

ROUTE 66 – 2 TIMOTHY
Shepherdology 102: Fight The Good Fight

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May 14, 2014

Note: The following are the pastor's notes used in preaching this message. This is not a complete, word-for-word transcription of what was preached. These notes serve as a companion to the complete message, which is available by listening to the audio version. Bible quotes are primarily from NASB and ESV, respectively.

The last will and testament of a dying man – this is Paul – in prison, convinced that he won't get out – he has finished his earthly assignment

The evidence seems clear that Paul wrote 1 Timothy and Titus shortly after his release from his first Roman imprisonment (62–64 A.D.), and 2 Timothy from prison during his second Roman imprisonment (66–67 A.D.), shortly before his death during the reign of Nero

I. GREETING – 2 Timothy 1:1-4

1 Timothy 1:2 – addresses Timothy as “...*true child in the faith*...” – since Timothy's father was evidently nowhere to be found (probably dead), Paul had taken on the role of a spiritual father to him

1 Timothy 1:3-4 – “*As I urged you upon my departure for Macedonia, remain on at Ephesus so that you may instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines, nor to pay attention to myths and endless genealogies, which give rise to mere speculation rather than furthering the administration of God which is by faith.*” – great trust placed in Timothy – yet begins the theme of concern for the ongoing teaching of the word which was a concern for Paul as he faced his imminent death

II. GUARD THE WORD – 2 Timothy 1:5-18

A. Your heritage – 2 Timothy 1:5

2 Timothy 1:5 – “*For I am mindful of the sincere faith within you, which first dwelt in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice, and I am sure that it is in you as well.*” – mentioning them indicates Paul knew them – possibly because they became Christians when he preached in Derbe and Lystra – Acts 16:1-2 – “*Paul came also to Derbe and to Lystra. And a disciple was there, named Timothy, the son of a Jewish woman who was a believer, but his father was a Greek, and he was well spoken of by the brethren who were in Lystra and Iconium.*” – you can never underestimate the value of a godly, praying, mother and grandmother – even though his father was evidently not a spiritual influence in his life at all, his mother and grandmother had tremendous spiritual influence –

2 Timothy 3:14-15 – tells about their influence – “*You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*”

B. Your gift – 2 Timothy 1:6

2 Timothy 1:6 – “*For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.*” – this is the first of three quick indicators that Paul may have felt a need to address either Timothy's timidity or his fear – after seeing Paul thrown into prison Timothy may have feared for his own life – Paul wanted to keep him pumped up because of the job before him:

- To “*kindle afresh*” means to “stir the fire” again – Timothy needed to stir the coals of the fire again to stir it into a flame
- The “*gift*” refers to his gift for teaching and preach – results in call to “*preach the word*” in 2 Timothy 4:2

C. Your calling – 2 Timothy 1:8-18

1. Don't be ashamed – 2 Timothy 1:8-12

Third indicator of Paul's concern for Timothy – 2 Timothy 1:8-9 – *“Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of me His prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel according to the power of God, who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity,”* – “do not be ashamed” is a subjunctive verb – indicates the *possibility* that he could become ashamed of the gospel, thinking it has no power (Romans 1:16) or of the fact that Paul was a political prisoner

To counter this, Paul appeals to Timothy's call as a Christian, reminding him that there was a higher power working within him in addition to the social and political influences he must have felt

2. Guard the treasure – 2 Timothy 1:13-18

Paul uses two phrases to emphasize his concern in 2 Timothy 1:13-14 – both are imperatives:

- *“Retain the standard of sound words which you have heard from me, in the faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.”* – “standard” – “pattern, model, example, prototype” – Scripture is the model for everything that comes after it – we are not to add our feelings, other ideas, other books, etc.
- *“Guard, through the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, the treasure which has been entrusted to you.”* – “Guard” = “to go without sleep, to watch all night, to build a garrison around a city” – picture is clear – everything must be done to guard the Scripture as if it were a precious “treasure” = “good thing” – seems to refer to the word of God as the previous instruction shows

When the church forgets this you see:

- Catholicism – disregarded Scripture for a thousand years
- Every cult
- Charismatic abuse

