

## FAITHFUL TO THE END

2 Timothy 4:5-22

I wanted a good opening illustration for today's sermon so I went to the Baseball Hall of Fame, Gettysburg, and Arlington Cemetery! Paul uses the images of a battle, of a crown awarded to an athlete, and of death – all intended *to inspire faithfulness to Jesus*.

I've wanted to go to Gettysburg for some time now, but I've wanted to go Cooperstown since I was about five. My dad and I have been planning a trip to the Hall for years... We weren't disappointed. My dad later said, "Bury me in Cooperstown." It was really neat in being in that little town, as we walked among the next generations – numerous Little Leaguers with those flat-billed hats – wanting to be the next superstar hall of famer, just like I used to dream of. We got to see Babe Ruth's bat, old uniforms, baseballs, and other artifacts. It was awesome.

The greatest award for a baseball player can have is a plaque in "The Shrine" – in acknowledgement of a great career. Every player has his own plaque. We took our picture beside **Al Kaline**... What an honor to be awarded this honor as a baseball player.

Paul uses an athletic analogy in this section, mentioning the "**crown.**" These Garlands or "Crowns" won by the Greeks were greatly prized, like these plaques in the Hall of Fame.

But Paul speaks of a crown of **infinitely greater worth**, of something of **far greater importance**. He speaks of a crown that he will receive—the same crown we also will one day receive! This should propel us to faithfulness.

Every little reward in this life pales in comparison to the crown of life. No trophy compares with seeing the Savior, and hearing  
"Well done."

And no trip to Cooperstown with my dad even compares with the joy I have in knowing, in light of his previous conversion, that we will

**get to taking a trip to Heaven, and be there together. There we will see the REAL Hero, Jesus Christ, who has won the greatest victory.**

**This is some very good practical stuff here on how to be faithful.** I've loved studying it. In this passage, Paul gives Timothy (and us) his *farewell message*, emphasizing the subject of *faithfulness*. I would like to look at it in four main parts:

1. Timothy's Call to Faithfulness (5)
2. Paul's Example of Faithfulness (6-8)
3. More Examples of Faithfulness (9-15, 19-21)
4. The Lord's Perfect Faithfulness (16-18, 22)

### **#1: TIMOTHY'S CALL TO FAITHFULNESS (4:5)**

The opening words are directed at Timothy with force, **"But as for you"** (4:5a). Like in previous passages, Paul once again contrasts the **present situation** in Ephesus with Timothy's call to **be different**.

- Even though many will **lose their head receiving false teaching** (4:3-4), Timothy must do something else. He must keep a clear head in everything (5b).
- Because some **do not want to hear the word of truth**, Timothy must be prepared to "endure hardship" when people oppose his teaching (5c).
- **Since people are ignorant of the gospel**, Timothy must "do the work of an evangelist" (5d).
- **Even though some will abandon him for the false teachers**, Paul tells him, "fulfill your ministry" (5e).

### **#1: Keep a Clear Head About Everything (5b)**

The commands to "be serious" or "be sober-minded" (5b, ESV) have to do with **"moral alertness" and "coolness and presence of mind"** (Guthrie, 179). **Paul used this word earlier in his list of qualifications for an overseer** (1 Tim. 3:2).

In colloquial terms you might say, **"Don't freak out."**

- We must not lose our heads when we face opposition, or hang our head when we are discouraged.

- We must remain **calm and sane like an airline pilot flying through rough air**. “Seat belts” (Nathan)

Notice the ESV, the word **“Always.”** When do we need to be sober-minded? **Always. We might wake up and wonder, “What should I do today?”** One answer is always, **“I should keep a clear head about everything. Lord, grant me grace.”** **At a ball game, in a class, at work, in traffic.** Always.

Similarly, Alistair Begg says we must avoid being **“fat headed”** (being puffed up with pride, e.g., 1 Tim. 3:6, 6:5), or **“bobble headed”** (**bouncing around to every doctrinal fad**, e.g., 2 Tim. 4:3-4). We might add **“empty-headed”** to the list (**getting involved in ignorant controversies**, e.g., 2 Tim. 2:23). Paul also urges us to avoid being **sick-headed** (**having a mind filled with immorality**, 2 Tim. 3:1-4) or **hot headed** (responding to critics with sinful anger instead of gentleness, e.g., 2 Tim. 2:24-25). **Instead, by the power of the Holy Spirit, we must be level-headed. Self-control, stability, and steadiness are marks of a faithful believer.**

**How many of you know someone who just freaked out, and stop running the race faithfully? They got arrogant and fell; they started chasing crazy doctrine; they got involved in stupid arguments; they fell morally; they just got mad at the world, and just stopped pursuing Christ...?**

Paul himself exemplifies this cool spirit later in the chapter. After saying that everyone deserted him in his first defense, he says, **“May it not be counted against them”** (4:16b). Paul does not say, **“I hope they all die and burn!”** He is not reckless. He is self-controlled, sober, and merciful. Likewise, may the Lord give us strength to be sober-minded.

