



Women's R&R Bible Study 2024-2025

"YOUR WORDS WERE FOUND, AND I ATE THEM, AND YOUR WORD WAS TO ME THE JOY AND REJOICING OF MY HEART."

JEREMIAH 15:16

LIVING IN HOPE LESSON 18

In our lesson last week, we learned what it means to be equipped by God's Word. Paul brings all his thoughts together here in chapter 4. Remember as you read this last chapter, these are the last spoken or written words we have from our friend Paul. His freedom was not guaranteed, and he knew it. I believe his heart ached as he realized that he might never see his friend Timothy again. In this chapter we read Paul's final farewell, which is full of practical lessons and instructions for Timothy, as well as the church today. It is the climax of not only this one epistle, but of Paul's entire earthly life. We feel a sense of urgency in his voice, full of authority and warning. I pray that knowing these are his last words will make you pay extra careful attention to what they say. After all, it may be Paul's hand, but it's the Holy Spirit's voice!

Memory Verse of the Week: "Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching." 2 Timothy 4:2

1. Read 2 Timothy chapter 4. What do you think is the main point of the chapter?
2. In what way does chapter 4 summarize the first three chapters?
3. How many people does Paul name in this chapter? Does this tell you anything about Paul?

4. Paul mentions Mark in verse 11. Why is this significant? (Read Acts 13:13, 15:37-41.)

Even though this letter is written to a young pastor, it applies to every Christian. Keep that in mind as you read through this chapter.

5. What does Paul “charge” Timothy to do? (A “charge” is a forceful order.) Whom does Paul call as his witness?

Paul again reminds Timothy that Jesus Christ would be coming back for His church (1 Timothy 6:14, 2 Timothy 4:8, Titus 2:13). He makes this charge in the presence of God as his witness. God will be both the witness, and the judge, of all.

6. What was Timothy told to preach? Unfortunately, what other things are preached from the pulpit?

7. What does the phrase “be ready in season and out of season” mean?

While Timothy preaches the Word, he is called to convince, rebuke, and exhort. A preacher must present a balanced message as he preaches. There is a time to correct, but a time to encourage. He must be sensitive to the Holy Spirit to know when each is appropriate.

The word “**preach**” means to herald publicly. Convince, or “**reprove**,” means to correct misbehavior or false doctrine. This word has the sense of motivating the listener to confession or conviction of sin, helping them to understand that what they’re doing is wrong. The word “**rebuke**” is a pronouncement of reproof or blame that requires humility and forgiveness, not condemnation. The goal is to bring the erring person to repentance. “**Exhort**” means to remind a person of previously taught knowledge to influence him to act upon it. Its methods range from a gentle “you can do it” to an urgent “get moving.” The Greek verb “*parakaleo*” is related to the noun “*parakletos*”, the title given to the Holy Spirit in John

14:16. It literally means “to be called alongside” to help someone. After the preacher corrects or rebukes them, he must come alongside them in love, encouraging them to apply what they have learned.

Timothy was to be ready at all times to share God’s Word. Verse 2 in the Amplified Bible reads this way: **“Keep your sense of urgency ... be at hand and ready, whether the opportunity seems to be favorable or unfavorable, whether it is convenient or inconvenient, whether it be welcome or unwelcome.”**

8. “But I’m not a preacher” you might say. Besides giving a formal message, how can we “preach the Word” on a daily basis?
9. Are you “ready at all times”? Do you take advantage of the opportunities God gives you throughout the day to preach His Word? Does convenience play a part?

Paul had previously discussed false teachers and their doctrine. Persecution of the church was becoming more and more severe. More and more false teachers were surfacing. Also, some were not willing to **“endure”** or **“tolerate”** sound doctrine. Sound doctrine is often a stinging rebuke to ungodly living, and many do not want to deal with it.

“Be watchful” in verse 5 also translates “to be sober in all things.” This means to be level-headed, well-balanced, steadfast, and self-controlled.

10. Practically speaking, what does it mean to be “watchful in all things”?

Timothy had been told before that he was called to endure hardships, or to suffer evil. Paul again reminds him that a faithful ministry involves sacrifice and is costly.