Personal note in 2 Timothy 1:15-18 – Phygelus and Hermogenes turned away from Paul – probably because of persecution – but others encouraged him – 2 Timothy 1:16-17 – *“The Lord grant mercy to the house of Onesiphorus, for he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains; but when he was in Rome, he eagerly searched for me and found me—”*

III. LIVE THE WORD – 2 Timothy 2:1-26

A. Pass it along – 2 Timothy 2:1-13

2 Timothy 2:2 – *“The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”*

- The *“things which you have heard from me”* – doctrine found in his epistles – preached in public ministry
- As Paul had done with Timothy, Timothy was to *“entrust these to faithful men”* – he was to find men who would be faithful and teach them – you can preach to the masses – but discipleship is only for those who are *“faithful”* – **FATR PEOPLE** – 1) Faithful – you can count on them – they are not flaky; 2) Available – they are there – don't skip Sundays; 3) Teachable – they don't challenge everything you say; 4) Reproducible – they commit to repeating the process
- Four generations – Paul – Timothy – faithful men – others

2 Timothy 2:3 – These people will be willing to *“Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”* – three examples of hard workers”

- The soldier – 2 Timothy 2:4 – *“No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.”*
- The athlete – 2 Timothy 2:5 – *“Also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.”*
- The farmer – 2 Timothy 2:6 – *“The hard-working farmer ought to be the first to receive his share of the crops.”*

Part of the hard work is suffering – 2 Timothy 2:8-9 – *“Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead, descendant of David, according to my gospel, for which I suffer hardship even to imprisonment as a criminal; but the word of God is not imprisoned.”* – preaching and teaching the word of God was everything to Paul – didn’t matter if he was in prison – the Scriptures weren’t – if those who have them will be faithful!

2 Timothy 2:10 – *“For this reason I endure all things for the sake of those who are chosen, so that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus and with it eternal glory.”*

B. Learn it – 2 Timothy 2:14-19

2 Timothy 2:15 – *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth.”* – lit. “to cut straight” – reference to carpentry and masonry, etc. – if you don’t cut straight lines in building you end up with unstable structure – same with life – if you don’t do good “hermeneutics” – i.e. – dig into meaning of words – historical background – grammar – syntax – you will end up with heresy

- To *“be diligent”* implies hard work – particularly to combat those who want to *“wrangle with words”* (v. 14) – the *“worldly and empty chatter”* – v. 17 – because their chatter will *“lead to ungodliness, and their talk will spread like gangrene.”* – just like Hymenaeus and Philetus – same one mentioned in 1 Timothy 1:20 with a new accomplice in Philetus – v. 18 – *“these men have gone astray from the truth saying that the resurrection has already taken place, and they upset the faith of some.”*

C. Practice it – 2 Timothy 2:20-26

1. Be a vessel of honor – 2 Timothy 2:20-21

2 Timothy 2:20 – *“Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor.”* – some “vessels” in the house were used for garbage and privy pots – others were the gold and silver and fine china

2 Timothy 2:21 – *“Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work.”* – “anyone” refers to anyone in the household of God – common dishes or extravagant – anyone who is cleansed from *“these things”* – the garbage that fills the common vessels – refers to the ones like Hymenaeus and Philetus whose false teaching leads people astray – this person who has been cleansed is now *“honored, sanctified”* – set apart – and *“used to the Master, prepared for every good work.”*

2. Flee youthful lusts – 2 Timothy 2:22-23

Because you are cleansed (2 Timothy 2:21) then (2 Timothy 2:22-23) – *“Now flee from youthful lusts and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace, with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels.”*

3. Confront the opposition – 2 Timothy 2:24-26

2 Timothy 2:24 – *“The Lord’s bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged,”* – the *“Lord’s bondservant”* – the one cleansed from the evil influence mentioned above

How to confront those in spiritual opposition:

- He must *“not be quarrelsome”* – “to fight” – fighting with an opponent never draws them to Jesus
- Must be *“kind to all”* – learn how to be kind to enemies – view them as Jesus does – may mean unbelievers but could also refer to believers who have been caught up in the *“...foolish and ignorant speculations”* (2 Timothy 2:23)

