

2 Timothy 4 • I have finished the race, I have kept the faith

Teacher: Pastor Paul LeBoutillier
Life Bible Ministry

We are in 2nd Timothy, and with the Lord's help, we'll finish up this study today. We'll see how far we get. I'm not going to make any promises. 2nd Timothy, chapter 4. Follow along in your Bible as I read. I'm reading from the ESV. It goes like this:

¹ I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: ² preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

⁶ For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ Henceforth there is laid up 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 loved his appearing.

⁹ Do your best to come to me soon. ¹⁰ For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. ¹¹ Luke alone is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very useful to me for ministry. ¹² Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. ¹³ When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. ¹⁴ Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds. ¹⁵ Beware of him yourself, for he strongly opposed our message. ¹⁶ At my first defense no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me. May it not be charged against them! ¹⁷ But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸ The Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

¹⁹ Greet Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus. ²⁰ Erastus remained at Corinth, and I left Trophimus, who was ill, at Miletus. ²¹ Do your best to come before winter. Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers.

²² The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

Let's pray. Heavenly Father, thank you for the time that you give us to get into the scriptures. We pray for Your Spirit to move in this place and to touch each and every heart.

Lord, you know where people are in their walk with you. You know, Lord, what they need to hear. You know what their hearts long for, and I pray that you'd fill each heart today. I thank you, Father, and ask that you would be with us in a very special way. In Jesus' precious name, amen.

So, here's Paul, the apostle. He's an old man now. He's in prison in Rome. And he knows that his race is done. He will soon be martyred. History tells us he will have his head cut off. That was a very gracious way to kill a Roman citizen, and Paul was a Roman citizen. But he had poured out his life sharing the gospel of Jesus tirelessly, going from place to place, enduring all kinds of difficulties to share that simple message that Jesus saves.

And now he's writing this final letter to Timothy, a young man who he traveled with for quite a time and spent time ministering to, pouring into. And he's finishing a letter to him. And as we begin this final chapter, you'll notice that it begins with a charge. Paul charges Timothy. He says in verse 1, *"I charge you."*

We talked earlier in this letter about what that means because earlier, Paul had told Timothy to charge the people, he said, tell them these things to stay away from, things to avoid and so forth. And we discussed the fact that a charge is a strong sort of a thing to give to someone. It means to urge strongly, or if you will, to insist. I insist upon it. That's the same thing as a charge.

Notice, I want you to notice the authority that Paul puts behind this charge. He says in verse 1, *"I charge you"*, notice this, *"in the presence of God, and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing. (ESV)"* In other words, that reminder, He's coming again, and His kingdom, isn't that it's pretty heady sort of a thing.

I charge you in these things. In other words, Paul is telling Timothy to remember the one who called him into ministry and the one before whom he

will stand and give an account. Paul wanted to remind Timothy that he would give an account of himself before God for his ministry. Now, please hear me correctly.

Paul is not telling Timothy that he's going to stand before God for his sins. Please understand that as believers in Jesus Christ, we will not stand before God for our sins. That has already been done. Jesus stood before the Father for you, for those of you who are in Christ, and He bore your judgment. He bore your sins.

He became your sins, and the curse that went along with it. And that has been finished. That's what Jesus said on the cross, right? One of the last things He said, *"It is finished"*. Oh, thank you Lord. *"It is finished"* (John 19:30). So that's not what Paul is saying to Timothy, "Tim, I want you to remember, dude, you're going to stand before God, you know, for your sin". He's not saying that he's saying that Timothy, along with every other servant of the Lord will one day have to give an account of themselves for the faithfulness that they demonstrated with the gifts and abilities and services that God has allowed us to take part in, in this life.

And for those who teach, that scrutiny is even going to be more severe. That's something we read about in the book of James. Let me put it on the screen for you. From James chapter one excuse me, chapter three, verse one.

James 3:1 (ESV)

Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.

James is reminding us here that those who claim to speak for God will have a higher standard. And the reason there's a higher standard is because there's only one truth. There aren't two or three or four or ten or twelve or a hundred. There's just one and we've got to get it right. And we got to be very careful not to stray from that truth to the left or to the right, but stay right on path.

