

## 2 Timothy 4

Good morning and thank you for joining us!

Well, after 3 months we've finally made it to the last chapter of 2 Timothy, so would you please turn in your Bibles to 2 Tim 4?

Just a reminder once we finish 2 Timothy, we'll then go to the book of Ecclesiastes on Sundays as we go back to the OT in order.

Now remember the setting for 2 Timothy. For the apostle Paul, this letter is the very last exhortation he writes before his head meets the executioners blade.

**SHOW PIC** At this point persecution is raging across the roman empire. Christians are being put to death in vicious ways. Some are being thrown to the lions, Nero is burning Christians at the stake. Timothy himself will be martyred within a number of years.

**CLOSE PIC**

Have you noticed that the prospect of death has a way of clarifying what's important in life? Knowing death is months, or weeks, or days away has a purifying effect as suddenly true priorities become very clear. That's what we're about to study over the next few weeks-the priorities of a dying man encouraging his son in the faith.

Hey and the reality is, all of us are dying too aren't we? How's that for a pick me up this morning!! But we know our time on earth is limited. So the question is, how are we to spend the rest of our days here on this earth.

This morning we're gonna see a variety of topics such as a pastors responsibility, we'll talk about worship, and revival, and we're only studying verses 1-5.

The title of this mornings message is Fulfill Your Ministry

Let's pray

Last words are important. When someone is passing you really sit up and pay attention to what they say.

**SHOW PICS** As Marie Antoinette was about to be beheaded, she stepped on the foot of her executioner and quickly apologized.

her final words were:

"I didn't do that on purpose":

- General John Sedgwick is quoted as saying "They couldn't hit an elephant at this distance" before being shot by a Confederate sniper

-: Salvador Dali said "I do not believe in my death" as he suffered a fatal heart attack.

Finally, -"I'm going to the bathroom to read": Elvis' last words before suffering a drug-induced heart attack on the toilet. **CLOSE**

**PICS**

Last words matter, there's a certain force and impetus on them that we need to heed. So how much more do we need to grasp the last words of the apostle Paul.

1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at<sup>[fn]</sup> His appearing and His kingdom: Now you'll recall that at the end of chapter 3 we saw the power of the word of God.

We saw how all scripture is God breathed-theonustos. Our Bibles are the very breath of God that He's given to guide us and direct our lives.

And remember, there's no page breaks, no verse numbers, no chapters as Paul writes this. So right after he explains the word of God, v1 begins with Paul saying to Timothy I charge you.

Paul is a dying man speaking to dying men. And he says I charge you therefore-because of the previous truths he's brought forth about God's word.

And notice in v 1 Paul's declared those truths before Jesus, who will be the judge of all mankind.

So here's the challenge, here's the charge...we're gonna break down v2

**2 Preach the word!** The word preach here is describing someone who makes a proclamation. See in those days they weren't able to text or email or tweet anybody. So the ruler would send out a representative who was a proclaimer.

That person would stand and make a proclamation for the King.  
That's our word here for preach-its proclaiming.

Paul says to Timothy I'm charging you in the sight of Jesus,  
proclaim the word.

And notice there's no caveat's here. It doesn't matter whether  
people want to accept it or not. You go out there and take the  
breath of Almighty God that's on the page and you proclaim it,  
and let the word of God do what it does.

Here's the beauty-the results aren't up to us

Isaiah 55:11 "For as the rain comes down, and the snow from  
heaven,

And do not return there,

But water the earth,

And make it bring forth and bud,

That it may give seed to the sower

And bread to the eater,

11 So shall My word be that goes forth from My mouth;

It shall not return to Me void,

But it shall accomplish what I please,

And it shall prosper in the thing for which I sent it.

So he says Timothy, you just go out and proclaim the Word. The  
reason you preach the word of God is because you're  
representing the King, and it's His message you're proclaiming.

It's interesting, it doesn't say I charge you, heal the sick. It says  
preach the word.

It doesn't say go do miracles, it says preach the word.

It doesn't say go and get all the crowds you can, it says preach the word.