11. Explain the difference between “doing the work of an evangelist” and “being called as an evangelist.” (Ephesians 4:11)

This word evangelize is used in relation to the call of every Christian to be a witness for Christ and proclaim the Gospel to a dying world. We all have a responsibility to herald the good news of salvation and do the work of an evangelist.

- 12.** What do you think Paul means by the phrase “fulfill your ministry”? Considering what Paul says in verses 6-8, why is this so vital?

The word “fulfill” gives the idea of bringing to completion, with eagerness and wholeheartedness. The Living Bible says, **“Leave nothing undone that you ought to do.”**

- 13.** What is your ministry? Are you fulfilling your ministry, whatever that may be? Have you been leaving anything undone that God has called you to do?

Paul knew that his time was short. This was the final period of his life and ministry. Although he knew his time was short, he did appear to believe he would see Timothy again (vv 13-21). It was up to Timothy now to carry on the work of the ministry. As Joshua had followed Moses, and Elisha followed Elijah, now Timothy must follow Paul.

- 14.** Paul gives a brief testimony in verses 6-8. He had been ministering for about 30 years. How does Paul describe his life in ministry?

- 15.** Does Paul seem to be depressed or in despair? Did he fear death?

In verse 6, Paul says that he is “being poured out.” This Greek verb is literally used in connection with a libation or drink offering (Genesis 35:14). As commanded in Numbers, Israel and the Gentiles who lived among them gave burnt offerings of animals, grain offerings, and a drink offering (Numbers 15:1-10). Paul was most likely thinking of his imminent death as an offering in the service of Christians and their faith. Dr. Wilber B. Wallis

said, “His whole life had been a sacrifice (Romans 12:1), and now his death would complete his life with a drink offering.” Paul had hope in death because of Jesus Christ.

16. In your own words, explain what Paul means by each of these statements:

- a.** I have **fought** the good fight.
- b.** I have **finished** the race.
- c.** I have **kept** the faith.

17. Why does Paul compare his Christian life to a race? Describe Paul’s course.

Bottom line, Paul is saying that he lived his life to the fullest. After he allowed the Lord to have control of his life, he went full steam ahead, in the power of the Lord. He obeyed the call that God placed on his life. He had no regrets, no unfinished business. He knew that he had fully accomplished all that the Lord called him to do. That’s what he was telling Timothy to do when he said, “fulfill your ministry!”

18. We obviously haven’t finished our race yet. We’re still running. Describe the course that you are on. If you’re getting tired, what should you do? (Read Isaiah 40:28-31.)

19. Do you know anyone who is getting weary in their race? What can you do to encourage them?

20. What reward is Paul looking forward to? (vs 8) What is the reward for? Is it only for Paul?

I love this section of Scripture. Paul is eagerly awaiting his crown. He was faithful to the Lord and was **so** ready to be with Him forever. As he

handed off the torch, I wonder if Timothy's hand was shaking. His dear friend who had led him to Christ, mentored him, taught him, and trusted him, was now handing the responsibility to him. It was time to step into those shoes and work on fulfilling his own ministry. The coming of Christ, who will be the judge of all, people's unwillingness to endure the Gospel, Paul's time drawing to a close, and the crown he was looking forward to ... these were all reasons that Timothy was to **"PREACH THE WORD!"**

- 21.** Are you looking forward to His appearing? Is your heart set on it? Will you be ready for it? Are you eagerly waiting for His Second Coming? How does this future **HOPE** give you **HOPE** for today?

Paul ends this letter to Timothy describing his present situation in prison. Paul was a people person, and we sense that he is lonely. This section really shows Paul's human side with human feelings. Often, we think of him as some "super" saint, but in the flesh, Paul was just like us. We can sense his deep love for Timothy because of his obvious desire to see him. He began this letter telling Timothy how much he wanted to see him again (2 Timothy 1:4), and he ends the letter the same way. I'm sure Timothy's heart was blessed to feel Paul's love for him seep through the pages of this final letter.

- 22.** Although Paul finished his race well, Demas didn't. What do we know about Demas from Colossians 4:14 and Philemon 24?
- 23.** After reading this section, answer the following questions:
- a. What needs did Paul have?
 - b. Who deserted Paul?
 - c. Who stayed with Paul?
 - d. Whom did Paul desire to see?
 - e. Who was sick?
 - f. Why did Paul warn Timothy about Alexander?
 - g. Even after everyone left him, who stood by Paul? Why?

