers.
1. Webster: Slander is "A false tale or report maliciously uttered. and tending to injure the reputation of another by lessening him in the esteem of his fellow citizens."
 2. Greek word is *diabolos* (δίαβολος) which literally means devil (translated devil 35 times in N.T.). A false accuser aligns himself with the work of the evil one. Rev. 12:10 describes Satan as "the accuser of the brethren"
- L. Incontinent** = no self-control. They have never learned to exercise a restraint upon their lusts and passions. They are "devoid of inner self-government."
- M. Fierce** = savage, un-tame (e.g. a wild animal)
- N. Despisers** = lit. "not lovers of good men." They are haters of good men. This is the attitude of apostate Christendom with its sneering attitude towards holy, separated living.
- O. Traitors** = betraying confidence and trust, disloyal. Illustration: The 'committed' generation (Grandma)
- P. Heady** = rash and reckless. Plunging into things without adequate forethought
- Q. High-minded** = to raise a smoke, to wrap in a mist, puff up. Speaks of pride.
- R. Pleasure-lovers** = fond of pleasures. They put devotion to self-satisfaction above devotion to God. Pleasure is their god as whatever I love and value more than God is the object of my worship.

Dangerous Times are Coming (2)

Text: 2 Timothy 3:5-9

Introduction:

1. This chapter: Paul warns Timothy of the coming apostasy of the last days (Vs.1-9), cites his own example as a contrast to the apostates (Vs. 10-13) and then exhorts him to live a life distinct from the apostates in conformity to the Scriptures (Vs. 14-17).
2. Outline of Vs. 1-9
 - I. The Certainty of Perilous Times (Vs. 1)
 - II. The Depravity of Perilous Times (Vs. 2-4)
 - III. The Religiosity of Perilous Times (Vs. 5)
 - IV. The Immorality of Perilous Times (Vs. 6)
 - V. The Illiteracy of Perilous Times (Vs. 7)
 - VI. The Obstinacy of Perilous Times (Vs. 8-9)
3. This lesson: We will cover the last four of the above 6 points.

I. The Religiosity of Perilous Times (Vs. 5)

A. Their Outward Appearance of Godliness (Vs. 5a)

1. 'form' = the outward form or appearance. It appears genuine on the surface but is superficial and fake.
2. 'godliness' = reverence and respect for God
3. Note: What an accurate portrayal of the modern church which is virtually indistinguishable from the world apart from its label. It has the same appearance, sound, lifestyle and message with some Christian trappings.

B. Their Inward Absence of Godliness (Vs. 5b)

1. 'denying' = they refuse the transforming power of the truth
2. 'power' = the true spiritual power connected with genuine holiness. Likely a reference to the transforming power of the Gospel (Rom. 1:16)

C. Our Required Avoidance of these Apostates (Vs. 5c)

1. "from such" = the men who fit the preceding description
2. "turn away" = an deliberate and active separation. Present tense indicates habitual action. Timothy must continually turn himself away from people like this.
3. Rom. 16:17 *"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause division and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."*
4. Note: 21st century Evangelical Christianity broadly speaking, largely ignores the doctrine of separation.

II. The Immorality of Perilous Times (Vs. 6)

A. Their Deceitful Approach (Vs. 6a)

1. 'creep' = lit. to put on, to clothe with a garment, to hide in. They are sly and subtle in their activities. Their actions indicate stealth and secretiveness (Hiebert).
 - a. Word used in Jude 1:4 "crept in unawares" What creeping creeps!
 - b. Deception a trademark of false teachers. In this, they resemble their master, Satan. 2 Cor. 11:13-15 *"For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, **transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.** And no marvel, for **Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light.** Therefore, it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."*
2. "into houses" = subversion to falsehood often takes place in homes

B. Their Defiled Activity (Vs. 6b)

1. "lead captive" = to take captive at spear point, to make a prisoner of war, to capture
2. "silly women" = simple minded and naïve. Expression of contempt in ancient world. Lit. "little women"
 - a. False teachers often target women. Many cults started by women (e.g. SDAs, Christian science).
 - b. Many women at the forefront of modern charismatic confusion (e.g. Joyce Meyer).
 - c. Women, due to their tendency to be trusting, can be more prone to being deceived (1 Tim. 2:14).
3. "laden with sins" = corrupt, immoral women. Note: If you are a woman of loose morality, you are not accomplished and sophisticated like the world would have you believe. You are foolish, ignorant and simple minded.
4. "diverse lusts" = many-colored, various, many different kinds. Immorality rampant within professing Christendom. If not outright condoned, it is often overlooked or dealt with lightly.
5. Illustration: Adultery and marriage breakdown rampant within the field of Contemporary Christian Music (CCM): E.g. Sandy Patty, Deniece Williams, Sheila Walsh, John Talbot, Randy Stonehill, Larry Norman, Tom Howard, Kevin Prosch, Ralph Carmichael, Steve Archer, Amy Grant, Stacy Jones, Melody Green etc... (David Cloud)
6. Perverted morals and perverted beliefs are natural companions.