What every Pastor, what everybody who teaches a Bible study, and what every congregation should demand of the pastors of the church is this very thing.

Not proclaim their own word, or what's popular, or what people want to hear, proclaim His word.

And since this is the very breath of a holy God, it means there is no room for profanity. Young pastors around this country that are dropping the F bomb and cursing in the pulpit and think they need to make the word of God cool. They're drinking from the pulpit trying to relate to the people. Listen they are carnal, they are in flesh, they are not filled with the Holy Spirit.

**SHOW SLIDE** It has to be the man of God feeding the people of God in the power of the Spirit of God with the word of God.

**CLOSE PIC**

Every congregation should demand this of their leaders, that they proclaim the word of the Lord

Lets keep reading v2

**2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season.** Pause here. This describes preaching the word when it's convenient and when it's not convenient.

Which also means when the culture is accepting and when the culture is not accepting. When people are going to thank you or when they're threatening to haul you off to jail.

In season and out of season. When you're feeling great with a great night's rest and full health, or when you're sick, no sleep, and your heart is heavy.

Doesn't matter the circumstance. You must be ready to declare God's word.

And this is what's needed as God's word is proclaimed.

**...2 Convince**, means to bring to light, to expose It's conviction. And conviction works in a lot of ways. It can be you know what, thank you, Lord, that confirmed it. I know that I need to be doing this or I know I should be going in this direction, I need to stop playing around with that sin.

Next up is...

**Rebuke**, it's a sharp disapproval, directly addressing an incorrect thought or behavior.  
finally..

**exhort**, to encourage, or to bring comfort. There's a call to action here, it's not just taking it in like it's some intellectual exercise. There's action to take place.

So in the teaching of the word of God, there should be convincing, rebuking, and exhortation. Now some suggest that "convince" addresses the intellect, "rebuke" confronts the emotions, and "exhort" appeals to the will.

But that's not all...

**with all longsuffering** Those are two words I don't like to put together, long and suffering.

Short suffering is bad enough. But it's with all long-suffering.

In other words, no pastor, nobody in ministry, no Christian brother or sister that's challenging another brother or sister about sin, should be doing that with delight or with a bad attitude.

You should be doing it with exhortation, then coming alongside in the spirit of Christ with all long-suffering. This is a long process. Finally v2 ends

**and teaching**. Teaching is a process. The teaching of the scriptures brings life change to the hearers, but it's not always immediate is it?

I know we just utterly dissected that, so let's read v 1 and 2 in their entirety

1 I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at[fn] His appearing and His kingdom: 2 Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; If this was the case 2,000 years ago, how much more is it today?

Now that word sound for sound doctrine is where we get our word hygiene from. The time is coming Timothy when people aren't going to want to hear healthy doctrine. The time is coming when people are gonna say, don't tell me how to lead a holy life. Don't tell me how to have a spiritually healthy life.

Instead people will demand 'tell me how to be personally happy. I want to walk out of church and be made to feel good. Give me a verbal massage with the sermon every week.'

And you look across the broad church in America today, and you find there are places everywhere that call themselves churches that don't want to talk about the deity of Christ.

They don't want to talk or hear about repentance, that people need to turn away from sin, that there's blood atonement. There is never any talk of hell, so there's no mention of the need to be saved.



And sadly, there's folks more concerned with the length of the sermon than they are with the depth of the sermon.

See when you boil it all down, this is what itching ears want. Want to know if a message is being used to scratch itching ears? **SHOW SLIDE** it always revolves around 'how can God serve me, rather than 'how can I serve God?' **CLOSE PIC**

**4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.** Notice 2 turns here-turn ears away from the truth, and turned to fables. That word for turned is a medical word that means to be out of joint or to be dislocated.

**SHOW PIC** Have you ever had a dislocated joint? It's quite uncomfortable. And you look at that dislocated joint and you know immediately something isn't right. **CLOSE PIC**

V4 says those who have itching ears are going to be dislocated. They're going to be out of joint. They'd rather listen to myths about prosperity and healing doctrines than the simple truth of God's word. And it leaves them dislocated-why? Because their relationship with God is out of place.