## **#2: Endure Hardship (5c)**

Once again the subject of **endurance** appears in 2 Timothy (cf. **1:8; 2:3, 9-10; 3:10-12**). Timothy is to continue through conflict: **“endure hardship”** (4:5c). **He is to avoid three common ways people wrongly respond:**

- **Being bitter in hardship (Self-pity)**
  - **Quitting because of hardship (Spoiled/Lazy)**
  - **Responding in violence to hardship (Anger/Rage)**
- **Many are quick to give up too easily - on all kinds of things: books, exercise plan, yard work, and sadly, even their marriages and ministry.**
  - **We prefer shortcuts. We want an easy route. And people make money off of this reality:**
    - **Diet Books or health plans: eat mangos! That's all you need. It's not about working out.**
    - **Take this pill to make your smart – you don't need books and school. No! If you take the pill you will not be smart, you will just be broke!**
    - **Marriage: "My wife talks too much, and she's not meeting my needs. ... I read a book on how to have a mute wife... But it's not working..." Dude. It takes work.**
    - **"We tried biblical counseling, but it didn't work." It takes time. This is not a TV show, where everything gets resolved in thirty minutes.**

As Paul mentioned previously, Timothy is called to "endure hardship as a good soldier" by the grace that is in Christ Jesus (2:3).

**No one will be able to triumphantly say, like Paul, "I have fought the good fight" if they do not learn to endure hardship.**

In my short time as a pastor, I have encountered:

- **Physical suffering,**
- **Relational abandonment,**
- **Demonic warfare,**
- **The burden of preaching,**
- **Financial instability,**
- **A hurricane called Katrina,**
- **Fear, Discouragement, Doubt,**
- **The loss of loved ones,**
- **Parental challenges,**
- **Wounding criticism,**
- **False accusations, and more.**

**But it's not just pastors. Every Christian who desires to obey Christ will inevitably face hardship (cf. 3:12). Let the hardships that come from following Jesus lead you to prayer and not to despair.**

### **#3: Do the Work of an Evangelist (5d)**

Paul probably does not have the office or position of an evangelist in mind here. In **Ephesians 4:11** and **Acts 21:8**, there seems to be a specialist ministry for "evangelists."

#### **A. The Nature of Evangelism: Work.**

The emphasis here in 2 Timothy has more to do with the "work" of an evangelist.

All Christians are called to spread the word (**Acts 4:31; 8:4**).

- Whether it is one-on-one personal evangelism or public proclamation of the crucified and risen Christ, evangelism is "work."
- A lot of Christians want to use the spiritually sounding excuse, "Evangelism is not my gift." I'm not sure if there's a gift of evangelism per se. There is the office of evangelist. But the early church didn't relegate evangelism to those "with the gift." They all did it. Are some better at it? Sure. But everyone is called to make disciples.
- I think the main reason we don't do it faithfully is not because of gifting. It's because it's work.
- Jesus told his disciples to pray for "**workers**" to enter the harvest field because there were so few of them (**Matt. 9:37-38**). **He did not tell them to pray for "half-hearted slackers."** Evangelism is labor! Like a **hard-working farmer**, we must keep sowing and plowing every day if we want to see fruit. Keep planting seeds, and pray for God to send the rain.

**Acts 17** shows us a powerful picture of the work of an evangelist. Paul is waiting on his friends in Athens *when he is provoked by the idolatry of the city*. Because Paul longs for people to worship the Savior, he engages them with the gospel. He works on three groups of people.

- First, **he reasons with the religious people** in the synagogue, pointing them to the Messiah (Acts 17:17a).
- Second, he **dialogues** with those who pass through the marketplace (17b).
- Finally, he addresses **the academic types** at the **Areopagus** (18).

We need laborers in all three fields today.