III. The Illiteracy of Perilous Times (Vs. 7)

A. Always Learning (Vs. 7a)

1. They are eager to acquire new knowledge and are open to being taught “new ideas”. They are open to every wind of doctrine. Note 4:3-4 and the multiplication of teachers
2. Today’s digital culture similar to the Athenians of Paul’s day – “(For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.)”
3. Note: We live in the age of information and education and yet we there is such appalling and widespread ignorance of the most fundamental and basic truths.
4. Note: While growth as a Christian is a continual process that doesn’t end until we go home to glory, there are some fundamental things we know!
 - a. The truth of the Person of Jesus Christ (John 14:6)
 - b. The truth of the Word of God (John 17:17)
 - c. The truth of salvation (1 John 5:13)

B. Never Understanding (Vs. 7b)

1. “never able” = they never come to a settled position. We live in the age where everything is subject for review, everything is questioned and it is said there are no absolutes.
2. “knowledge of the truth” = an experiential knowledge of salvation. “Not just an intellectual understanding of the truth but a heart submission and appropriation of the same, resulting in salvation.” (Wuest)

IV. The Obstinacy of Perilous Times (Vs. 8-9)

A. The Symbols of their Resistance (Vs. 8a)

1. “Jannes and Jambres” = Believed to be the chief Egyptian magicians who opposed Moses in Pharaoh’s court (e.g. Ex. 7:10-13; 8:7, 18-19). Not mentioned by name in Exodus account but names familiar in Jewish tradition. Paul is here lead by the Holy Spirit to validate this fact.
2. “withstood Moses” = reveals the motive of the Egyptian magicians. They sought through their sorceries to disprove the truth as presented by Moses.
3. “so do these also” = Paul draws a connection between the opposition of the Egyptian magicians and the end time apostates
4. “resist the truth” = ‘withstood’ and ‘resist’ come from the same root word. It means “to set oneself against, oppose & withstand.”
 - a. We are living in a day when there is fierce opposition to the truth, not just from the world but from much of professing Christendom.

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- b. Note the warning of chapter 4:3-4 *“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; And they shall **turn away their ears from the truth**, and shall be turned into fables.”*

B. The Source of their Resistance (Vs. 8b)

1. “corrupt minds” = lit. “having been corrupted in the mind”. The perfect tense indicates a permanent state of depravity. The passive voice indicates that they have submitted to this corrupting process. Points to the destructive work of sin, Satan and error in their lives.
2. “reprobate” = rejected after testing. Word used for the testing of metals.
3. “concerning the faith” – they have been tested in regards to “the faith” and like a counterfeit coin have been found wanting, hence they must be discarded as worthless. (Hiebert)

C. The Stupidity of their Resistance (Vs. 9)

1. “proceed no further” = to promote, further, forward. They will not enjoy unbroken success in their evil works. God will stop them!
2. ‘folly’ = madness, foolishness
3. ‘manifest’ = their deceit will eventually be exposed. Evil eventually outwits itself.
4. “as theirs also was” = just like the Egyptian magicians were proven no match for the Almighty power of God and were exposed for what they were, so also those who in our day resist the truth.

Conclusion:

1. Are you walking in the power of genuine holiness or are you living a double life?
2. What is your attitude to the truth? Are you a receiver or an opposer of sound doctrine?

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Be Faithful!

Text: 2 Timothy 3:10-17

Introduction:

1. This chapter: Paul warns Timothy of the coming apostasy of the last days (Vs.1-9), cites his own example as a contrast to the apostates (Vs. 10-13) and then exhorts him to live a life distinct from the apostates in conformity to the Scriptures (Vs. 14-17).
2. This lesson: Timothy is challenged to 'continue', to be faithful. Paul will encourage Timothy with his own example (Vs. 10-12), exhort him to also be faithful (Vs. 14-15) and then equip him for a life of faithfulness (Vs. 16-17).

I. The Example of Faithfulness (Vs. 10-13)

A. Paul's Catalogue (Vs. 10-11)

1. "But thou" = Timothy's life stands in sharp contrast to the apostates described in the previous verses
2. "fully known" = to follow, have understanding. To follow along, to follow closely. Describes the relation of a disciple to his master – study at close quarter, follow in spirit, note with a view to reproducing (Key).
3. Paul gives a graphic sketch of his ministry calling with 9 terms. Timothy's intimate knowledge of Paul, his father and mentor in the Gospel ministry, would serve to spur him on to stay faithful.
 - a. Doctrine = teaching, system of truth (i.e. the Gospel, truths contained in Epistles)
 - b. Manner of life = conduct, the way one leads one's life, the guiding principles of one's life
 - c. Purpose = the goal and aim of Paul's life (i.e. to fulfil God's calling upon his life)
 - d. Faith = his personal faith in God. Paul was a man of great faith and thereby enjoyed a great measure of God's power upon his life and ministry
 - e. Longsuffering = patient forbearance
 - f. Charity = Christian love (e.g. for God and others)
 - g. Patience = bearing up under the load, perseverance amid trying circumstances
 - h. Persecutions = to be pursued like a hunter would its prey. Note they are plural in number.
 - i. Afflictions = sufferings