- This doesn't mean abandoning the truth – he must be “*able to teach*” – same words used in 1 Timothy 3:2 – one word in Greek – *didaktikos* – “skilled in teaching” – they must be able to apply Scripture to the situation
- Must also be “*patient when wronged*” – *anexikikos* – “putting up with the bad – name calling, hating you, demeaning, spreading falsehoods and rumors
- Why? – 2 Timothy 2:25, 26 – “*with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil having been held captive by him to do his will.*”

IV. DEFEND THE WORD – 2 Timothy 3:1-17

A. Opposition will come – 2 Timothy 3:1-9

2 Timothy 3:1 – “*But realize this, that in the last days difficult times will come.*” – “*last days*” is not prophet – not referring to today – 1 Peter 1:20 – “*For He was foreknown before the foundation of the world, but has appeared in these last times for the sake of you...*” – 1 John 2:18 – “*...it is the last hour*” when “*...many antichrists have appeared*” – “*difficult times*” – “*perilous*” – any time most of the people become like the following list will be difficult times

2 Timothy 3:2-5 – “*For men will be lovers of self* (“*self-lovers*” – narcissistic – stare at themselves in front of the mirror), *lovers of money* (1 Timothy 6:10 – “*...by it some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.*”), *boastful, arrogant, revilers, disobedient to parents, ungrateful, unholy, unloving, irreconcilable, malicious gossips, without self-control, brutal, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, conceited, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to a form of godliness, although they have denied its power; Avoid such men as these.*”

2 Peter 2:1 – “*But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.*”

B. Stay the course – 2 Timothy 3:10-17

The opposite of false teachers is found in 2 Timothy 3:10-17 – 2 Timothy 3:10-11 – “*Now you followed my teaching* (doctrine – begins here – you act what you really believe), *conduct* (look at a person's behavior to see what they really believe), *purpose* (what are your priorities in life?), *faith* (dealing with hard times), *patience* (what do you do when you are wronged or when things don't go your way?), *love* (the ultimate sign of a disciple), *perseverance* (the long haul), *persecutions* (we don't like to think of this, but it is the sign of a Christian that he will be persecuted), *and sufferings* (physical, spiritual), *such as happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium and at Lystra; what persecutions I endured, and out of them all the Lord rescued me!*” – discipleship isn't merely learning facts about the Bible and theology – it's learning about life

2 Timothy 3:14-15 shows the importance of the continuing influence of Scripture from one generation to the next – “*You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them, and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.*” – the “*sacred writings*” were the Old Testament – we know they didn't make specific reference to Jesus, but they taught salvation by faith and clearly pointed to Jesus:

- Luke 24:44 – after Jesus had appeared to two disciples on the road to Emmaus where He had explained the Scriptures to them, He later appeared to them again with the disciples in Jerusalem – “*‘...These are My words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.*’” – Moses represented the Law – the prophets were a large portion of Scripture intended to call people back to God and reveal the millennial blessings to them – the Psalms also revealed the Messiah – then He continued to teach them from the Old Testament – 2 Timothy 3:45-47 – “*Then He opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and He said to them, ‘Thus*

it is written, that the Christ would suffer and rise again from the dead the third day, and that repentance for forgiveness of sins would be proclaimed in His name to all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.”

- 1 Peter 1:10-11 also spoke of the Old Testament references to Jesus – *“As to this salvation, the prophets who prophesied of the grace that would come to you made careful searches and inquiries, seeking to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow.”*
- Galatians 3:24 – *“Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, so that we may be justified by faith.”*

Paul is stressing the ongoing need to hold fast to Scripture – the same Scriptures that Timothy’s mother and grandmother used to bring him to faith are eternal – 2 Timothy 3:16-17 – *“All Scripture is inspired (theopneustos – “God breathed” – written Scripture is the work of the Holy Spirit) by God and profitable for teaching (explaining the path), for reproof (where you get off the path), for correction (how to get back on the path), for training (how to “exercise” to stay on the path) in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.”* – THE SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE!