If you read the biographies of faithful evangelists who have labored in each field (Spurgeon, Moody, Ravi), they would all illustrate the need to work. One thing that I've learned after reading several biographies: **They don't write biographies about lazy people.**

The type of portrait of the lazy person is sad. Proverbs calls this person "**a sluggard.**" Perhaps we should reflect on this bad example a bit. (Here we are in the lazy days of summer). Derek Kidner says of this guy, "The sluggard in Proverbs is a figure of a tragic-comedy, with his **sheer animal laziness, his preposterous excuses and his final helplessness.**" You could relate the sluggard verses to all types of work – including evangelism. Consider the sluggard **in Proverbs 26:**

1. He is **happy** making **excuses** (26:13; cf., 22:13; 20:4). We must stop making excuses. There is no lion in the road! The real lion is Satan, who has put you in his snare with laziness. There will always be excuses to not work.
2. He is **hinged** to his **bed** (26:14; cf., 6:6-11; 24:30-34). We can't reach our neighbors and the nations if we sleep all day.
3. He is **hopeless** in **completing things** (26:15; cf., 12:27). He would rather enjoy his laziness, than his food!
4. He is **haughty** in his **self-assessment** (26:16). He regards himself as something **of a genius**. He mocks his friends who work hard. Notice, he is the last to see his own features. This is sure sign of pride. He has a blind spot... he has no idea that he's lazy.

Then in **chapter 21**

5. He is **hungry** for **fulfillment** (21:25-26a; cf., 13:4). He desires but because he won't work, he remains unfulfilled. The

**reason many of you aren't happy isn't because of a church or the preaching, it's because you're lazy.** If you begin to reach out, you will find enormous fulfillment. You can find fulfillment in ministry, the question is, will you?

**I'll stop there with the sluggard. We could go on. If we are going to reach our city, we need a church full of zealous people, not lazy people.**

#### **B. Some Ways of Evangelism**

**Let's say you want to improve in this area – as I do. How should you do it? Let me just mention a few ways, and then we'll move on.**

- **Pray.** God saves sinners. He saved you. Pray for converts. **Pray for Clint who will be leading some outreach for us...**
- **Serve your neighbors.**
- **Ask Questions.** That's what Paul and Jesus did!
- **Share Your Story.**
- **Use the Church.** I mean by that, invite them, and bring them!

#### **C. Power for Evangelism**

- **Remember that you do not work alone!** The Holy Spirit is the Great Evangelist who opens eyes for people to believe. Throughout the book of Acts there is a great picture of faithful evangelism and God's mighty work of bringing people to Christ (Acts 8:26-40; 16:14; 18:9-10).
- **Further, remember that we speak out of the overflow of our hearts.** Therefore, fill your own heart with the gospel daily. "Remember Jesus Christ," Paul tells Timothy (2 Tim. 2:8, ESV). Let us send "little evangelists" into our hearts every day, reminding ourselves of the gospel and who we are in Christ. Then let us arise and tell others about the Savior of our souls.

#### **#4: Fulfill Your Ministry (5e)**

This exhortation is a summary of Timothy's calling. Paul urges him to complete his ministry. **The same verb ("fulfilled") is used when Paul and Barnabas had completed their relief work in Jerusalem. Luke says, "After they had completed [fulfilled] their relief mission, Barnabas and Saul returned to Jerusalem, taking along John who is**

**called Mark” (Acts 12:25). Timothy is likewise urged to continue his work until it is completed.**

The work that Paul has in mind includes, broadly speaking, **all that he has already told Timothy to do in 1-2 Timothy**. He wants Timothy to **keep preaching the Bible, pointing people to Jesus, and loving Christ’s church.**

In other words, complete your assignment and then go home to your Savior.

Notice the word **“your.”** He doesn’t tell him to focus on someone else’s ministry. There are a lot of people who love someone else’s church, someone else’s wife, someone else’s job. **Fulfill your ministry. Love your church. Love your wife. Love your neighbor.**

## **#2: PAUL’S EXAMPLE OF FAITHFULNESS (4:6-8)**

Paul issues his charge in the light of his impending martyrdom. After urging Timothy to fulfill his ministry, he reflects on his own ministry.

### **The Present (6)**

**In verse 6, Paul speaks of dying and departing.** The first subject is **illustrated with a sacrifice** and the second is perhaps the image **of a boat**. Concerning the former, he says, “I am already being poured out as a **drink offering**” (6a). **About five years earlier, he used this analogy in writing to the Philippians to describe the possibility of his death** (Phil. 2:17). **Here, it is no possibility. He speaks as though the process has already begun.**

This picture is drawn from the Old Testament sacrificial system (cf. Ex. 29:40-41; Lev. 23:13; Num. 15:1-12; 28:7, 24). **During the ritual of sacrificing a lamb, wine was poured out at the base of the altar. Perhaps Paul used this image to refer to the type of death he expected. Because Roman citizens could not be crucified, he may have anticipated being beheaded, in which case his blood would splash like wine on the ground.**