B. Paul's Conclusion (Vs. 12-13)

1. Persecution is a guaranteed experience for the separated, consecrated believer (Vs. 12)

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- a. “will live godly” = ‘will’ means willing, desiring or determining. Those pursuing a godly life will encounter opposition!
 - b. “shall suffer persecution” = an guaranteed experience. Persecution comes in many forms and in varying degrees but a godly Christian will face some form of persecution for his walk with Christ.
 - c. Luke 6:22 *“Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake.”*
 - d. John 15:18-19 *“If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.”*
 - e. 1 John 3:13 *“Marvel not, my brethren, if the world hate you.”*
 - f. Note: The reason many believers do not experience persecution is that they are too much like the world with little to no quest after a godly life. “The world cannot hate us, we are too much like its own” (Jim Elliot) Luke 6:26 *“Woe unto you, when all men shall speak well of you! for so did their fathers to the false prophets.”*
2. The ungodly will continue to degenerate into further depths of depravity (Vs. 13)
- a. ‘seducers’ = deceivers, jugglers, magicians
 - b. “wax worse and worse” = to increase, make progress. Evil does not improve with time, it gets worse!
 - c. “deceiving and being deceived” = the deceiver becomes the deceived! Their sin becomes their punishment. They encounter the law of sowing and reaping. In the process of embarking on a course of deceiving others, they themselves loose themselves from the moorings of truth and become captives to the treacherous currents of falsehood that abound in a lost world.

II. The Exhortation to Faithfulness (Vs. 14-15)

Timothy is to be faithful to two key things:

A. To His Schooling (Vs. 14)

1. “but...thou” = Timothy is exhorted to live a life distinct from the evil men described in previous verse (Vs. 13) as well as Vs. 1-9.
2. ‘continue’ = to abide (translated ‘abide’ 61 times in N.T.), to remain
3. “in the things” = the truths of God’s Word
 - a. The things he had been taught – “thou hast learned” The things taught him by the Apostle Paul (Vs. 10) and his mother and grandmother (Vs. 15; 1:5)
 - b. The things of which he had assurance – “assured of”

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- c. The things he knew came from a credible source – “knowing of whom thou hast learned them” There are any number of people who will want to try and teach you their pet heresies so make sure you consider whether they are a reliable and godly source of instruction. 1 Cor. 4:15-16 *“For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel. Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me.”*

B. To the Scriptures (Vs. 15)

1. The time of his instruction – “from a child” A *brephos*, a newborn child, an infant, a babe.
2. The content of his instruction – “the holy Scriptures”
 - a. ‘holy’ = set apart for God. Distinct from the writings of man.
 - b. “Scriptures” = letter, writing
3. The aim of his instruction – “to make thee wise unto salvation”
 - a. This reveals the grand purpose and design of Holy Scripture, to lead lost sinners to salvation.
 - b. “through faith which is in Christ Jesus” = faith is the channel through which this salvation is received (Eph. 2:8-9). Jesus Christ, His Person and Work, are the focal point of Scripture. John 5:39 *“Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.”*

III. The Equipping for Faithfulness (Vs. 16-17)

The same Scriptures to which Timothy is to be faithful (Vs. 15) will also provide him with the spiritual resources to be faithful. “After exhorting Timothy to hold fast to the sacred Scriptures, he now proceeds to describe them.” (Wuest)

A. The Source of the Scriptures (Vs. 16a)

1. “All Scripture” = the scope of inspiration. Inspiration extends to every part of the Bible. This refutes the idea that the Bible merely “contains” the Word of God, implying some of it is not.
2. “is given by inspiration of God” = comes from one compound Greek word, *θεοπνευστος*, made up of ‘God’ (*theos*) and ‘blow’ or ‘wind’ (*pneo*). So, it means “God-breathed”. See also 2 Peter 1:21. ‘moved’ means to be born or carried along (‘driven’ in Acts 27:17)
 - a. The Scriptures are precious as they reveal the mind of the Eternal God to us.
 - b. Albert Barnes: “Let us, then, study and prize the Bible. It is a holy and a safe guide. It has conducted millions along the dark and dangerous way of life, and has never led one astray. The human mind, in its investigations of truth, has never gone beyond its teachings; nor has man ever advanced into a region so bright

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that its light has become dim, or where it has not thrown its beams of glory on still far distant objects.”