And the charge to Timothy is then kind of laid out for us in verse 2. Look in your Bible. Where Paul is calling him to take up his mantle of leadership. He says in verse 2, *"...preach the word. Be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching. (ESV)"* Let me put these on the screen for you so you can kind of see them in linear fashion there.

Paul charging Timothy to...

- Preach the Word
- Be ready always
- Reprove
- Rebuke
- Exhort
- with patience and teaching

These are the things that Paul exhorted, no, charged Timothy to do. And notice too, it's kind of interesting, you know, almost like bookends, you can see that you've got preaching at the beginning and teaching at the end. So almost as if they were bookends, you see this calling, this charge to Timothy that begins with preaching and ends with teaching.

And you'll remember that those are not the same things. Some people think so. Preaching, teaching, same thing, isn't it? No, they're not the same thing. First of all, there's very different Greek words that are used for those, and there are very different elements behind them. Preaching is exhortational. It involves encouraging, it involves warning, it involves, you know, other things, elements like that.

Teaching is instructional. It is didactic, it is line by line, precept by precept. It's explaining what the scripture means. So there ought to be preaching and teaching in every church. It should start with teaching. Here's what the Bible says. And then when we get to that point of saying, now, here's how you walk it out. That's preaching. Okay.

It's, they're both very much needed. Unfortunately, you know, in most churches, you get a lot of preaching and very little teaching. And that's just kind of the way things have evolved, I guess, over the years. But I want you to notice here that even in preaching, what does Paul say to Timothy?

He says, “*preach the word*” (ESV verse 2). Do you notice that? He didn't say preach from the latest book you happen to be reading this week or month or whatever. He said, “*preach the word*”, in other words, exhort, encourage, warn, whatever, based on the Word, using the Word for your preaching. He didn't say, preach a message about cultural tolerance. He said, “*preach the word*”. So you see, even preaching is to be based on the scriptures, you know?

And then in between these bookends of preaching and teaching, we have these other elements, like, “*be ready in season and out of season*” (ESV verse 2). That basically just means be ready at all times. Just be prepared. Be ready to go. Boom! Get up and move. It's you know, the soldier, you know, in the foxhole. He's just, he's got everything he needs, you know. And he has to jump up at a moment's notice and just go.

Next Paul tells him to reprove. I don't know if you use the word reprove on a regular basis. I don't. The Greek word, however, means to convict. And it carries the idea of exposing. So to reprove someone is to expose. And that's not a fun thing to do. These, some of these things aren't fun for like a pastor or leader to do, to expose an area of sin or something like that.

And then the very next thing he says is to rebuke. Did you notice that? That's right after you expose, then rebuke. And that means to sternly warn someone related to whatever they may be doing or the path that they're on. And a pastor teacher cannot be afraid to tell someone they're wrong and warn them, you know, of the consequences.

He can't be worried about his job security. It's one of the reasons we don't hire pastors and churches should never get into the habit of hiring their pastor because somehow, some way he's going to start to think that his job security is predicated upon pleasing the people and making sure he never upsets the apple cart. But sometimes he has to upset the apple cart because sometimes there's rotten apples in there and he can't be afraid to do that and that's tough.

It really is. I can tell you from experience. And you know what? I've been rebuked. As a younger man, I've been rebuked by my pastor. It stinks. Let me tell you, it stinks doing it, too. It's not fun. Next, he says that Timothy is to exhort with patience. To exhort is to constantly to keep urging and not give up.

He's basically telling Timothy don't get, don't grow weary of encouraging the people to walk with the Lord, because, you know, people are going to fall down and they're going to stumble. Have you ever gotten impatient with somebody when they just, their walk with the Lord was stuttering? Because it happens a lot.

And some people stutter and fall down and stumble more than others. I spent a long time stumbling. And I still stumble, but in my early Christian life, it was a train wreck for the most part. I mean, I'd get up and take four steps forward and two back. And it was just, that was kind of my life for quite a while, and I'm so

glad there were people who were patient with me, but yeah, it's tough being patient.

It's tough continuing to exhort and be patient when people disappoint, you know, sometimes. And then finally, he says the pastor is to teach the scriptures. Which again is to instruct them in what the Word of God has to say. And the reason why true preaching and teaching and all the things that are in between those two bookends are so necessary is because of what he says in verse 3.