**Whatever Paul intended, the application is clear: go out worshipping!**

Paul adds, “The time for **my departure** is close” (6b). The word translated “departure” is also used in Greek literature for the **loosing of a ship from its moorings or a soldier loosing the stakes of his tent**. The image of a boat is indeed a beautiful one. **I love the image of Paul lifting the anchor, tossing aside the ropes, and joyfully sailing to a better place. The believer never really dies; he or she just departs.** Paul longed for this final, ultimate voyage. He told the Philippians, “I have the **desire** to depart and be with Christ” (Phil. 1:23b). Why? He says, because it is “**far better**” (23c). This was Paul’s dream. And now the ship was about to leave. **Paul was ready. Are you?**

### **The Past (7)**

Paul looked back on his life with triumph. He uses **three more** pictures. First, he uses the analogy of a **fight**. “I have fought the good fight” (7a), he says. Paul was a **warrior**. He does not appear to be physically impressive, but he was a spiritual warrior. **He had stood before Felix, Agrippa, and the officials of Rome with courage. He endured the riots in Ephesus and the opposition in Corinth. He endured all kinds of struggles on his missionary journeys. About thirty years had passed since Christ called him on the Damascus Road. On that momentous occasion, he was told that he will suffer for Christ’s name, and he did (Acts 9:16).**

Consider afresh some of Paul’s past hardships in **2 Corinthians 11:23-28**. What is more, Paul says ultimately his fight is beyond what the human eye can see” (eg., Eph. 6:12).

Second, Paul says, “I have **finished the race**” (7b). Some years earlier he told the Ephesian elders that his goal was to finish his course (Acts 20:24). Now he could say triumphantly, “I finished it.”

We all have a race to run. Keep running!

Finally, Paul says, “**I have kept the faith**” (7c). **Paul is probably emphasizing his role as a steward of sound doctrine. He was a guardian of the gospel.** Earlier he tells Timothy, “Hold on to the pattern of sound teaching” (2 Tim. 1:13a), and “Guard what has been entrusted to you” (1 Tim. 6:20).

**Every Christian in general and leaders in particular should take heed. We too have a fight to endure, a race to run, and a treasure to guard.**

## **The Future (8)**

The final picture in verses 6-8 is that of a “crown,” or **garland**.... Notice that **Jesus Christ is the righteous Judge** (cf. 2 Cor. 5:10). This righteous Judge has already given Paul His righteousness when he believed (Rom. 3:21-22; 2 Cor. 5:21). But now, Paul awaits the crown of righteousness; that is, the ultimate, permanent state of righteousness. While Nero was about to declare Paul guilty and condemn him, **Christ the righteous Judge was about to declare him righteous!**

But Paul **does not stop** with *his* crown. He says, “not only to me, but to all those who have loved his appearing” (8b). The same crown of righteousness awaits all believers, not just the mighty apostle. Genuine believers are those who love his appearing. A sure evidence of saving faith is having your heart set on Christ. Unbelievers dread Christ’s coming, but as believers, we long for it. Jesus is our “blessed hope” (Titus 2:13).

**This vision will keep you running. Do you see Jesus? There he is. You are getting closer. Keep running. Keep fighting. Keep guarding. Soon, you will see him as he is (1 John 3:2). Then you will see his scarred hands and look into his majestic eyes. His lips will move and he will say, “Well done.” He will place a crown on your head. On that day, you will not regret fighting, running, and enduring for his name’s sake.**

### **#3: MORE EXAMPLES OF FAITHFULNESS (9-15, 19-21)**

From Paul’s final words here, we see the importance of relationships. What is on the mind of the apostle at death? **JESUS AND PEOPLE!** He’s not asking for a trophy that he won, or a newspaper clipping about himself, or even his diplomas. He mentions people.

In chapter 4, he mentions a number of individuals, both friends and foes. Some were faithful, and some were unfaithful.

- Some started well, but departed.
- Others started poorly, but were now exemplary.
- Some were faithful throughout. Not perfect but faithful.

As we survey the individuals mentioned, we might ask ourselves if we are being faithful to God and one another. Are you like deserting *Demas* or *Useful Mark*? Are you an *Evil Alexander* or a *Loyal Luke*?

**Nine Examples (9-15)**

In verses 9-15, Paul lists nine people. While we should not sit in judgment over them, it seems that enough is said about them to at least learn from them and examine our own faithfulness.

Below is a chart that might help summarize this group of people. It may look like a battery, but it is not! You could really put all of humanity on this chart. That's pretty impressive! One slide!