The itching ears are looking for somebody who can fill a sports arena. All they are talking about is human potential. You can do this, you can do that, God will do it for you.

And look there is some of that in Scripture. But the scripture also talks about disease, and difficulty, and suffering, and struggle,

and broken homes, and prodigals, as we're awaiting the Kingdom of God.

And here's what those with itching ears miss. You don't need to twist the scriptures, because God's word stoops down to meet us exactly where we hurt and where we struggle. God's living Word speaks to us, it ministers to us, it's a comforting balm for all those areas that are hurting in our lives, but how many people refuse to pick it up and apply it?

But tragically we're surrounded by churches and parishioners that are more focused upon being relevant than being true to the word.

And there's places that are teaching these young pastors coming out of seminary and Bible school to put on the leather jacket, get the tattoos, get the piercings, curse a little, drink a little, turn up the volume, get the smoke machines and pack out the seats.

And the tragedy is that that stuff never brings forth true revival.

It's interesting when you study revival you see some commonalities in them. But between periods of revival, the Church always goes into decline.

And look there's some exciting things happening in our nation right now, there's some whispers and talk of revival.

How do we know if we're in a revival? During periods of revival, Christ is over the culture.

But when the church is in decline, the church accommodates Christ to the culture.

When there's revival, the Word of God is prioritized for what it is. In periods of decline, the church alters the word of God to the pressure of the culture.

When there's revival, the praise of God is prioritized. All glory and all praise is His.

When the church is in decline, praising God isn't a priority. The priority becomes social justice and humanitarian work, which should always be part of what we do, but that becomes the epicenter.

When there's revival, lives change because there's conviction. The language clears up. Actions change

You know, you study the 1904 revival in Wales it's fascinating. Mining was impacted. Think about that. There's accounts of guys 800 feet down under the ground in the mine with nobody talking to them, falling on their knees, weeping and repenting because the Spirit of God was moving in Wales.

And the funny part is that mules that pulled the carts were so used to being cussed at and screamed at, that when the miners got saved they were speaking politely 'come on now let's go' and the mules just stood there, didn't know what to do cuz the animals only knew curse words.

Because when there's true revival, there's conviction, there's purity. Language cleans up. Indulgence is pushed to the side.

When the Church is in decline, there's indulgence, there's coarse language. Drinking becomes the norm.

When there's revival the men are back in church, men taking their role as husband and high priest of the home seriously.

When there's revival, pastors are stepping up to the plate, doing what's right, proclaiming the entirety of God's word.

**SHOW PIC** One of my favorite stories is a story of a man named Peter Cartwright, who between 1800 and 1835 was a circuit preacher, and he became very well known. God used him powerfully. And when he would come to a town, often a pastor would open up his church. If Cartwright wasn't preaching in tents or outdoors, they would let Peter Cartwright guest preach from their pulpit, **CLOSE PIC**

One week he was in Massachusetts, he was going to preach in a large church. **SHOW PIC** And that church got word that the president of the US Andrew Jackson was coming to church that morning. So the pastor and the elders, all nervous, they took Peter Cartwright aside and they said, look, we just want you to be careful.

You can preach, but understand the president's gonna be here. We want you to be careful what you say. Do you understand?

Cartwright said I understand exactly what you're telling me. I will be careful what I say. **CLOSE PIC**

And Peter Cartwright walked out to the pulpit and he said, 'I've been told to be careful about what I say today because the president, Andrew Jackson, is here. So let me be very careful and very clear. If Andrew Jackson doesn't repent of his sins and turn to Jesus Christ, he will go to hell when he dies.'

Everybody was stunned.

Andrew Jackson came and found Peter Cartwright after church and said 'if I had a company of men like you in the army, I could beat anybody.'

We should pray for revival. If there's going to be a revival again in this nation it's going to take place when the Word of God is honored and prioritized as the Word of God, and the church gets back to worshipping Jesus instead of trying to put on a show.

Look we live in a day when everyone wants to be comfortable. They want to get entertained. And here's the danger I see today. It's not only really hard to find churches truly teaching the word of God, it's becoming harder and harder to find true worship in churches.