Look with me in your Bible. *“For the time is coming, (and may I say to you people that time is here,) when people will not endure sound teaching but having itching ears” (ESV)*. Itching ears is an interesting term. It's a euphemism to describe the desire for something fresh. You know, we're kind of tired of the Bible. I've been through the Bible. The Bible is kind of boring and the Bible is always telling me what I'm doing wrong. And I don't like that. So I don't want to find something better. I want to find something that's more exciting. I think I'm going to go to one of those churches where they're going to constantly be telling me God wants me rich. That's the ticket.

That's basically what he's talking about here. He says they will essentially abandon sound doctrine and their desire will be for something that is pleasing to the flesh. Notice that what he says here at the end of verse 3, he says, in fact, in order to do that, they will accumulate for themselves teachers.

In other words, they will seek out teachers to suit their own passions. So, in other words, because they no longer have time for the truth of God's Word, they're only going to tolerate someone who preaches and teaches according to their own personal passions. *“What I want. I want a new job. I want a more income, so I'm going to make sure I have someone in my life who's constantly telling me that God wants that too, and I just need to have enough faith.”*

And the Prosperity Doctrine is born and alive and thriving in the world today. I hear from people in some parts of the country where that's all there is. There is nothing else. In certain continents in the world, there are, the prosperity gospel has so taken over in the name of Christ that there is like nothing else available except for what people can get online. And I get notes from people like that all the time.

Verse 4, he goes on to describe, he says, and they *“will turn away from listening to the truth and they will wander off into myths.”* And, you know, we heard earlier about this turning away. You remember in Paul's first letter to Timothy, he said in later times, people will depart from the faith (1 Timothy 4:1-5). Do

you remember that? We talked about that in, in first Timothy. And so he's kind of reminding Timothy of that. And of course, we've seen again, plenty of that today.

But now Paul begins to say, but "*As for you,*" and now, and I'm going to direct the rest of this exhortation, this portion right here to those of you today who are here with me, who are in Christ. We can talk all we want about the world and the way it's going, but now this is the exhortation to us.

He says, "*As for you always*", first of all, "*be sober minded.*" Isn't that interesting, that's the first thing Paul should say to Timothy, to be sober-minded? And he's not necessarily saying, be careful about how much wine you drink because, you know, Timothy didn't like to drink wine anyway, but you know, it was a common beverage of the day because it was so hard to find good, you know, water that didn't, wasn't full of bacteria.

So they drank wine as a regular part of their diet many times, but Timothy didn't really like to. And Paul actually exhorted him, you remember earlier, to say, he said, drink a little wine because of your stomach. You're constantly having issues with your digestion because you only drink water. And water was not very good.

We take it so for granted, don't we? I just turn on the tap, filtered water, there you go. Boom, you know? And they didn't have that. And you go from place to place like Paul did along with Timothy, drinking different bacteria now than your system is accustomed to, you know. And our system can do that.

We can get accustomed to the local bacteria, you know, and then you go somewhere else and you introduce a new bacteria into your body and it just causes havoc. It's terrible sort of thing. And Timothy struggled with some of that. And so Paul told him to take some wine, but this isn't about sober mindedness based on drunkenness.

This is simply a statement to say to Timothy, first of all, Timothy, be clear minded so you can think. Do you guys understand how important it is to think? I know that sounds like a really stupid question. But the application of it, I mean, I got to tell you something. The enemy of our souls has very effectively created a cloudy mindedness in our culture.

And he has done it through, you know, many things, drugs, alcohol, pornography. I'm going to, some of you are going to hate me for this, gaming, and just pleasure seeking. Something that dominates your attention will cloud

your mind. And the first thing Paul says to Timothy is be very careful that you don't allow the things of this world to so cloud your mind that you are no longer able to think clearly.

Because we've got to be able to think. Thinking is not high on people's list of things that they're trying to do these days. I don't know if you've noticed. It's just not really popular. We're not deep thinkers. Have you picked up a book lately written by a deep thinker? Like, like C. S. Lewis. I mean, he'll put you to shame.