The positive and negative signs reflect Paul's words. The plus indicates faithfulness (some were faithful throughout; some started with a negative [like Mark] but ended with a positive; some were the opposite, starting with a positive and then going to the negative). **Of course, I do not mean to imply that the "positive, positive people" were *sinless*.** I am only saying that Paul had good things to say about their lives, and that we should all seek to emulate their faithfulness. Everyone in this room fits into one of these categories.

++	<b>Timothy</b> Faithful Son	<b>Titus</b> Faithful Comforter	<b>Tychicus</b> Faithful Messenger	<b>Crescens</b> Faithful Unknown	<b>Luke</b> Faithful Friend	<b>Carpus</b> Faithful Host
- +	<b>Mark</b> Unfaithful Restored					
+ -	<b>Demas</b> Unfaithful Deserter					
--	<b>Alexander</b> Faithless Opponent					

***Timothy (9).*** Twice Paul urges Timothy to come to him quickly (9, 21a). His desire for Timothy's urgent visit probably indicates

that Paul believed his time was short, and soon the winter months would inhibit travel. It also shows the close bond between these two men. While Paul's ultimate desire was to see his Savior, he still wanted to see his spiritual son (cf. 1:4).

**John Stott notes that these two desires are not incompatible.** He writes, "One sometimes meets super-spiritual people who claim that they never feel lonely and have no need for friends, for the companionship of Christ satisfies all their needs. But human friendship is the loving provision of God for mankind" (Stott, 120). Timothy was a "positive, positive." He was there in the beginning, and he was there in the end.

That's the kind of testimony you want. We tend to put the person with an awful testimony on the platform. It's like, "Yeah, I sold crack, then I joined Al-Kaida, and I was an arms dealer, and then I married my sister, then I saw mother Mary in my cereal and became a Christian." So, then all the "positive-positive people" think they don't have a testimony. The kids at youth camp think they need to go kill someone in order to talk at the fire. No! You want a "boring testimony." No book deals. No E True Hollywood Stories. No Reality TV show.... They would never make a show about a person who goes to work everyday on time, loves his wife, gives to the church, loves his neighbors, keeps his head, and does the work of an evangelist. Follow Timothy. Steady faithfulness. Those with awful pasts do have great testimonies, but so do the Timothy's who came to Christ early, and kept walking with him.

***Demas (10).*** While people can be wonderful sources of joy, they can also be sources of discouragement. Enter Demas. Paul says that he "has deserted me" (10a). The word "deserted" is a strong verb, meaning to "utterly abandon and leave someone helpless in a dire situation" (MacArthur, 206). His desertion brought pain to Paul. According to other passages, Demas was previously a "coworker" (see Col. 4:14; Philem. 24). In both passages, Demas' name is with Luke's. Demas was "positive," but sadly went "negative."

Why did he desert Paul? Paul simply says it was "because he loved this present world" (10b). Instead of loving Christ's appearing

(4:8), Demas loved “**this present world**” (cf. Rom. 12:2; 1 John 2:15-17). It is hard to tell exactly what this means since the details are not given, but it is certainly not positive. We know that it means he had misplaced affections. **As noted earlier in this letter, when we have the wrong loves, we live a wrong life (cf. 3:2).**

**It is astonishing to think about a guy who hung out with Paul but later fell away. “Well, Demas needed an accountability group... He needed a Bible study.” He not only went to “Bible studies,” but he also sat with a guy who wrote part of the Bible! Demas reminds us of Judas. He was a fair-weather disciple. Holiness and love for Jesus isn’t caught like a cold. It doesn’t matter who your friends are, or who your parents are. Demas was with Paul, but deserts him. Why? He doesn’t really love him. I think this broke Paul’s heart.**

**His desertion should serve as a warning to us: “Whoever thinks he stands must be careful not to fall” (1 Cor. 10:12).**

***Crescens, Titus, and Tychicus (10c, 12).* While Demas’ desertion hurt Paul, three other departures seem to have received the apostle’s blessing.**

- **Crescens** and Titus appear to have been sent out on mission. Nothing else is known about Crescens in the New Testament, but there is a tradition that connects him with the churches of Mayence in Gaul (Guthrie, 183).
- **Titus** is no stranger to us. Apparently, **Titus finished his assignment in Crete, and was now sent on a new assignment...** Earlier, Paul had told Titus that the reason he wanted him in Crete was to “set right what was left undone” (Titus 1:5). **His mission in Dalmatia is probably similar. He is sent out to strengthen the church and build up its leaders.**

**Some of you will be sent out to plant new churches, but some of you may be a Titus, sent out to revive and re-order struggling, existing churches.**

- **Tychicus** also seems to have been a “positive, positive” associate, demonstrating a consistent life of faithfulness. **He was the loyal bearer of the letter to the Colossians and Ephesians** (see Eph.

