



“When Truth is Unpopular”

Pastor Jason West | August 23, 2026

I. Remember Who You Answer To

2 Timothy 4:1 “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”

A. A Serious Obligation

(2 Timothy 4:1a)

B. Accountable To _____

(Daniel 7:9-10, 13b-14; Revelation 1:13-16)

John 5:22-23a “For the Father judges no one, but has given all judgment to the Son, that all may honor the Son, just as they honor the Father.”

John 5:27 “And he has given him authority to execute judgment, because he is the Son of Man”

Luke 18:31 “And taking the twelve, he said to them, ‘See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished.’”

Revelation 5:11-12 “Then I looked, and I heard around the throne and the living creatures and the elders the voice of many angels, numbering myriads of myriads and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing!’”

John 1:1 “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”

Hebrews 1:3a “He is the radiance of the glory of God and the exact imprint of his nature, and he upholds the universe by the word of his power.”

Matthew 16:27 “For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to what he has done.”

Matthew 16:13-16 “Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter replied, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’”

C. The Audience of _____

Galatians 1:10 “For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.”

II. Give People the Word

2 Timothy 4:2 “preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.”

A. Preach What?

2 Timothy 3:16-17 “All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.”

B. Be _____

(2 Timothy 4:2b)

C. Speak the Truth With Grace

(2 Timothy 4:2c)

1. Reprove – Point Out the _____

2. Rebuke – Call for a _____

3. Exhort – Point Toward the Right

4. Be _____ – Walk With Them Along the Way

III. Choose _____ Over Preference

2 Timothy 4:3-4 “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, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.”

Jeremiah 5:31 “the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?”

A. Don’t _____ Itching Ears

B. Shopping for the _____
(2 Timothy 4:3b-4)

IV. Keep Your Head When Others Lose Theirs

2 Timothy 4:5 “But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”

A. Think _____

B. _____ Faithfully

C. _____ the Gospel Boldly

D. Finish Your _____ Fully



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BACKGROUND:

In *2 Timothy 4:1-5*, Paul urgently charges Timothy to faithfully preach and teach God's Word regardless of opposition, hardship, or changing cultural trends. He emphasizes that faithfulness to God's truth must take precedence over popularity, public opinion, and personal preference. Paul warns that many will turn away from sound doctrine and instead seek messages that satisfy their own desires and beliefs. Despite this reality, Timothy is called to remain steadfast, exercise self-control, endure suffering, proclaim the gospel, and faithfully fulfill the ministry God has entrusted to him.

DIGGING DEEPER:

Faithfully Proclaiming God's Truth (Verses 1-2)

This passage challenges us to prioritize God's truth above the approval of others. As believers, we are called to faithfully share and live out God's Word with patience, love, and conviction, trusting Him even when the message is unpopular or misunderstood.

1. Paul charges Timothy before God and Christ Jesus to preach the Word. How does this remind us that ministry is ultimately accountable to God rather than to people? What ministry or area of service has God entrusted to you and how can you maintain a proper perspective as you serve?
2. What do you think Paul means by being ready "in season and out of season"? Why is it important to hold firmly to God's truth regardless of circumstances?
3. What does it mean to reprove, rebuke, and exhort? Why does Paul emphasize that these responsibilities must be carried out with patience, firmness, and love?

The Danger of Rejecting Truth (Verses 3-4)

Paul predicts a widespread rejection of biblical truth. Rather than seeking God's message, many people will seek teachers who tell them what they want to hear. The phrase "itching ears" describes a desire for messages that entertain, flatter, or justify personal desires instead of calling people to repentance and obedience.

4. Paul warns that a time will come when people will no longer endure sound doctrine. What dangers arise when people reject biblical truth and embrace myths, even ones that sound spiritual? Read *Romans 1:18-23* and discuss.

5. Can you think of examples where you have witnessed truth being rejected, false ideas being embraced, or human opinions replacing God's revelation? How should a believer respond in those situations?

6. How can we evaluate teaching according to Scripture rather than by whether it is pleasant or popular? What did the Bereans do that led Luke to describe them as "more noble"? Read *Acts 17:11* and discuss.

Remaining Faithful Through Hardship (Verse 5)

Paul reminds Timothy to remain clear-minded and self-controlled, to endure suffering, and to faithfully evangelize by proclaiming the gospel.

7. Certain responsibilities in the church are often delegated to church leadership. While Timothy was a leader appointed by Paul, how are Paul's expectations of Timothy similar to Jesus' expectations for every believer?

8. In what ways have you, or someone you know, struggled to remain sober-minded and self-controlled in the face of hardship, opposition, or rejection? How does God's opinion of you outweigh the opinions of others?

9. In *2 Timothy 1:7*, we learn that God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power, love, and self-control. We also see that self-control is a fruit of the Spirit (*Galatians 5:23*). As you grow in your understanding of these truths, how can you depend on God to develop greater self-control in your life?

TAKING IT HOME:

Jesus is the founder and perfecter of our faith (Hebrews 12:2). He has entrusted His truth to us, calling us to guard it, live it, and proclaim it faithfully. Faithfulness to God's truth must take precedence over popularity, personal preference, and comfort. God calls every believer to respond to hardship, opposition, and persecution with gentleness, kindness, and self-control.

10. Why is it important for believers, as Christ's representatives, to respond faithfully in every circumstance? Read *1 Thessalonians 5:16-18* and discuss.

11. In your opinion, what is the key to persevering and enduring through the hardships that accompany faithful ministry?

12. What is one thing you learned from today's sermon that you plan to apply to your life, and why?