

The Church and Her Aged
2 Timothy 4:1-8
How to Finish Well

For the Christian, finishing well means to faithfully follow Christ to the very end of life. Finishing well does not imply a perfect life, but it does require a life submitted to God.

What we aim to leave behind after we die sets the course for how we intend to live. **Tim Challies**

What does it look like to finish well?

1. Exhort others with the word to faithfully follow Christ (4:1-5).

a. Paul gives Timothy an energizing exhortation (v. 1; 1 Tim. 6:13-15)

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:

(1) Trinity's presence:

- God is over us (Eph. 4:6)
- Christ is with us (2 Tim. 4:17)
- The Holy Spirit in us (2 Tim. 1:14; 4:22)

(2) Three realities about Christ:

- His presence (1a) - in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus,
- His judgment (1b; Jn. 5:22; 2 Cor. 5:10) - who is to judge the living and the dead
- His appearing and kingdom (1c) - and by his appearing and his kingdom:

> Those who finish well have a Christ-centered life.

b. Paul exhorts Timothy to proclaim the gospel (vv. 2-4)

(1) His God given assignment (v. 2)

2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

> Those who finished well have made God's word a vital part of their life.

> Those who finish well have a teachable spirit through life.

Without spending time in the Bible, there is a starved and strengthless spirit heart, a barren life and a grieved Holy Spirit."
F. B. Meyer

(2) The reason for his assignment (vv. 3-4)

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.

c. Paul exhorts Timothy to fulfill his calling (v. 5)

5 As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

> Those who finish well have a laser-focused life.

> Those who finish well have made disciples.

2. Be an example of one who faithfully follows Christ (4:6-8)

Paul gives his life as example to encourage Timothy to finish well.

a. Paul looks to the present (v. 6)

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.

> Those who finish strong have modeled sacrifice not self-indulgence before the next generation.

b. Paul looks to the past (v. 7)

(1) The fight (v. 7a)

7a I have fought the good fight,

1 Timothy 6:12

12 Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

> Those who finish well have kept a wartime mentality.

(2) The race (v. 7b)

7b I have finished the race,

> Those who finish well have lived disciplined lives.

(3) The faith (v. 7c)

7c I have kept the faith.

1 Timothy 4:16

16 Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

> Those who finish well have guarded the gospel.

c. Paul looks to the future (v. 8)

(1) Paul's crown (v. 8abc)

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,

> Those who finish well have an eternal perspective.

(2) Our crown (v. 8d)

and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

> Those who finish well have loved Jesus.

James 1:12

12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

3. Fellowship with believers who have the same passion to finish well (4:9-22).

> Those who finish well have lived an influential life.