

2Timothy 4:1 ¶ I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

At this point Paul begins to close his letter to Timothy with final instructions for the young pastor. The Greek for the word “charge” implies an earnest plea for Timothy to heed what Paul is telling him. That he prefaces these instructions as “before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ” emphasizes that they are according to the will of God—not just the will of Paul. The fact that Jesus will “judge the living and the dead at his appearing” is meant to signify the importance of these instructions—in other words, you will be accountable to God for your ministry.

The wording of the KJV is a bit confusing in this instance; I think the NIV states it best in conjunction with other scripture: *“In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge....”*

Scripture is clear in declaring that the judgment of the dead will occur after His 1000-year reign.

*Revelation 20:4–6 “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. **But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.”***

I believe the phrase “the quick,” is a reference to those possessing spiritual life, all of whom will be a part of the first resurrection. Jesus was clear in stating that there are only two resurrections, two judgments.

John 5:26–29 “For as the Father hath life in himself; so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.”

Note that these verses in John also affirm Paul’s statement that God the Father has delegated all judgment to His Son Jesus.

The “appearing” Paul referenced is also prophesied by the Apostle John in the last book of the Bible, Revelation.

*Revelation 19:11–15 “**And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture***

dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron...."

Note that John declares that the Lord "appears" from heaven in the process of coming to rule the nations. The verses from Revelation 20 (see above) detail that His earthly kingdom will continue for 1000 years. This time period is often referenced as the millennium and will fulfill the unconditional covenants God made with Abraham and David. (See Topical Study "Refuting Replacement Theology" for a more detailed discussion on the covenants.)

2Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

Primary instruction – "Preach the word." To preach is to publicly declare. The "word" is obviously a reference to the scripture, the word of God. I understand that the primary reference to "the word" in the early church would have been a reference to the Old Testament scriptures, but I believe that Paul expected Timothy to understand that he meant all that Paul had taught him as well. Paul was clear in declaring that he preached what God had personally revealed to him.

Galatians 1:11–12 "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

Ephesians 3:1–8 "For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;"

Timothy was to preach the word whether it was convenient or not, whether the need for the message was apparent or not. The Greek also seemed to indicate that he wasn't to wait for the opportunity to present itself; implied—he should create the opportunity.

His preaching was to consist of reproof, rebuke and exhortation; and the message was to be delivered with patience and self-control and adhering to the truths he had been taught. The Greek for "reprove" includes the idea of producing conviction through a message that is convincing with its warning and counsel against faults and wrongdoing. "Rebuke" seems to be a stronger term that involves "direct and pointed reproof" (from Webster) regarding specific

types of wrongdoing. Exhortation is a reference to earnest encouragement accompanied by prayer (from the Greek).

I like this quote from David Guzik: "The Biblical preacher will comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable."

2Timothy 4:3 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;

2Timothy 4:4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

"the time will come" – I think we can safely deduce from the rest of this sentence that time is here in reference to the church as a whole—at least in America.

Paul is warning Timothy that there is coming a time when men will not put up with the teaching of the truth of God's word. Why? Because it speaks against their own sin. They will seek out teachers who declare a message that doesn't interfere with their chosen lifestyle. Any time someone turns away from truth, he is choosing to believe a lie.

We have to remind ourselves at this point that Paul is warning about those who profess to be part of the "church," the body of believers. I just don't think there is another time in church history that so perfectly fits this description as the "church" today. There have always been false teachers at work trying to undermine the truth of scripture. Today, however, those within mainstream evangelical leadership are perverting the truth of God's word in ever increasing numbers and tailoring their message so as to appeal to the masses and increase their own popularity and bank accounts. This movement is often described as "seeker sensitive" and operates under many different umbrellas. Some preach the prosperity gospel; others preach only about God's love and refuse to identify sin. Some emphasize lying wonders and miracles. Many are turning to mystical practices that appeal to the senses and feed off one's emotions in ways that are directly connected to eastern religions. Recently, the focus is being directed toward promoting peace and unity among the religions through tolerance, e.g. Chrislam.

