

Finish Well

Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:1-8

I. You finish well by passing on the good news about Jesus to believers and unbelievers.

- A. Paul begins 2 Timothy 4 with a very serious charge to Timothy. What was that responsibility? Preach the Word (vs. 2). When Paul tells Timothy to preach the Word, he is telling him to preach the Gospel (2 Timothy 2:8-9). He is giving Timothy the solemn responsibility to tell others the Good News that Jesus died for our sins on the cross, that He rose from the dead, and that those who repent of their sins and turn to Jesus in faith will be forgiven of their sins and live with Christ for eternity in heaven.
- B. The word preach simply means to proclaim or declare something. Paul tells Timothy to be faithful to speak the Gospel, when it is convenient and when it is inconvenient. When Paul tells Timothy to declare the Gospel with complete patience and teaching, he is reminding Timothy of what he is dealing with in terms of the false teachers in his church at Ephesus. Preach the Gospel to those who appear to be believers and those who are believers. And preach the Gospel to those who are unbelievers. Timothy is to do the work of an evangelist (vs. 5).

II. You finish well by sacrificing for others and keeping your eyes on the prize.

- A. "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come" (vs. 6). When the Jews offered up a lamb as a sacrifice, they would also pour out wine at the base of the altar as part of the sacrifice. Paul saw himself as a drink offering, a sacrifice. He sacrificed his life for God and for people. It is those like Paul who live for others and not for self who finish well. Paul looks back to his past and thinks about how he had finished the race (vs. 7). Hebrews 12:1-2: **"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith."**
- B. Paul could look to the future in verse 8. What prize would be given him? "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge will award me on that day." When we believe that Jesus died for us on the cross, we receive the gift of Jesus' righteousness. But we are not yet permanently righteous. When you enter the presence of Jesus in heaven, you will receive as a gift of grace the ultimate permanent state of righteousness.

Application:

Finish well wherever you are finishing something in your race of life.

Sources:

The Bible

Commentaries by R. Kent Hughes, Andreas Köstenberger, and Phillip Jensen.

Sermon Discussion Questions

- 1) How serious is the responsibility that Paul gave to Timothy? What responsibility was Timothy given? In what sense have all Christians been given this responsibility?
- 2) What was hard about this responsibility for Timothy? What did Paul say was coming for those who preached the Word (vs. 3)?
- 3) How did Paul look to his past, his present, and his future as he prepared to finish his life and ministry (vs. 6-8)? What was he most looking forward to at the end of his life (vs. 8)?