6:21-22; Col. 4:7-8). Think about that assignment! Hand delivering a book of the Bible! **It is possible that he took this present letter to Timothy also:** “I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus” (4:12) (**Sounds like Hip-Hop!**) **Another possibility is that he was going to serve as Timothy’s (temporary) replacement in Ephesus, so that Timothy could visit Paul in Rome (cf. Titus 3:12).**

Because these three faithful men were sent out, it increased Paul’s need for Timothy’s companionship.

**Luke (11a).** Paul says, “**Only Luke is with me.**” We should not read this as a disparaging comment about Luke. (**Please come! I only have this Dr. with me!**). Luke, “the dearly loved physician” (Col 4:14) was a loyal friend and companion to Paul.

He stands in contrast to Demas. **Hughes** says, “**Luke was a tough friend for tough times. He was with Paul in prison from the first time to the last. He was Paul’s biographer, and the ‘we’ passages in Acts indicate that he was with the apostle during some of the most difficult times**” (Hughes, 260). Surely, Paul was glad to have Luke with him.

What an example Luke is. He is just a loyal friend, and co-laborer.

**Mark (11b).** Concerning (John) Mark Paul says, “**Bring Mark with you, for he is useful to me in the ministry**” (11b). **Mark’s story is encouraging.** He started out with many incredible privileges and opportunities.

- **His mother’s home was one of the main places for the Jerusalem church.**
- **Peter joined the disciples in this home after miraculously getting out of prison (Acts 12:12).**
- **This home may also have been where the Last Supper was eaten.**
- **Mark was an eyewitness of Jesus, and may have been the young man who ran away (naked!) at Jesus’ arrest (Mark 14:51-52). He was very familiar with the life and ministry of Jesus.**

**When Paul went on his first missionary journey, Mark went with him. For some reason, however, Mark went home (Acts 13:5,**

13). Later, Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them on another trip, but Paul rejected the idea because he viewed Mark as a deserter. Barnabas and Mark went one way, and Paul and Silas went another. Barnabas, the encourager!

**But Mark gets restored. We have all “made a Mark.” Had moments of failure and regret. Forsaken the wonderful privileges and opportunities. Praise God, there’s grace.**

- Mark is later present with Paul during the apostle’s first imprisonment (Col. 4:10).
- Paul calls him a “coworker” (Philem. 24).
- Peter also mentions Mark as his “son” (1 Peter 5:13).

**Here in 2 Timothy, some twenty years after their separation, Mark makes the short list of reliable friends and companions of Paul.**

**Mark’s story should give fallen Christians hope. Despite rejection, possible shame, hurt, and failure, Mark is restored and put back in the game. Mark not only was useful to Paul, but he was used by God to write the Gospel of Mark! Under the inspiration of the Spirit, Mark gives us the action-packed Gospel focusing on the suffering Messiah.**

**It is this Messiah who restored him and can restore us all by his grace.**

***Carpus (13).*** Paul mentions Carpus in his request to Timothy, “When you come, bring the cloak I left in Troas with Carpus, as well as the scrolls, especially the parchments” (13). **As a pastor, few things are more important to you than your books! I would consider this guy a righteous man if he watched over my books and returned them safely!** Apparently Carpus lived in Troas and Paul had visited him. **It is also possible that the church in Troas met in his house** (cf. Acts 20:6-7). **For some reason Paul left some important items there (due to an arrest?).**

- **Paul’s cloak** is important because he is cold in Rome. This was probably an expensive item. His books and parchments were also expensive and personally valuable.

- His **“books”** (ESV) were probably papyrus rolls, possibly being the Old Testament.
- **Parchments** were expensive. They were vellum sheets made of treated animal hides that were used for important documents like legal papers. **These were possibly written accounts of Jesus’ words and deeds. Or, they may have simply been blank pages that Paul planned on using for other writing purposes. It is not outrageous to think that these parchments contained important Christian material.** It certainly fits the idea of “guarding the truth.”

We see a glimpse of Paul’s humanness and need here.

- “I’m lonely. Come see me.”
- “I’m cold. Bring my cloak.”
- “I’m bored. Bring my books.”