Try though they might, scripture is clear in declaring that there is only one gospel, one way to salvation and eternal life—and that is through faith in Jesus Christ.

John 14:6 "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Matthew 7:13–14 "Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

I couldn't help but think of a verse from my recent study of Jeremiah at this point.

Jeremiah 5:31 "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so"

2Timothy 4:5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

The Greek for "watch" makes reference to staying sober; to "watch" also makes reference to staying vigilant to stick to the truth of God's word in all that he does. One who chooses to be obedient to God's word and declare its truth must be willing to suffer for what he believes. Timothy obviously was witness to Paul's testimony in this regard, but Paul is not taking anything for granted as he instructs his son in the faith.

What is the work of an evangelist? To preach the gospel message. I think Paul is making a distinct reference to the gospel of saving faith as identified in his letter to the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures...."

After looking at the Greek, I think the NLT has it right regarding the last phrase: "Complete the ministry God has given you." In other words, don't be a quitter; never give up; keep on keeping on.

2Timothy 4:6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

2Timothy 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished *my* course, I have kept the faith:

Paul now gives a few words of personal testimony to encourage Timothy. It is clear that Paul knows he will soon die. The wording indicates that he is ready to be a sacrifice to the glory of God. He knows he is going to die as a martyr for his faith.

Paul confidently declares that he has "fought a good fight." In other words, he has worked very hard and held nothing back; he has given his very best to serve God in accordance with his calling. This is one time that I think the added word "my" is integral to the correct translation. Paul has completed *his* race, *his* fight, *his* mission before God on this earth—and he has kept the faith to the end. This is an important statement. The scripture is clear in declaring that endurance and keeping one's faith to the end gives evidence to genuine saving faith.

Matthew 10:22 "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved."

Matthew 24:11–13 "And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

*1 John 2:18–19 "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; **for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.**"*

2Timothy 4:8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

Paul was confident that he would be rewarded with the crown of righteousness when he faced the Lord in judgment of his works. The Christian has already been declared justified before God and will face no condemning judgment. He/she will, however, face a judgment to determine rewards.

John 3:17–18 "For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

1 Corinthians 3:11–15 "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

Paul seems to be connecting the reward of this crown to persevering in the faith to the end while eagerly looking forward to His return. Other crowns will be rewarded for other qualifying works.

2Timothy 4:9 ¶ Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me:

2Timothy 4:10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

2Timothy 4:11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

2Timothy 4:12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

2Timothy 4:13 The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring with thee, and the books, but especially the parchments.

With these verses Paul begins his personal instructions for Timothy. His first request is that Timothy makes an earnest effort to come and see Paul as soon as possible. Paul was feeling lonely in his last days. Demas left for Thessalonica apparently because he was concerned about his own well being in relationship to Paul. His faith was weak at best; he was certainly not ready to become a martyr for it. Crescens had gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia; since nothing negative was attached to their leaving, it would seem that they were serving as instructed.

Faithful Luke is Paul's only remaining companion. Paul also wants Timothy to bring Mark with him, which indicates to me that he was also in Ephesus or in some city en route to Rome. It is to Mark's credit that he who was once in such disfavor with Paul had matured to the point of being considered a profitable ministry assistant.

Paul notes that he has sent Tychicus to Ephesus—I would assume to serve there in Timothy's absence.

Research indicates that we can only speculate concerning the specifics of verse 13. Some commentators think Paul wanted his cloke because winter was approaching, and this makes sense to me in light of verse 21 below. It is to be noted that Paul also wants Timothy to bring the books and the parchments. I would tend to think that the books might reference valued volumes from his personal library. Because the parchments were mentioned with special emphasis, I tend to think that they were copies of the Old Testament scriptures. It is also possible that they were his personal records of the things that Jesus taught him and that he eventually shared with the churches through his letters.