**SHOW PIC** What's popular is pumping up the volume and the songs so when the people walk out they're jazzed up like they just left a concert. Listen, that's not worship, that's scratching the itching the ear. It may be a wonderful christian concert, and I

have no problem with Christian concerts, but it's not worship.

**CLOSE PIC**

**SHOW PIC** Brandon Lake is the most popular Christian artist right now. He's a worship pastor, and he said this: **CLOSE PIC**

"I'd love to see more worship sets, more churches, kind of keep Bubba in mind. Like we all call him Bubba, the guy who's like in the back of the room and he's like, he got dragged there by his wife. And, I just don't know if, like, when your opening song or most of your songs have so much Christianese language, I think he has a hard time going like, 'Can I sing to that? Like I'm not there yet.'

... like when your first song is like, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty, I think he's going like, 'What does holy mean? ... What?' I don't know.

Obviously, that's where we want to get to in a worship set — is where it's just every eye is fixated on Him. And it's just like everyone — it's like vertical. But like give Bubba some language he can be like, 'Alright, I find myself in that song. I feel like that,' you know? And hopefully that's what some of my music can continue to do."

That man has NO CONCEPT of what worship is.

I hope you know worship is not about if you like the song. It's about giving Jesus Christ the honor and glory He deserves.

When we worship, we are called to one thing, to minister to one Person... the LORD Himself.

True worship leaders are not called to change the atmosphere with praise, not called to usher in the Presence, not called to put on a performance, or to make worship cool again. You are called to an audience of One.

1Chron 16 23 Sing to the LORD, all the earth;  
Proclaim the good news of His salvation from day to day.  
24 Declare His glory among the nations,  
His wonders among all peoples.

25 For the LORD is great and greatly to be praised;  
He is also to be feared above all gods.  
26 For all the gods of the peoples are idols,  
But the LORD made the heavens.  
27 Honor and majesty are before Him;  
Strength and gladness are in His place.

28 Give to the LORD, O families of the peoples,  
Give to the LORD glory and strength.  
29 Give to the LORD the glory due His name;  
Bring an offering, and come before Him.  
Oh, worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness!  
30 Tremble before Him, all the earth.  
The world also is firmly established,  
It shall not be moved.

31 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth be glad;

And let them say among the nations, "The LORD reigns."

32 Let the sea roar, and all its fullness;

Let the field rejoice, and all that is in it.

33 Then the trees of the woods shall rejoice before the LORD,

For He is coming to judge the earth.[fn]

34 Oh, give thanks to the LORD, for He is good!

For His mercy endures forever.[fn]

The focus of worship is Jesus, not trying to draw in the multitudes.

Pray for revival that churches would teach the word, and get back to worshipping Jesus in a way that's honoring to Him.

We're gonna end in v5 and do a quick breakdown

5 But you be watchful in all things, this is a present imperative. It means you need to continually watch. It means it's not a suggestion. This is what's necessary. Be watching, be on your toes. And this is what the Holy Spirit would say to all of us

...5 endure afflictions, Being a follower of Christ means we have to endure afflictions. I would rather walk a lonely road in fellowship with Jesus than be in a crowd without Him wouldn't you?

I would rather walk a lonely Rd. with Jesus Christ my Savior than to be popular and in the crowd without Him. Afflictions abound, but we have Christ with us, and we need to endure.



...5 do the work of an evangelist, This implies that Timothy was not particularly gifted as an evangelist but he still had to faithfully declare the gospel message of salvation.

...5 fulfill your ministry. There are lots of reasons why someone's ministry goes unfulfilled. And each reason must constantly be confronted. **SHOW SLIDE**

Fear.

Unbelief.

The cares of the world.

The fear of man.

Criticism and discouragement.

Sin.

**CLOSE SLIDE**

It says fulfill your ministry. What's your ministry? Maybe you're a grandma pouring into your kids-then give it your all.

Maybe your stuck at a job and you just dread going into work but you know the Lord has you there to be a witness-then give it your all

We have a choice. We have 1 life to spend for Christ. Go-fulfill your ministry!!

Praise God we know the ending!