B. The Service of the Scriptures (Vs. 16b)

The Divinely inspired Scriptures are profitable for four functions:

1. Doctrine = teaching
 - a. Doctrine is important! This is the first use of the Scriptures listed. This is totally reverse priority to the modern user-friendly church that would have us set aside doctrine in the name of “unity”.
 - b. Our doctrine is to come entirely from the Scriptures. It is the sole authority for faith and practice. It is not Scripture plus tradition but Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone!).
2. Reproof = to convict, convince, tell a fault, rebuke. Means to refute error, to show that a certain teaching or action is wrong. Sin and error must be dealt with in a direct and plain manner (Cloud). Note ‘reprove’ and ‘rebuke’ are at the top of the list in 4:2.
3. Correction = to straighten up again, to rectify, to set wrong things right (Cloud). “Restoration to an upright or right state, setting right.” (Wuest)
 - a. The Word of God corrects our course
 - b. Illustration: An airplane or ship must be kept on course by continually comparing the present course with the fixed compass and stars and by making continual readjustments. Even a slight deviation off course can have disastrous results in the long term.
 - c. Note: There is such violent opposition to any form of correction today largely due to the “positive only” mantra that has permeated our politically correct society and seeped subtly yet definitely into the hearts and minds of God’s people within the church.
4. Instruction = lit. “child training” and includes discipline, training and education. Word translated ‘nurture’ (Eph. 6:4) and ‘chastening’ (Heb. 12:5,7,8, 11). God’s Word shapes and molds the whole man.

C. The Sufficiency of the Scriptures (Vs. 17)

1. ‘that’ = the end/goal of these various functions of Scripture
2. ‘perfect’ = complete, brought to maturity
3. “thoroughly furnished” = to completely outfit, fully furnish, fully equip or supply. We have all we need in the Living Word (Col. 2:9-10) and the written Word. No need for tradition or extra biblical revelations.
4. “all good works” = the Word of God sufficient to for every form of Christian service and ministry

Conclusion: It’s not how we start but how we finish. Will we be found faithful to God and His Word at the end of our race? Are we staying faithful to the truth or are we allowing ourselves to drift with the currents of this world?

Preach it Preacher!

Text: 2 Timothy 4:1-4

Introduction:

1. The Epistle now reaches its climax in Paul's final recorded charge to Timothy, his son in the faith (Vs. 1-8). These are the last words the Spirit of God lead Paul to write and are therefore of great importance and significance.
2. Paul's death is drawing near. Paul has already appeared once before Nero. He anticipates one final meeting and then certain death (Vs. 6)

I. The Mindset for Preaching (Vs. 1)

A. We are Responsible to the Scriptures (1a)

1. 'therefore' = on the basis of the inspiration and sufficiency of Scripture (3:16-17)
2. 'charge' means "I am solemnly witnessing, testifying". It means "I solemnly order & adjure you." It was used in secular Greek to call the gods and men to witness.
3. 'before' = in the presence of, in the sight of

B. We are Responsible to the Saviour (1b)

1. God the Father
2. The Lord Jesus Christ
 - a. Pictured as the coming Judge
 - b. Return of Christ central to Apostle's thinking
 - c. 'shall' = "The word is used of someone who is on the point of going something...Paul was living in the expectation of the imminent return of the Lord." (Wuest)
3. Challenge: What we need in this age are men who are more concerned about their standing in the sight of God than in the sight of men. Men who love the praise and approval of the Saviour above all else. Men who have a deep sense of awe and reverence for God. Men who fear God more than they fear man. Men who preach for the Lord rather than for man.

II. The Mandate for Preaching (Vs. 2a)

A. The Technique – 'preach'

1. 'preach' = to herald, proclaim
2. A Herald in Paul's Day: "In Paul's day, a ruler had a special herald who made announcements to the people. He was commissioned by the ruler to make his announcements in a loud, clear voice so everyone could hear. He was not an ambassador with the privilege of negotiating; he was a messenger with a proclamation to be heard and heeded. Not to heed the ruler's messenger was serious; to

abuse the messenger was even worse.” (Wiersbe) **The Preacher is under Divine Orders! (Vs. 1)**

3. Isaiah 58:1 **“Cry aloud, spare not, lift up thy voice like a trumpet, and shew my people their transgression, and the house of Jacob their sins.”**
4. Note: We do not want a carnal display of angry yelling that originates from the flesh. But we do desire Holy Ghost courage and boldness to fearlessly proclaim the truth with passion and conviction.
5. Note: Matt. 12:19 is often misused against preachers who preach the Word strongly and loudly but it is not speaking of Christ’s preaching ministry!
 - a. Notice the first word ‘strive’. It is speaking of the meek and peaceful spirit that would characterise His earthly ministry. Christ was not contentious. The context is the rage of the Pharisees.
 - b. Adam Clarke: “The spirit of Christ is not a spirit of contention, murmuring, clamour, or litigiousness. He who loves these does not belong to him. Christ therefore fulfilled a prophecy by withdrawing from this place, on account of the rage of the Pharisees.”
 - c. Christ did raise His voice at times in the proclamation of the truth! See John 7:37 – ‘cry’ means to “call aloud”

B. The Theme – “the Word”

1. We are to preach the whole counsel of God
 - a. **“For I have not shunned to declare unto you *all the counsel of God.*”** Acts 20:27 ‘shunned’ = to draw back, keep back
 - b. Jeremiah 26:2 **“Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD’S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD’S house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; *diminish not a word:*”**
 - c. Ezekiel 3:1-11
 - d. Note: If we are to proclaim all of God’s Words, shouldn’t we be concerned about corrupt Bible versions that delete and remove hundreds of the words of God?
2. The Bible is to be the preachers text book
 - a. Beware of endless story telling!
 - b. Beware of excessive humour!
 - c. Beware of froth, bubble and hot air!