**A coat for his body. Books for his mind. A friend for his heart. Paul was no superman. He had the same needs we have. I must point out that Paul wanted to read.... Experience was not enough... He didn’t think in his old age that he’d learned enough... He wanted his books.**

***Alexander (14-15).*** Alexander is an obvious opponent to Paul and the gospel. Paul notes that he **“did great harm to me”** and that “he strongly opposed our words” (14a, 15b). **He may have been involved in Paul’s second arrest. As a “coppersmith,” he may have been an idol maker who resented Paul** (like **Demetrius** in Acts 19:24) because Paul was cutting into his bottom line.

In 1 Timothy, Paul mentions an “Alexander,” whom he “handed over to Satan” (1:20, ESV). Whether this is the same Alexander or not, we cannot know for sure. “I can’t do anything else with this guy.”

**Demas followed the path of Judas, and Alexander followed the path of Satan. Negative-negative.**

Paul tells Timothy two things about him. **First, “The Lord will repay him according to his works” (14b).** Paul says that the Lord, the righteous judge, will render the ultimate judgment on this man (cf. Ps. 62:12). **Secondly he says, “Watch out for him yourself” (15a).** He tells Timothy to constantly be on guard against his evil opposition.

**It's interesting that he doesn't appear to be a teacher, but an influencer. Some of the greatest problems in the church can come from the "Alexander the coppersmiths." The plumber that is evil/divisive; the lady who gossips, etc.**

**Where are you? Are you faithful to Jesus? Have you deserted him and the church? Jesus said you are either "for him" or "against him." Being indifferent is against him.**

### **Faithful Old Friends and New Friends (19-21)**

***Prisca and Aquila and Onesiphorus (19).*** Jumping ahead to the final list of names, Paul first greets his friends elsewhere (19). **Prisca and Aquila (wife and husband) befriended Paul in Corinth. Paul stayed with them and worked with them as tentmakers (Acts 18:2-3). Paul called them his "coworkers" (Rom. 16:3). They exemplify steady faithfulness to Jesus.**

Paul also greets Onesiphorus' household. Even though this refreshing friend appears to be in Rome, Paul still mentions a word of greeting to his household.

***Erastus and Trophimus (20).*** Two other mutual friends are included here. Paul says, "Erastus has remained at Corinth; Trophimus I left sick at Miletus" (20, ESV). It may be that this is the Erastus spoken of in Romans 16:23, where he is known as the "city treasurer" and the same guy who was with Timothy on a previous trip to Macedonia (Acts 19:22). **Trophimus**, a native of Ephesus, was a companion of Paul on his third missionary journey. **According to Acts 20:4, he was with Paul when he went to Miletus, and according to Acts 21:29, he went with Paul to Jerusalem. Trophimus knew of the hardships of Paul and undoubtedly experienced difficulty as well in laboring for the gospel.** He may have been with Paul on this trip from Asia to Rome but had to remain in Miletus because of an illness. **These individuals were loyal servants.... Also note that Paul healed people but it wasn't at his disposal, like a superhero, but was according to God's will. Here, his friend is sick. Healing is in God's hands.**

***Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and the brothers (21b).*** Nothing is known of these three men and one lady. They appear to be part of the church in Rome since their names are joined with "all the

brothers.” One tradition places Linus as the one who became first bishop of Rome following the martyrdom of Paul and Peter. Love these names! **“Pudens.” Was that his real name? Did he like deserts?**

These four new friends show how faithful saints through the years have blessed the body of Christ. **While they are unknown to us, they were not unknown to God. Your service to Jesus does not go unnoticed either!** The church has been blessed, enriched, and strengthened throughout the ages by unsung heroes.

#### **#4: THE LORD’S PERFECT FAITHFULNESS (16-18, 22)**

##### **A. The Lord’s Presence (16-17)**

Paul’s “first defense” (16) may refer to a preliminary investigation that would precede the formal trial, roughly equivalent to a grand jury hearing (Hughes, 267). Paul says that no one stood with him during this trial... Except Jesus... Who knew what that was like

**Some could not because of other tasks, and others would not because of fear or other reasons.** This courageous missionary of the church did not have one single Christian alongside him.

**Demas reminds us of Judas, and Alexander of Satan, but Paul reminds us of Jesus.**

##### **Let me mention 7 ways Paul died like Jesus**

- 1. Previously, Paul, like Jesus, set his face to Jerusalem knowing that he was walking into his death (Acts 21:11-14; Luke 9:51).**
- 2. Paul is in his own garden of Gethsemane. He says, “Everyone deserted me” (4:16a; cf. Mark 14:50).**
- 3. Paul dies, like Jesus, expressing mercy and forgiveness to people (16b; cf. Luke 23:34). He says, “May it not be counted against them” showing mercy and not anger or bitterness.**
  - Notice here that there’s no resentment here. He doesn’t say of his friends, “Hey, I lead you guys to Christ, I baptized you, I officiated your wedding, I planted that church - now could**

someone bring me a coat and my books! Could someone take a day off and visit me?! You didn't come to my defense, so could you at least do that.?" Not a word. And he doesn't say of his **adversary**, "Hey, Alexander, I hope you burn."

