

A Life Worth Living

Paul says that his life is being offered and sacrificed to God in one last act—the act of death. What a view of death! Seeing death as an offering and sacrifice being presented to God. Paul's triumphant testimony.

2 Timothy 4:6-8

INTRODUCTION

- A. Paul wrote 2 Timothy from a dark and damp Roman prison cell just before he died in AD 67. The Roman emperor Nero had been slowly descending into madness since his ascent to the throne in AD 54, a process exacerbated by the great fire of Rome in AD 64 that burned half the city. With the residents of Rome in an uproar, Christians became a convenient target for Nero, who used believers as scapegoats for his city's lack of preparedness. Paul was one of those caught up in this persecution and was beheaded by Roman officials soon after writing this letter.
- B. This was Paul's last letter before he died. Things were not going so well. After his first trial, everyone deserted Paul; now, he was alone with Jesus.
- C. **In 2 Timothy 4:6-8 Paul shares some of his most powerful and raw emotions regarding his present life, his past life, and the life that is waiting for him in the near future.**

1 The Present: Paul is Ready 2 Timothy 4:6

EXPLANATION

A. **"For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come."** (2 Timothy 4:6)

B. Drink offering - a death worth dying

1. Paul says that his life is being offered and sacrificed to God in one last act—the act of death. What a view of death! Seeing death as an offering and sacrifice being presented to God.
2. It seems like the death of an innocent life is a waste, but Paul sets before us the actual value and meaning of a life spent in faithful service to the Lord.
(**"But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all."** Phil. 2:17)
3. Drink offering (Numbers 15, Exodus 29; Leviticus 23) - pouring out as a last act of sacrificial worship. (Romans 12:1)

C. The time has come of my **departure has** come (b) and Paul's view of death

1. Paul said his execution was at hand soon. "Departure - analuo"
 - a. the idea of hoisting the anchor, loosening the mooring ropes, and departing from one country to another. Paul had been tied and anchored to this world, but the time had come to hoist the anchor and loosen the ropes of this world and set sail for the greatest of all ports - heaven.

D. Paul's view of death

1. The idea of breaking camp and moving to another place for camp. Paul had pitched his tent from place to place for many years; this was the last time he would break camp and pitch his tent in heaven.
2. The idea of unyoking an animal from the burden of the cart, plow, or millstone. Paul had been released from the burden of the millstone, from the plow yoke, and set free to depart for the pastures, still waters, and rest of heaven and eternity.

- a. "for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." (Romans 14:8)
- b. "For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain.²² But if *I am* to live *on* in the flesh, this *will mean* fruitful labor for me; and I do not know which to choose. But I am hard-pressed from both *directions*, having the desire to depart and be with Christ, for *that* is very much better;" (Philippians 1:21-23)
- c. **"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints" (Ps. 116:15).**

2 The Past: A Life Well-Lived 2 Timothy 4:7

EXPLANATION

- A. *I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.* Paul uses three graphic illustrations to describe what he describes his life:
- B. (ἀγῶνα, *agōna*) "I have fought the good fight" does not refer to military conflict but to an athletic competition
 - 1. "Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses." (1 Timothy 6:12). The idea is that what he has engaged in, the preaching of the Gospel has been a good fight and noble fight.
- C. "I have finished the race." Another translation says, "The only race worth running."
 - 1. He had run and finished the course of his life, completed the race of life just like an athlete completes a race and enjoys the fruits of the prize.
 - 2. Paul lived a disciplined life and controlled his flesh and emotions.

3. 1 Corinthians 9:23-27; "I do all things for the sake of the gospel, so that I may become a fellow partaker of it.**24** Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but *only* one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win. **25** Everyone who competes in the games exercises self-control in all things. They then *do it* to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. **26** Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; **27** but I discipline my body and make it my slave, so that, after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified."
4. Philippians 3:14; "I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus."
5. Hebrews 12:1; "Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us,"

D. "I have kept the faith." -

1. During Paul's life as an apostle, he was a faithful steward of the Gospel, thus being a faithful keeper of the faith.
2. What does it mean or take to keep the faith?
 - a. Think about this for a moment—all the sufferings that Paul went through—the terrible trials—the times that he could have ...
 1. dumped the trust of the faith or laid it aside and ignored it. But he never did. He had been chosen by the Lord and Master of life to manage the trust of God, even the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, Paul took the trust and managed it through all—both good and bad times. He never forsook the faith. And because he had been faithful, it was time for him to bear the fruit of his labor. He was now to reap the benefits of the faith; he was to be given all the rights and privileges of the Lord's estate—to live and enjoy its pleasures forevermore.
 - b. 1 Corinthians 4:2; "In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy"
 - c. 1 Peter 4:10; "As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."

3 The Future: The Reward 2 Timothy 4:8

EXPLANATION

- A. "in the future 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."
- B. **Crown** (stephanos, not diadem), garland or prize an athlete receives.
1. The Crown of righteousness is the crown of life we are all hoping for with confidence.
 - a. James 1:12; "Blessed is a man who perseveres under trial; for once he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which *the Lord* has promised to those who love Him."
 - b. Revelation 2:10; "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. ❗ Behold, ❗ the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, so that you will be tested, and you will have tribulation for ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life."
- C. "which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day"
1. Jesus has been appointed to judge the world one Day
 1. Acts 17:30-31; "Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all *people everywhere* should repent,³¹ because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

2. The living and the dead

- a. 2 Timothy 4:1; "I solemnly 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:"
- b. 2 Corinthians 5:10; " For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may be recompensed for his deeds in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad."

CONCLUSION

1. Paul was all alone in his prison cell, already having his first imperial court hearing and awaiting his second.
2. Demas and others had abandoned this man of God, this one who had given his entire life to the service of the Lord as a faithful minister and steward of the Gospel, punished physically and emotionally, but he had secure hope:
 - a. He had fought the good fight
 - b. He had run the race without fail
 - c. He knew that Christ the righteous Judge had a crown reserved for him in heaven as a reward - NOW THAT's a life worth living!
3. But wait, there's more!
 1. Not only for Paul, but all who have loved His appearing (2 Timothy 4:8)
 2. "Therefore, *prepare your minds for action, keep sober in spirit, fix your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" (1 Peter 1:13)
4. Plan of Salvation