C. The Time – “be instant in season, out of season”

1. “be instant” = means to take one’s stand, to stand by, to be ready. Speaks of constant readiness. Military word meaning “to stay at one’s post”

2. "in season, out of season" = it is to be preached in good times and in difficult times
 - a. The Word of God is always in season even if the circumstances are not!
 - b. Note: The 21st century church generally ignores this principle. The church growth movement defines success in terms of numerical growth. This requires constant adaption to the ideas and philosophies of the age.

III. The Method for Preaching (2c)

A. The three-pronged approach – “reprove, rebuke, exhort”

1. Reprove (convincing) = to bring to light, to convince, to convict
2. Rebuke (correcting/warning) = to censure sharply, to warn. Speaks of correction.
 - a. Psalm 141:5 *“Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness: and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head: for yet my prayer also shall be in their calamities.”*
 - b. Prov. 27:5-6 *“Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.”*
 - c. Titus 2:15 *“These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with **all authority**. Let no man despise thee.”*
3. Exhort (encouraging) = to urge & encourage
 - a. Means “one called alongside to help.”
 - b. The Holy Spirit is called the ‘Comforter’ (Jn. 14:16) and Christ is referred to as our ‘advocate’ (1 Jn. 2:1)

B. The two-fold accompaniment – “longsuffering and doctrine”

1. ‘with’ = reproof, rebuke and exhortation are all to be done with these two principles
2. Longsuffering = patience & endurance. A fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). Consider some of the prophets with long ministries with little change in the people.
3. Doctrine = sound Biblical content as our basis, not human opinion

IV. The Motivation for Preaching (Vs. 3-4)

Paul reminds Timothy of the coming apostasy to motivate him to seize the opportunity to proclaim the truth. The time would come where there would be:

A. A Resistance to Truth (3a)

1. ‘endure’ = to bear with, put up with, tolerate
2. ‘sound’ = wholesome, healthy
3. ‘doctrine’ = teaching of Scripture

B. A Regard for False Teachers (3b)

1. Driven by their lustful desires – they do not want their sinful nature confronted by the Word of God
2. Driven by their carnal appetites – they want something spine tingling and tantalizing to hear
 - a. Isaiah 30:8-10 *“Now go, write it before them in a table, and note it in a book, that it may be for the time to come for ever and ever: That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, **Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits:”***
 - b. Jeremiah 5:31 *“The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; **and my people love to have it so:”***

C. A Rejection of Truth (4)

1. They refuse truth – stubbornly turn away their ears
2. They replace it with fiction – fables. “turned aside” is a medical term used of wrenching a limb out of joint. They will twist themselves out of their normal position in order to have their itching ears gratified with fables.” (Hiebert)

Conclusion: Preach On!

If you're preaching from the Bible, preach on. If you're longing for revival, just preach on. Preach on sin and condemnation, Preach for sinners His salvation, Preach to Christians, consecration; But preach on.

If your sermons from the Lord, preach on. Never mind if they look bored, just preach on. If the devil looks down on it, If the critics frown upon it, Many souls depend upon it, so preach on.

If you step on someone's corns, well preach on. Take the bull by the horns, and preach on. Even though we may not like it, Even though some may try to fight it. Where there's wrong the Lord will right it, so preach on.

Let not time be a restriction, just preach on. If the sinner's got conviction, then preach on. Christ can save his soul from hell, Cleanse his heart and make him well; Even if it's after twelve, just preach on.

From the Law to Revelation, yes, preach on. Christ for every situation, Oh preach on. Even if your members doubt it, and say they can do without it, If you've talked with God about it, preach on.

Think of Christ's own message clear and preach on. There for all who wish to hear, Oh preach on. All are sinners, they must know, That His blood did freely flow. He can wash them white as snow, Oh, preach on.

In the Holy Spirit's power, Oh preach on. He'll reward you in his hour, just preach on. Broken hearts and sin forgiven, blessings here so freely given, and a crown up there in Heaven, Oh, preach on, preach on, preach on!