V. PREACH THE WORD! – 2 Timothy 4:1-8

A. A solemn charge – 2 Timothy 4:1-5

The need to continue to propagate the word of God was the impulse that prompted Paul to speak emphatically to Timothy about his primary responsibility – 1 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...”*

- *“charge” – “diamartureo” – “to witness through” – it has the idea of calling someone to witness about something repeatedly because of its importance*
- This “witness” or “charge” is made in the *“...presence of God and Jesus Christ”* – Paul invokes the highest audience possible to the charge he gives to Timothy
- The reason is profound – Jesus is the One who will *“...judge the living and the dead”* – all believers, but especially ministers are accountable to Christ as our Judge – 2 Corinthians 5:10 refers to the *“...judgment seat of Christ”* in which the works of all believers will be judged as to their spiritual merit – 1 Corinthians 3:12-15 indicates some works will have little merit, being *“wood, hay, and straw”* while others will have great merit, being *“gold, silver, precious stones”* – James 3:1 indicates not many are to become *“...teachers, my brethren, knowing as such they will incur a stricter judgment.”*
- The judgment refers to the final judgment *“at His appearing and His Kingdom”* – second coming of Christ when He will establish His millennial Kingdom bringing to pass all His promises to Israel and bring all humanity under His dominion

So the charge is supreme since it will be judged by Christ Himself – *“preach the word”* – supreme command for all pastors:

- *“preach” – imperative of “kerusso” – “to herald, proclaim” – one way discourse – in ancient times the herald announced all important news of the kingdom – his messages came directly from the king*
- *“the word” – “logos” – John 1:1, 14 indicates Jesus is “the word” – we are to preach Jesus! – but this does not refer exclusively to an evangelistic message about Jesus – Matthew 28:20 – Jesus told His disciples to “...teach them to observe all that I commanded you” – this is everything in the Bible! – Jesus taught from the Old Testament while having His words recorded in words that became the gospels – in the context of 2 Timothy 3:16 “the word” means “All Scripture” that is “inspired by God” – all the writings of Scripture*
- This is the primary call of pastors – they are not to be teaching “topics” that appeal to the crowd! – the best form of this is expository teaching which handles all the topics of Scripture – even difficult or obscure ones

Another command – *“...be ready in season and out of season”* = “to stand” – used of soldiers preparing for battle – the word of God is our offensive weapon against the devil – this communicates a sense of immanency and urgency – *“...in season and out of season...”* – all the time! – not just when preaching is popular or convenient – the command to preach is what drove many Reformers to jail and to their death

Al Mohler – “We have underestimated, I submit, what Paul meant when he charged Timothy to preach the Word in season and out of season. We sometimes act as if it means when it's popular and when it's not - when it is in vogue and when it seems out of date. I don't think this sums up the substance of Paul's concern. I think Paul's concern lies far deeper than this. Paul is not merely concerned with popular taste and cultural trends. Far more deeply than that, Paul means, by 'in season and out of season', when it fits and when it does not fit, when it works and when it seems not to work, when it bears visible fruit and when it seems barren, when it is appreciated and when it is denounced, when it is legal and when it is illegal, when it is plentiful and when it is scarce, when it is broadcast on airwaves and when it is preached in catacombs. We are to preach the Word at all times.”¹