Even A. W. Tozier. You read through a book by one of those guys. And John Stott deep thinker. I pick up C.S., the first time I picked up, somebody told me, you need to read Mere Christianity by C. S. Lewis. So I picked it up and I was probably, I don't know, in my late twenties, early thirties at the time.

And I started reading C. S. Lewis and I was like, what in the, what is he saying? It was like, I know this is written in English, but it's like it's a different language. And then I literally put it down for like 10 years. And then I picked it up again and it instantly became my favorite book. And what happened in that 10 years is God brought me more out of the world than I was from the previous 10 years, where I was able to think more deeply than before.

And at first it was like somebody going (gestures mouth moving) wa wa wa wa wa wa wa. I couldn't get it, you know? And then it's just incredible. And I still had to read really slowly even then. And even when I still pick up C.S. Lewis, I've got to like read a paragraph and then think on it for like a week or so.

It's just critical thinking and deep thinking are not things that our culture elevates today. And the best, one of the best things we can do with our kids is to challenge them to think deeply, to think critically, because the world's lost their mind. I don't know if you've noticed. Have you been watching any of the headlines or anything like that? You guys know that this stuff isn't going to end, right? You guys know that. It's not going to end, okay.

They're always going to find another (COVID) variant. It's going to keep going and you're going to get, have to get a booster shot every year. Just know that and you got to just, you got to be okay with it one way or another.

Because you know what I've learned about fear is once you give into fear, you stop thinking clearly. And you're always going to be afraid of something. You know why? There's always something to be afraid of. Life is full of boogeymen and monsters under the bed and in the closet. And once you literally open your

life to that kind of a response to threatening situations, you no longer think clearly.

And that's why some of us are looking at what the world is doing and we're going, what in the world is going on? Well, they're not thinking clearly. They've been overcome. They've been overwhelmed by fear and dread and all the other things that go along with it. Paul says, Timothy, whatever you do, man, be sober minded so you can think clearly.

You got to be able to think your way through this thing and God will help you. But if there's a cloud there, you know, there's going to be problems. Notice he goes on here to say, endure suffering. In other words, he's saying patiently endure any opposition that comes to you because you're a believer.

That's tough, isn't it? I see notes from time to time, in fact, I get a note from this kind of a Christian news organization that talks about believers who are being persecuted and things that are happening in other countries, and sometimes even in our own country, related to just opposition and persecution.

And it's kind of almost like a pound your fist on the table approach to what's going on with Christians being persecuted. And what I mean by that is they're like, what is going on with these people in the world? And they're persecuting us as believers. And all the while I go to my Bible and Jesus goes, yeah, it's going to happen.

So just deal with it. You know, you need to expect it. And Paul says here, and when it happens, endure it patiently. That sounds easy, it just rolls right off the tongue. You ever tried to endure something patiently that is really bugging you? It's not easy. But that's what we're called to do, you guys. We are called to endure patiently.

Endure suffering. He says, do the work of an evangelist. You know, Timothy wasn't an evangelist. Neither am I. But I still am called to do the work of an evangelist. That means I've got to be ready to share the gospel with others when the time is right. And then I love this last statement. He says, "*Fulfill your ministry.*" (ESV verse 5)

And this is Paul's way of just simply saying, you've been given a job, just finish it. In other words, complete the work that you've been given. Complete the work that you've been given. And then that whole idea of completing the work brings Paul to speak now of the completion of his own ministry. And these are some of the most incredible verses.

Verse 6, he says, *“For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith”*. Wow. I find it particularly interesting that Paul likens the completion of his ministry to a drink offering. You know, that was something that the Jews did.

I've personally never even seen a drink offering poured out. But I can kind of imagine, it was, they would pour out wine or something before the altar of the Lord. And what was interesting about a drink offering is once you poured it out there was nothing left even showing that you'd made an offering. It all got poured out. And that's kind of, I believe that's what Paul is saying in using this phrase when he says, *“I am poured out like a drink offering.”*

He's saying, I am completely poured out. I'm used up. I've given everything. I've held nothing back. Oh, Lord, help me to be able to say that myself one day. I want to say that. I tell you, those words really resonate with my heart. I want to say, Lord, I didn't hold anything back. I poured it all out for you. I didn't retain any.