Paul's Final Charge to Timothy

Text: 2 Timothy 4:5-8

Introduction:

1. The Epistle now reaches its climax in Paul's final recorded charge to Timothy, his son in the faith (Vs. 1-8). This chapter contains the last words the Spirit of God lead Paul to write and are therefore of great importance and significance.
2. Paul has already delivered 3 charges to Timothy his son in the faith (1. Tim. 1:18; 1 Tim. 5:21; 1 Tim. 6:13). Paul now delivers his final charge before passing through the gates of death into eternity.
3. This charge can be divided into three sections.

I. The Injunction to Preach (Vs. 1-4)

Refer previous sermon for details.

A. The Mindset for preaching (Vs. 1)

B. The Mandate for preaching (Vs. 2a)

C. The Method for preaching (Vs. 2b)

D. The Motivation for preaching (Vs. 3-4)

II. The Instruction for Ministry (Vs. 5)

Timothy's life was to be lived in contrast to the apostates described in Vs. 3-4. There are four duties he is to maintain in pastoral ministry.

A. Vigilance (Vs. 5a)

1. 'watch' = word literally means to be sober, an abstainer from wine. Concerning one's attitude it referred to being alert and circumspect.
2. Much of a shepherd's duty involves watching the sheep (e.g. being alert to possible threats)
3. Hebrews 13:17 *"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: **for they watch for your souls**, as they that must give account, that they may do it with you, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you."*
4. Careful monitoring and oversight of the sheep has nothing to do with dictatorship, being overbearing or micro managing. It has everything to do with being a faithful shepherd of God's sheep.

B. Endurance (Vs. 5b)

1. "endure afflictions" = suffer hardship, evil, ill treatment, that which is bad.
2. Paul has already exhorted Timothy to endure the "afflictions of the Gospel" (1:8) and to "endure hardness" (2:3). Both of these come from the same Greek word.
3. Timothy is to patiently bear the many trials of the Gospel ministry, he is to faithfully weather the storms.

4. Illustrations: The buffetings of Satan (1 Cor. 16:9; 1 Thess. 2:18); The reproach of the tongue (e.g. slander, misrepresentation); hostility of the world; emotional and physical strains; family pressures etc...

C. Evangelism (Vs. 5c)

1. 'evangelist' = a proclaimer of good news. Root word is 'Gospel'. An Evangelist's primary role is to preach the Gospel (Note example of Philip the Evangelist in Acts 8:5). Timothy is not to **be** and evangelist as this is a separate calling (Eph. 4:11) but is to do the **work** of an Evangelist.
2. This means a pastor needs to be a soul-winner. Amidst all his other duties and responsibilities, he needs to have a heart that's warm for souls. He is to be a personal soul-winner as well as being a Gospel preacher.
3. Illustration: NBC Institute soul-winning requirement

D. Diligence (Vs. 5d)

1. "make full proof" = to fully perform, carry it out to its end, to fulfil. He is to complete all its demands and requirements.
2. "thy ministry" = Christian work in general, covering every mode of service.
3. There is no place for laziness and sloppiness in the ministry. It is the highest vocation on earth! "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour, especially they who labour in the word and doctrine." (1 Tim. 5:17)

III. The Inspiration for Ministry (Vs. 6-8)

The Apostle now gives a word of testimony to inspire Timothy to faithfulness in ministry. There is a tremendous victory note in these words.

A. His Present (Vs. 6)

1. "ready to be offered" = 'offered' means to be poured out as a libation or drink offering. Paul viewed his impending martyrdom as an act of sacred service to God. "For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21)
2. 'departure' = to loosen, release. Word used of the slackening of tent ropes when breaking camp or of a ship hoisting anchor and setting sail.
3. "The ring of triumph and noble self-assurance is intended to rouse Timothy, as the dying cry of a general inspires his flagging followers to new courage and daring." (Pope)

B. His Past (Vs. 7)

Paul sums up his life using 3 figures:

1. A Greek wrestler – "I have fought a good fight"

- a. Figure not drawn from the battle field but from the Greek games. It is a picture of an athlete struggling and contending for the prize. Paul had wrestled and fought all his life for the Gospel, contending with the sin and Satan.
 - b. 'good' = reveals the character of this contest. This is no fleshly warfare, no carnal contest but a Spirit-filled, God-honouring fight for the truth. This is a fight that all Christians are commanded to be a part of (Jude 1:3).
2. A Greek runner – “I have finished my course”
- a. Figure is that of a foot race. Paul had run his race well, fulfilling the mandate of Hebrews 12:1-2
 - b. “my course” = Paul had completed the specific track God had ordained for him to run. We are all to run according to the rules (2:5) but God’s specific will is different for each one of us. We need to find out what that is and seek to fulfil it faithfully.
 - c. Illustration: Christ testified in John 17:4 “...I have finished the work the work which thou gavest me to do.”
3. A Roman soldier – “I have kept the faith”
- 1. Picture is of a Roman soldier standing guard.
 - 2. 'kept' = to keep by guarding
 - 3. “the faith” = the sacred deposit of truth entrusted to Paul. Paul had faithfully guarded the truth from the attacks of false teachers. Now Timothy was to continue that guardianship of the truth (Note 1:13-14)

