



Are You Ready? 2 Timothy 4:1-8

Everyone's days on this earth are numbered. If your last one was today, would you be ready?

Paul was Ready

Paul recognized his imprisonment would likely lead to his death. Eusebius, an early church historian, wrote that Paul was beheaded by the command of Roman Emperor Nero. This would have happened in AD 67. Since Paul had Roman citizenship, he was spared crucifixion which tradition tells us is how Peter died. Paul describes the end of his life as the pouring out of a drink offering and departing like a traveler leaving on a journey. A drink offering was poured out as part of the Old Testament sacrificial service after the priest had sacrificed the lamb, ram, or bull (Num 15:1-10; Num 28:4-7). As Paul looked back on his life, he used three metaphors to describe it: ***"I have fought the good fight."*** Literally, "I have competed the good competition." Paul could be referring to a boxing or wrestling match. ***"I have finished the race."*** ***"I have kept the faith."*** Paul had been a faithful steward of the Christian faith. Because of how he had lived his life for Christ, he expected to receive a reward – the "crown of righteousness" - which can mean the reward *is* righteousness or the reward *is for* righteousness (that is, righteous living). (See James 1:12 and Rev 2:10 where the crown of life is a reward of life, not a reward for being alive). That day refers the day of rewards for Christians – the judgement seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10).

Paul Warned Timothy to be Ready

Paul gave Timothy a solemn warning in 4:1. He states Jesus is judge (He's watching what you do). He is coming back (at any time), and He has a kingdom. Therefore, Paul gives Timothy the following commands: (1) Preach the word. (2) Be ready at all times (3) Rebuke (4) Correct (5) Encourage with great patience (6) Exercise self- control in everything (7) endure hardship (8) do the work of an evangelist (9) fulfill his ministry. It was necessary Timothy do this because people will not want sound doctrine. Instead, they will surround themselves with teachers who say what the listeners want to hear and will turn from the truth to myths.

Are You Ready?

The first part of being ready is having a right relationship with God. Additionally, we must live a life pleasing to God so that when face God at the judgement we receive rewards. The Bible specifically mentions: (1) Imperishable Crown (1 Cor 9:25) for leading a disciplined life (2) Crown of Rejoicing (1 Thess 2:19) for evangelism and discipleship (3) Crown of Righteousness (2 Tim 4:8) for loving the Lord's appearing (4) Crown of Life (James 1:12; Rev 2:10) for enduring trials (5) Crown of Glory (1 Pet 5:4) for shepherding God's flock faithfully. Also, are your relationships with others right? If any of these need attention, then you aren't ready. Get ready now!