2 Timothy 4:2 – the intent of preaching – “...reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.”

- “Reprove” – “bring to light, expose, set forth, convict, convince, punish, discipline” (New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology) – basically it means “to convince” addresses the motives of someone erring in behavior or doctrine – their heart is the issue, not the head – “rebuking” them is an attempt to bring conviction over their sin and call them to repentance
- “Rebuke” – “*epitimao*” – root word means “honor” – with prefix *epi* it has the idea of rebuffing someone verbally – Mark 10:13 – “*the disciples rebuked*” those who brought children to Jesus – Mark 10:48 – the crowd verbally rebuked a blind man when he called out to Jesus – Mark 8:32 – when Jesus told the disciples that He would be killed, Peter took Him aside and rebuked Him – the word is also used in the context of the church – Luke 17:3 – when a brother sins, “*rebuke him*” – preaching is to rebuke those in sin – verbally and publicly – Mohler – “Indeed, I will go so far as to assert that if you are at peace with the world, you have abdicated your calling. You have become a court preacher to some earthly power, no matter how innocuous it may appear. To put it straight: you have been bought! If there is no controversy in your ministry, there is probably very little content to your preaching. The content of the Word of God is not only alive and active, it is sharper than any two-edged sword, and that means it does some surgery. It does some cutting, and that leads to bleeding, and by God's grace there then comes healing, and there is always controversy.”²
- Exhort – “*parakaleo*” – “to be called alongside” – preaching must always be directed to the wounded soul – the one who is struggling with belief, with life, with people, with hardship and loneliness – Paul singles exhortation out in 1 Timothy 4:13 – “*Until I come give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching.*”

Warning against ignoring preaching – 2 Timothy 4:3-4 – “*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.*”

The parameters of ministry are given in 2 Timothy 4:5 – “*But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.*”

B. Finish well – 2 Timothy 4:6-8

2 Timothy 4:6 – “*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.*” – Paul had already been released from prison five years previous to this – now he was in the Mamertime prison – fully expected to die there – in the Old Testament the “drink offering” was the final offering following the burnt and grain offerings – Paul was offering his life as his final offering – “*departure*” – *analysis* – originally mean the loosening of the ropes of a ship or the pegs of a tent

2 Timothy 4:7-8 – “*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 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.*” – no regret – each description is

¹ Al Mohler, *Preaching: The Centrality of Scripture* (17-18.

² Albert Mohler Jr., “The Primacy of Preaching” from Don Kistler, *Feed My Sheep: A Plea for Passionate Preaching* (Edinburgh: Reformation Trust Publishing, 2008), 12.

specific – “the” good fight, “the” course, “the” faith – Paul had finished exactly what God had prepared him to do – Paul viewed his life as complete

There are at least five “crowns” given in heaven for believers:

- 2 Timothy 4:7 – the “*crown of righteousness*” – referred to plaited wreaths of garlands placed on the heads of dignitaries and victorious military officers or athletes – other crowns noted in Scripture:
- James 1:12 – the “*crown of life*” is given for the one who perseveres under trial
- 1 Thessalonians 2:19 – the “*crown of exultation*” is given to all believers as a celebration over Satan at the coming of the Lord Jesus
- 1 Corinthians 9:25 – the “*imperishable wreath*” is given to the one who exercises “*self control in all things*”
- 1 Peter 5:4 – the “*unfading crown of glory*” for Christians when the Chief Shepherd appears

VI. PERSONAL CONCERNS – 2 Timothy 4:9-22

As is common often with Paul, he lists some final concerns in succession:

- He wanted Timothy to come to him in Rome – 2 Timothy 4:9-10
- He was alone except for Luke – 2 Timothy 4:11 – Demas (former close associate in Colossians 4:14) had deserted him
- 2 Timothy 4:11 – “...*Pick up Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for service.*” – this was the same Mark who had deserted Paul and Barnabas in Perga (Acts 13:13) – caused break between Paul and Barnabas (Acts 15:38) – Mark went with Barnabas to Cyprus, but eventually turned up with Paul in Rome where he was an accepted companion (Colossians 4:10) – Paul didn’t hold a grudge – now wanted Mark to return to Rome – Mark had recovered his courage – Paul didn’t hold a grudge – Mark went on to become the author of the gospel of Mark – suffered martyr’s death
- 2 Timothy 4:13 – It was cold but Paul still wanted his coat, “*the books, especially the parchments*” – the “books” were papyri scrolls of Old Testament – the “parchments” were animal hides Paul may have been writing letters on or blank ones for more writing
- 2 Timothy 4:14 – “*Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm; the Lord will repay him according to his deeds.*” – possibly one who had lied about him when he went to trial in Acts 19:23
- 2 Timothy 4:16 – No one defended him at his “...*first defense*” – his arraignment
- Personal greetings
- Told Timothy to “...*come before winter*” – desired his companionship and it was cold (2 Timothy 4:21)