C. His Future (Vs. 8)

1. The gift (reward) (8a)
- a. “crown of righteousness” = the ‘crown’ was a the victor’s crown, a laurel wreath made of oak leaves or ivy and given to a winner in the games.
 - b. Paul was anticipating rewards for faithful service.
 - c. There are 5 crowns mentioned in the N.T.
 - i. The incorruptible crown for living a disciplined, faithful Christian life (1 Cor. 9:25)
 - ii. The crown of rejoicing for successful soul-winning (1 Thess. 2:19-20)
 - iii. The crown of righteousness for loving Christ’s appearing (2 Tim. 4:7-8)
 - iv. The crown of life for enduring temptation (James 1:12)
 - v. The crown of glory for faithful pastors (1 Peter 5:1-4)
2. The Giver (8b)
- a. “the Lord” = the real value of the gift is due to the One giving it. How infinitely more precious than the gift itself will be the joy of standing in His presence and hearing His voice saying, “well

done thou good and faithful servant.” As expressed in the words of this hymn:

“The bride eyes not her garment, But her dear bridegroom’s face. I will not gaze at glory,
But on my King of grace. Not at the crown He giveth, But on His pierced hand: The
Lamb is all the glory of Immanuel’s land.”

- b. “the righteous judge” = figure of athletic games continued. Christ is the perfect judge (umpire) who will be perfectly fair and just in the rewards that He gives on that day. He stands at the finish line waiting for us, his rewards in hand.
3. The Guarantee (8c)
- a. “not to me only” = this reward is not exclusively for the Apostle but is available to all believers – “to all those also”
 - b. “love his appearing” = the qualification for this crown is to love his ‘appearing’.

Conclusion:

1. Are we involved in the contest for the truth?
2. Are we running our race for God’s glory?
3. Do we love Christ’s appearing? Are we living for eternal rewards or temporal gains?

Paul's Parting Words

Text: 2 Timothy 4:9-22

Introduction:

1. The Epistle now closes with Paul's final recorded words before his martyrdom in Rome. They contain matters of a more personal nature but contain some precious gems to inspire and encourage all believers.
2. Though Paul is suffering greatly, yet these words contain the spirit of victory.
3. The text naturally divides into four sections as follows:

I. Paul's Petitions (Vs. 9-13)

In these verses Paul makes two personal requests to Timothy:

A. Please Come (Vs. 9-10)

1. The request (Vs. 9)
 - a. "do diligence" = make haste, exert every energy to come shortly or quickly
 - b. "do thy diligence to come before winter" (Vs. 21) = winter would make travel impossible and Paul doesn't have much time left
 - c. At Paul's time of deep trial, he longed to see Timothy his son in the faith one more time.
2. The reason (Vs. 10)
 - a. Paul had been forsaken (10a)
 - i. Departing Demas had abandoned Paul in his hour of greatest need.
 - ii. Demas had ministered to Paul in his first imprisonment – "*Luke, the beloved physician, and Demas, greet you.*" (Col. 4:14) "*Marcus, Aristarchus, Demas, Lucas, my fellowlabourers.*" (Phil. 1:24)
 - iii. What was it that caused Demas to forsake Paul? Answer: "having loved this present world". As a believer, Demas was drawn away from the place of faithfulness to the Lord and the Lord's servant, due to the pull of the world.
 - iv. This is the reason many believers leave a good, solid church that preaches the truth and turn their backs on a faithful preacher who comes under fire for the truth (Note Vs. 4). They simply love their worldliness too much to endure separated preaching or take a stand that will cost them something.
 - v. Illustration: Christ experienced the same thing during his earthly ministry – "*From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.*" (John 6:66)
 - b. Paul was isolated (Vs. 10b)

- i. There were those who had left Paul in the will of God. This was not as grievous as Demas' departure but still involved pain and loneliness.
- ii. Crescens to Galatia (Vs. 10)
- iii. Titus to Dalmatia (Vs. 10)
- iv. Tychicus to Ephesus (Vs. 12)

B. Please Bring (Vs. 11-13)

1. Bring yourself (Vs. 9)
2. Bring Mark (Vs. 11) – what a change this represents concerning Mark who previously came to blows with the Apostle Paul (Acts 15:36-41). Mark has gone from being a deserter to being a useful servant of the Lord.
3. Bring my things (Vs. 12)
 - a. His cloke – winter is about to arrive (Vs. 21) and the cell is cold.
 - b. His books and parchments – his study materials
 - i. 'books' = contained writings on the cheaper and more perishable papyrus paper
 - ii. 'parchments' = writings written on costlier and more permanent skins of vellum. Likely the O.T. Scriptures
 - iii. Essentially Paul says, "Please bring me my Bible and my books."
 - iv. C.H. Spurgeon comments on "books and parchments"

"Even an apostle must read...He is inspired, and yet he wants books! He has been preaching at least for thirty years, and yet he wants books! He had seen the Lord, and yet he wants books! He had had a wider experience than most men, and yet he wants books! He had been caught up into the third heaven, and had heard things which it was unlawful for a man to utter, yet he wants books! He had written the major part of the New Testament, and yet he wants books! The man who never reads will never be read; he who never quotes will never be quoted. He who will not use the thoughts of other men's brains, proves that he has no brains of his own. Brethren, what is true of ministers is true of all our people. You need to read...we are quite persuaded that the very best way for you to be spending your leisure is to be either reading or praying...Paul cries, "Bring the books" – join in the cry."