- o Instead, he goes out like Jesus.
- o There is not a complaining,, whining, narcissistic word uttered. Amazing.

4. **As he is dying, it seems that Paul, like Jesus is meditating on Psalm 22** (16-18; Mark 15:34). This psalm also occupied the mind of Jesus during his dying moments.

Take a moment to compare

- o 2 Timothy 4:16 with Psalm 22:1 - forsaken
- o 2 Timothy 4:16 with Psalm 22:11 - "trouble is near, there is none to help"
- o 2 Timothy 4:17 with Psalm 22:21- lion's mouth
- o 2 Timothy 4:17 with Psalm 22:27 - nations
- o 2 Timothy 4:18 with Psalm 22:28. - kingship, rule over nations

Paul is certainly a model of faithfulness and devotion, worthy of our imitation because he points us to the Savior (cf. 1 Cor. 11:1).

Paul knew that he was not ultimately alone. **The Faithful Lord was with him!** He says, "But the Lord stood by me and strengthened me..."

**Paul had no one with him, but Jesus never left him. Jesus was with Paul, and Jesus was able to sympathize with him in his weakness because he too was left alone.**

5. **Paul, like Jesus, died thinking about other peoples** (17b; John 20:26-27)

"so that the proclamation might be fully made through me, and all the Gentiles might hear. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth" (17).

**He's not concerned about himself. He's concerned about the mission, about people.**

What an amazing illustration of 2 Timothy 4:1-2: “preach the word ... **in season and out of season**” (ESV).

Paul taught about being conformed into the image of Jesus, in 2 Timothy 4 we see how that looks practically.

**6. Paul, like Jesus, died with full confidence that he would be in God's Presence (18a; Luke 23:43, 46).**

Though Paul was temporarily rescued from the lion's mouth, he knew that death was certain. But he could **face death with peace because of his relationship with his faithful Lord**. He says, “The Lord will rescue me from every evil work and will bring me safely into His heavenly kingdom.”

**7. Paul's lived and died to the glory to God (18b, cf, John 17:4)**

“To Him be the glory forever and ever! Amen” (18).

Because God gives the strength, gives the message, protects us from evil, and will ultimately bring us to Heaven, God deserves the glory: “To Him be the glory forever and ever” (18).

Paul taught about being conformed to the image of Jesus. But here he shows us what it looks like: loving, humble, forgiving, selfless, Missional, God-glorifying, trusting, resting...

He lived and died faithfully to the end like Jesus because Jesus was faithful to end.

Jesus supplies not just the example, but the power. Because Jesus faced the ultimate abandonment, suffering (we won't face wrath), betrayal, and trial, we can be forgiven and find the life that is truly life.

What's this called? Grace. Paul ends his last letter appropriately: about grace.

**C. The Lord's Grace (22)**

**We began this exposition of 2 Timothy by noting the gospel-centered nature of the letter. Paul ends it with a gospel-centered blessing: “The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you!” (22). The apostle’s final recorded word is fitting: “grace.”**

**This war-torn apostle experienced God’s amazing grace, testified to the gospel of grace, and closes by praying for the Savior’s grace to strengthen and empower his “son.”**

### **Building Your Own Casket**

Recently, our missionary friends showed us some pictures of a totally unengaged people group that he and his family are going to minister among for the next three years. There has never been a church planted among this particular group of people in East Asia. **We were struck by one particular photo. It was a picture of a casket.**

**When individuals of this people group turn sixty-five they each build their own casket and it just sits by their house.**

Our friends are going to share with these people **“the promise of life in Christ Jesus” (2 Tim. 1:1) so that when each one gets put in his or her casket, they will be able to live forever in “His heavenly kingdom” (4:18).**

That picture of a casket is a reminder for everyone. We will all die. We must make this life count. We must be faithful to the end.  
How?...

As you pursue faithfulness to God

- **Rest in the Savior’s grace, who died in your place;**
- **Remember God’s perfect faithfulness. You are never alone;**
- **Rely on his strength to finish your course.**

Then when you are put in your casket, and you can go **join Paul and these others in the Savior’s heavenly kingdom.**