2Timothy 4:14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

2Timothy 4:15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

In these verses Paul warns Timothy about a man identified as Alexander the coppersmith. Though Paul doesn't supply the specifics, it appears that Timothy was aware of this person, but wasn't aware that he was an enemy to the ministry of the gospel. This man had evidently acted very wickedly and injured Paul by his actions; maybe he was even actively engaged in prosecuting Paul and having him imprisoned. He sounds like he would have been in league with the new atheists of today who attack those who believe in God with such anger and mocking. Paul's prayer is that the Lord will reward him in accordance with his actions—actions that were aimed at preventing the spread of the gospel.

For him to warn Timothy so strongly, it sounds like Alexander might be the type to try to infiltrate the church first before working his mischief.

“our words” – I almost overlooked this little phrase. Paul is confident that Timothy is delivering the same message Paul is declaring. He had that

confidence because they were both intent on declaring the word of God—not the word of Paul or the word of Timothy.

2Timothy 4:16 ¶ At my first answer no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me: I pray God that it may not be laid to their charge.

2Timothy 4:17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

The word “answer” is a reference to “clearing of self, defense.” It would seem that Paul was left to defend himself when he first faced accusation before the judge. Paul does not wish that this lack of support be held against those that left him standing alone because he knew they were afraid. The actions of Nero and his followers toward Christians would provoke fear in most everyone.

Paul was well aware that “the Lord stood with him,” not just as a comforting presence, but as One who gave him strength through the ministry of His Spirit. He had expressed this confidence in his letter to the Corinthians.

1 Corinthians 2:4–5 “And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man’s wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.”

The Lord had given Paul a mission to the Gentiles, and he was sufficient to meet Paul’s every need in fulfilling that mission. The wording indicates to me that he boldly proclaimed the gospel as he spoke in his own defense. He knows that his life was spared at that time because God still had a bit more for him to do.

I liked this comment from JFB: “It was not deliverance from Nero (who was called *the lion*) which he rejoiced in, for he did not fear *death* (2 Timothy 4:6-8), but deliverance from the temptation, through fear, to deny His Lord: so ALFORD.”

2Timothy 4:18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Paul’s testimony to Timothy is that God is sufficient. It is the Lord who will deliver him from every attempt to thwart his ministry until he has fulfilled God’s purpose for him. When that time comes, he is confident that he will immediately be ushered into “His heavenly kingdom.” As Paul thinks about that glorious day, he can’t help but burst into praise for his Lord.

2Timothy 4:19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. 2Timothy 4:20 Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

Paul now closes his letter asking Timothy to give his greetings to several people. Prisca (Priscilla) and Aquila had been co-workers with Paul since he first visited

Corinth; they were fellow tentmakers. They even followed him to Ephesus and after a time in Rome eventually returned to settle there. Paul even mentioned in the closing of his letter to the Romans that they had risked their own lives on his behalf.

Onesiphorus is mentioned in chapter one (v16-18) as showing Paul great hospitality and one who diligently looked for Paul when he was in Rome without regard to how it might impact his personal safety.

It seems that Paul is informing Timothy as to the whereabouts of both Erastus and Trophimus in case he needs to contact them for any reason, and (I am sure) so that Timothy would pray for Trophimus.

2Timothy 4:21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

At this point Paul pleads with Timothy to come before winter (inferring the need for his cloak).

Paul closes by sending greetings to Timothy from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia and all the brethren. It would seem that though Paul felt the loss of his main ministry assistants, he still had support from believers in the church at Rome. The NIV Commentary notes that according to church tradition, Linus became the first bishop of Rome after the deaths of Paul and Peter.

2Timothy 4:22 The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

Paul closes his letter by pronouncing a blessing on Timothy. He prays that the Lord Jesus Christ be ever present with him. It is the spirit that is the essence of life in us, and it is the Holy Spirit indwelling the believer that gives us the privilege of the Lord's presence in our lives.

I love the Greek definition for "grace"—the divine influence upon the heart. Paul is expressing his hope that Timothy will ever be in submission to Jesus as Lord and Savior and that his ministry will be motivated by and focused on his hope in his Lord's return.

The second *epistle* unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.