II. Paul's Tribulations (Vs. 14-18)

Paul recounts his experiences at his first trial before the Roman court:

A. He Faced Opposition (Vs. 14-15)

1. "Alexander the Coppersmith" = Could be the same Alexander mentioned in 1 Tim. 1:20. Whoever he was, he was one of Paul's chief opponents at his trial. He fiercely opposed Paul and his ministry
2. "the Lord reward him" = Paul pleads for the justice of God in relation to this man's evil activities, placing Him in the hands of the Judge of all the earth who will always do right. Paul's concern here was not himself but the bigger picture of God's work and God's honour.

There is a place to pray that God will deal justly with those who oppose His work.

3. “of whom be thou ware also” = ‘ware’ means to guard, keep watch, observe, beware. Paul didn’t hold back from warning against the wolves that would tear the sheep. He identified them by name! Paul names people specifically in his two Epistles to Timothy at least 7 times (1 Tim. 1:20; 2 Tim. 1:15; 2:1; 4:14)

B. He Faced Desertion (Vs. 16)

1. “at my first answer” = his first defence (apologia) before the imperial court.
2. “no man stood with me” = Paul had to stand alone without the support of others. Bearing one’s cross can be a lonely road so far as human support is concerned.
3. A.W. Tozer “It is doubtful that the Lord used anybody greatly, without first hurting them deeply.”
4. “I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge” = Paul prayed for those who hurt him by abandoning him with a forgiving spirit. Paul exhibited the same spirit as Stephen who prayed when the stones were being hurled at him, “Lord, lay not this sin to their charge” and Christ who prayed as he endured the agonies of the cross, “Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.”

C. He Found Consolation (Vs. 17-18)

1. Past Victory (Vs. 17)
 - a. “the Lord stood with me” = While Paul was alone so far as human support was concerned, when he stood before the highest tribunal in the world at that time, He knew the strengthening presence of God with him. He was not alone! John Wesley’s dying words were, “The best of all is, God is with us.”
 - b. “that by me the preaching might be fully known” = the purpose for which Paul was strengthened by God. God was able to use Paul’s court case as an opportunity for the Gospel to be made known as he testified
 - c. “and I was delivered” = Paul’s first defence meant that his case was adjourned until a second hearing. During this time, Paul was able to pen 2 Timothy! God kept Paul alive until all His purposes which he had to accomplish through him were complete.
2. Future Hope (Vs. 18)
 - a. “shall deliver me” = Paul looks to the future, viewing his martyrdom as ordained of God to deliver him from “every evil work”
 - b. Past victories form a foundation for assurance, a foot hold for faith as we look to the future.

III. Paul's Salutations (Vs. 19-21)

A. Greetings from Paul (Vs. 19)

At the end of Paul's life when he could have greeted any number of people, two families were on his mind. Both were sold out for the Lord's work and had a special ministry of support to Paul.

1. Priscilla and Aquila = Note Paul's words concerning this couple in Romans 16:3-4 "*Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles.*"
2. The household of Onesiphorus = this man, with the support of his family, had a special ministry of support to Paul. Described in first chapter of this Epistle (1:16-18)

B. Remarks from Paul (Vs. 20-21a)

1. Erastus stayed at Corinth
2. Paul left Trophimus at Miletum due to sickness. This passing reference "clearly shows that miracles of healing were not wrought at the mere will, even of an apostle, they were doubtless exceptional manifestations of divine power, made only as the Holy Spirit directed and empowered him who performed them." (Harvey)

C. Greetings from the Brethren (Vs. 21b)

IV. Paul's Benedictions (Vs. 22)

Paul concludes with his last words of comfort to Timothy, desiring he would know:

- A. The Lord's presence – "the Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit"**
- B. The Lord's grace – "grace be with you"**

Conclusion:

1. Are you a "departing Demas"? Are you being drawn away from a fruitful Christian life by the love of the world?
2. How if your passion for studying the Word of God? If Paul still desired to grow in his knowledge of God's Word as a man about to die in prison, how much more should we.
3. Are we praying in our trials, drawing on the strength of God to stand for Him?
4. There we leave our studies of the Pastoral Epistles for now! Remember the central theme of each Epistle - "Behave thyself" (1 Timothy); "Maintain good works" (Titus) and "Continue thou" (2 Timothy)

Grace be with you. Amen