

**Paul's Final Instructions to Timothy**  
**Sermon Delivered by Pastor Richard Chung on 10/24/2021**  
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*Scripture Passage: 2 Timothy 4:1-8*

**1** *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: 2 Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. 3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. 5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. 6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

Imagine now if today someone came to you and warned you that you do not have much time left to live but you have a chance to write down something to tell all the people that you love some guidance and advice and to pass on your knowledge before you pass away.

The passage from the Apostle Paul to Timothy is something just like that. Paul knew that he would soon pass away in jail in Rome. He didn't know when this was going to happen but he knew that was gonna to happen soon. He had a chance to write to Timothy and the believers what was dear to his heart. The final lesson was so urgent and important that he was guided by the Holy Spirit to pass on these truths to us.

Paul was in Rome and in prison. He knew soon he would be executed. He had been very much alone. A lot of people had abandoned him and other people who were faithful had gone to other missionary trips. He missed Timothy who was a younger pastor and had been with him on many trips over many years. He invited Timothy to come and wanted to make sure the Timothy knew what it meant to be a strong and effective pastor. He wanted other people and generations later, people like us, to hear and learn from these words.

The final instructions as recorded in 2 Timothy 4:1-8 can be summarized as follows:

1. Share the whole gospel.
2. Be patient in ministry.
3. Persevere in life.

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Paul was telling Timothy never forgot the gospel message that Jesus loves us and redeems us from sin and sacrifices for us on the cross. We are here at church because of the gospel message. I want to highlight here that the gospel message is always about life centered around the love of God. Do we love one another? Do we truly love God? When we meet do we care for others so much that we want to serve one another?

Not only we need to share God's love, but we need to share the whole message. We need to remind and teach the whole truth of the gospel message according to the Bible that if we confess our sins God will forgive us our sins and purify us.

*1 John 1:9-10. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.*

I think on one extreme we have churches that are very judgmental and legalistic. They are talking about rules and regulations and there is no mercy and grace and no life. On the other extreme there are people who say you don't need to repent and there's no such thing as sin. That is not the gospel either. We need an important balance. When we have mercy and grace, Jesus himself said repent and believe. You cannot leave repentance out.

We are sinners. Paul was very clear to Timothy. The reality is that there are a lot of false teachers out there saying that you don't need forgiveness and Jesus. When you share the gospel tell the whole gospel about God's forgiveness and the importance of repentance and confession having faith in Jesus Christ.

The second point is patience in ministry. Paul continues in verse 5, "... keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry." Those words, "keep your head in all situation" are the most important passages in the Bible. What Paul is saying here is: "Don't freak out, be logical, be patient and be wise on how you handle ministries. Keep your head in all situations."

I'm talking about all churches and no church is perfect because churches are full of sinners. We all make mistakes but we need to keep our heads in all situations. There are so many things that can happen in the church that would drive you crazy, upset you or even drive you to want to leave. Keep your head and know that you're not alone. God is with us in all situations, we have to endure hardship and we have to continue to be faithful members.

I haven't heard about your church history but I'm sure that you have your own stories. People have argued over things that they really should not have argued. I know every single church has some similar stories. People argue over where to spend the money or what color to paint the classroom, or what clothes that the worship leader should be wearing. If you don't keep your head these arguments can drive you crazy. We are not

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perfect and no church is perfect but we need to keep Christ centered. We are in the same church family we need to love one another, we need to forgive one another and we need to care for one another.

One of my senior pastors once said: "Don't major in the minors." Yet I still get caught up in the minor little tiny things and make a big deal about it. As Christians we need to stick to the most important truth that a church community must share the gospel message, care about one another and love the community so much that we will serve the community. In ministry Paul knows that there are a lot of hardship. Be patient in ministry. Patience comes from enduring hardship. We must continue to trust in God and show grace and mercy to others.

My final point today is that Paul tells Timothy to finish strong, don't give up but finish strong. As Christians we serve in church but then we want to quit because we are frustrated. The fact is that many people actually say: "they just don't like to go to church anymore because they don't think God hears their prayers. They quit."

I want to say to you. Don't give up. No matter how difficult the situation is, you're not alone. No matter how distant you feel God maybe, he still loves you and he is still with you.

In verses 6 and 7, "For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith." Paul encourages each one of us the same way that he persevered. We need to fight the good fight and finish the race. So many times we feel like giving up and we feel like we're alone, frustrated and discouraged. Let me encourage you today that you are not alone. God is with you always and he will never abandon you. He is always going to be with you, will continue to bless you and teach you even when you are going through the toughest times in life. He will be with you every step of the way and walk this journey of life together.

In the process there is in store the crown of righteousness awaiting. On that day all of us who have persevered will have the crown of righteousness. We will enjoy eternity in heaven and continue to fellowship with God.

So do not give up. Do not be discouraged. Trust in the Lord