And then he confirms this statement by saying, *“I finished the race.”* Paul knew that the race was over. He knew it. It's time to let others carry on. Time to pass the baton. Pass the torch, as it were. Let Timothy carry on. Move on. Move forward. Fight the good fight. Paul's time was done.

It's kind of interesting, you know, as a pastor, I've kind of had to come to terms with this whole idea of serving the Lord with my whole life and deciding, you know, how am I going to, I mean, I'm 64 years old, I feel like I'm 23, but I tell people I'm 23.

Do you ever do that? Do you ever have a dream where somebody asks you your age and you tell them something that is completely wrong and then you wake up and you go, Oh, man. Has it ever happened to you? People ask me my age in my dreams, and I go, I'm 23. And then I wake up and I go, oh, it's not true.

I'm 64. And, you know, typically I would, you know, if I were doing a secular job I would be about a year away from retirement. But, you know, I kind of had to come to terms with the fact that I, there is no retirement. I'm not going to retire. It's just not going to happen. I'm going to do this as long as God allows me, and people come.

I'm always shocked every Sunday when people come, but I'm just going to keep doing it until I can't do it anymore. And then, but I hope that even then, I hope

that if I'm like bedridden or something like that, you know, heaven forbid, that I'll still be serving the Lord. You know, it's like you can still pray, you know, or you can still be writing letters or encouraging people in some way.

I just, you know, I want to just keep going until my, the race is over. You know, don't you feel the same way? Don't you just want to keep going until the race is over? It's like, okay, I know the races are, and it's probably cool to be able to say, like, Paul, hey, the race is over, you know, I fought the good fight.

And so, he then begins to mention the rewards for his faithful service. He says in verse eight, *"Henceforth there is laid up 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 loved his appearing."*

By the way, there are different words in the Greek for crown. You notice he's talking about a crown here. He says, the crown of righteousness awaits me. And there are certain words that speak of a royal crown. And there's others that speak of a crown as a reward. And this is that. It is the victor's crown.

That's what Paul's talking about here. And he expected it because he's, he believed that he had won, in the power of the spirit. And he said that this same crown would be given to everyone who waited patiently and longed for the appearing of Jesus. And so he's talking about rewards. How do you feel about rewards?

I get notes from time to time from people who are bothered when I bring up rewards or talk about them because they will say, I don't think that's what should motivate us. I don't think we should be motivated by reward. I think we should be motivated by a pure desire to serve the Lord and please him. That should be our motivation.

I got to be honest with you. I don't see why one has to exclude the other. I don't see why you can't be motivated by both because Jesus talked about rewards a lot. And He worked that idea into His parables quite often as if to kind of say, hey, there's going to be a reward at the end of the race.

Have you ever run a race where there wasn't an award at the end of the, I mean, unless you lost. I mean, I ran track when I was in school and, you know, we knew that there was a ribbon at the other end, you know, depending on how fast we ran in the race. Can you imagine getting done with the race and going, yeah, you did good. See ya.

So, the idea, you know, I don't see why it shouldn't motivate us. God talks a lot about rewards. Now, as we kind of finish out this letter, verses 9 through the end, a lot of this is just very personal from Paul to Timothy. He says in verse 9, *"Do your best to come to me soon."* By the way, we don't know whether Timothy ever made it.

I'd like to think that he did, but we don't know that he got to Rome before Paul was martyred. He says in verse 10, *"For Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica,"* and he's simply talking about a man who apparently chose to love the world over and above loving and serving Jesus.

Sadly, it still happens today. Demas is by no means the only person to have done it. But you know what? Sometimes people do that and then they come back to their senses, don't they? And they rededicate their life to the Lord, and that's pretty cool. It's not cool that they left, but it's cool that they came back.

He says in the middle of verse 10, *"Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia."* He's talking about other men who had been with him. These aren't men who deserted him. They just had been sent to minister to areas that needed ministry. He says, (verse 11) *"Luke alone is with me."* This is Dr. Luke, the physician, author of the gospel that bears his name, and also the book of Acts.

And I like this next statement. He says, *"Get Mark and bring him with you for he's very useful to my ministry."* This is the same Mark, John Mark who was taken on the very first missionary journey with Paul and Barnabas. In fact, he was Barnabas's nephew and he went on that first missionary journey, but you remember he kind of wiggled out about halfway into it and he went home.

And so, when they got ready to start their second missionary journey, Barnabas wanted to take John Mark along again, and Paul didn't think it wise. Paul thought John Mark a liability, and the two men disagreed over it to the point where they ended up going their separate ways. And Barnabas took John Mark, and he went to Cyprus and Paul took Silas, you'll remember, and then retraced his steps from the first missionary journey, visiting the churches and also sharing Christ where they had not shared him before.

But again, I want to just remind you, Paul saw John Mark as a liability at that time. Now, what does he say about John Mark? He says he's very useful to me. You know what that tells me? People can grow up and they can change and they can mature. And we have to be careful not to pigeonhole them in whatever place of failure or immaturity we once saw them displaying themselves in front

of God and everybody. And we need to give people the opportunity to grow up and to change, to be different. And John Mark became different.

And Paul said, he's useful to me. Verse 12, *"Tychicus I've sent to Ephesus."* And that's where Timothy was currently. He says, *"When you come bring the cloak that I left with Karpis at Troas"*, they would use their cloak to warm themselves when the weather got cold. He says, *"also the books and above all the parchments."* We assume by parchments he's referring to portions of the Hebrew scriptures.

And then he says, kind of by way of warning in verse 14, *"Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm. The Lord will repay him according to his deeds. Beware of him yourself for he strongly opposed our message."* I like this statement and I have to tell you why. Paul is giving us a wonderful example about how to deal with those who oppose us in our ministry or in our life in Christ.

Did you notice what Paul's attitude was related to Alexander the coppersmith? The Lord will repay him. Let Him handle it. Let God handle it. And Paul wasn't saying that just because he was incarcerated at the time and couldn't do anything about it. That was his attitude. God will take care of it. Do you have somebody who's opposing you right now?

God will take care of it. God will repay. By the way, He's a lot better at it than you are. Just want to remind you of that. Of course, that doesn't stop Paul from warning Timothy about this evil man, and that's what he does in verse 15. He goes on in verse 16, it says, *"At my first defense, no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me."*

May not be charged against them." What an attitude. But then he reminds Timothy. You know, even though all of my companions kind of ran off and hid themselves, the Lord stood by me. He gave me strength. So that through me, I might proclaim the gospel in the hearing of all the Gentiles.

You know, Paul, every time Paul went before some kind of a political leader or whatever, he got to share the gospel every time.

So, Paul, what are you here for? Why have you been arrested?

Well, let me tell you. Let me tell you about Jesus. Let me tell you about who He is, what He did and what I believe about Him and why people don't seem to like

that. And that's what he's saying here. It's incredible. I keep getting arrested and it gives me these wonderful opportunities to share Jesus.

He says, so *“I was rescued out of the lion's mouth.”* And he went on to very confidently say (verse 18), *“the Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and (ultimately he says) will bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom.”* And you know what? God did do that. *“To Him be the glory forever.”* Isn't that lovely? Just unwavering confidence, even at the end, even in a Roman prison, he says, yeah, God will rescue me.

Even if that rescue ends up with my death, that's still a rescue. He didn't consider death the ultimate bummer. He considered it the ultimate graduation ceremony where he would be inducted into the presence of his savior.

Final greetings here are given in verses 19 through 21. *“Greet Prisca.”* Your Bible may say Priscilla. I prefer that. Prisca doesn't sound very, I don't know, feminine. Anyway. *“So greet Priscilla and Aquila.”* Besides, then their names rhyme, and what's better than that, right? Right? It's like Mary and Barry. Right?

“And the household of Anesiphorus.” We heard about him before. *“Erastus remained at Corinth and I left Trophimus who was ill at Miletus.”* So, he says, *“do your best to come before winter.”* Again, we don't know if Timothy made it. *“Eubulus sends greetings to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers.”*

These were apparently some believers who were living in Rome, and he ends the letter, these last words of the Apostle Paul to his young apprentice, (verse 22) *“The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.”* 2nd Timothy.