According to verse 17, Paul continued to preach the Gospel. Paul was an example to Timothy, not only in his life, but in his death. He exhorted Timothy to “Preach the Word,” and Paul did the same.

We don’t know who Crescens is (vs 10), only that he is a faithful man. Paul sent him to the people in Galatia, whom he had a special love for. Paul visited the churches in Galatia on all three missionary journeys. Tychicus carried letters from Paul in the past to other churches (Ephesians 6:21, 22, Colossians 4:7, 8, Titus 3:12), and was quite possibly the one who was going to take this letter to Timothy. We don’t know anything about Carpus, or why Paul left his cloak with him. Priscilla and Aquila are familiar to us (Romans 16:3, Acts 18:2, 18:26, 1 Corinthians 16:19), as well as Onesiphorus (2 Timothy 1:16-18). Erastus may be the man found in Romans 16:23 and Acts 19:22. We can read about Trophimus in Acts 20:1-6 and 21:29. Unfortunately he was sick and had to be left in Miletus. The four mentioned in verse 21 (Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, and Claudia) are unknown to us, except they must be faithful servants of the Lord.

Most commentators believe that this “first defense” refers to the first hearing, or first investigation of this case. According to Roman law, Paul could have called witnesses to testify for him. Alfred Plummer says this, “among all Christians in Rome there was not one who would stand at his side in court either to speak on his behalf, or to advise him in the conduct of his case, or to support him by a demonstration of sympathy.”

We’re not sure what the charges against Paul were. We know from history what some of the accusations were against other Christians at the time. They were said to have committed all sorts of evil crimes. John Stott wrote this, “Christians were supposed to be guilty of horrid crimes against the state and against civilized society. They were accused of atheism, cannibalism (because they spoke of eating Christ’s body), and even of general hatred of the human race (because of their supposed disloyalty to Caesar and perhaps because they had renounced the popular pleasures of sin). It may be that some of these charges had been made against Paul. Whatever the case, he had no one to defend him but himself. This moment was Paul’s Gethsemane.”

24. Have you ever felt abandoned by your friends and family? What did you do? What did Paul do? Where did he get his strength?

The books that Paul is referring to in verse 13 are rolls of papyrus, less expensive than the animal-skin parchments. F. F. Bruce said that “What the parchments were which Paul so particularly desired Timothy to bring we cannot be sure, but it is a reasonable guess that they contained portions of Holy Scripture.”

Verse 17 is an encouragement to each of us when we feel like we’re standing alone. We’re not. The Lord will never leave us or forsake us. He didn’t leave Paul, and He won’t leave you!

- 25.** Do you feel like you’re standing alone in some situation in your life?
The Lord wants to be your strength. How do we receive that strength?

What “**lion**” is Paul referring to in verse 17? No one knows for sure, but here are a few suggestions:

1. Emperor Nero himself, because of his cruel nature. (He was called a lion by some.)
2. The devil (1 Peter 5:8)
3. Paul’s human prosecutor in court
4. The overwhelming peril he was in

John Stott calls Paul a “New Testament Daniel” because the Lord shut its mouth to protect him. I like that. The Lord wants to protect us from the lions in our life as well.

- 26.** What does Paul say the Lord will deliver him from, in verse 18?
(death?)
- 27.** Is there a lion in your life that is after you? Whatever, or whoever it is, the Lord wants to protect you too. Will you continue to allow God’s message to be preached as you endure afflictions, whether it be by your words or your life?

28. Thinking back over this book, does Paul ever refer to what size Timothy's church should be? Does he talk about the wealth of it?

29. What do you think makes a church fruitful, or considered a "good church"?

30. List some practical lessons that are taught in this book. How can you apply them?

Soon after Paul wrote this letter, tradition tells us that Paul was tried and executed by Nero. James Stalker wrote this:

"In all history there is not a more startling illustration of the irony of human life than this scene of Paul at the bar of Nero. On the judgment seat, clad in the imperial purple, sat a man who in a bad world had attained the eminence of being the very worst and meanest being in it -- a man stained with every crime, the murderer of his own mother, of his wives and of his very best benefactors; a man whose whole being was so steeped in every namable and unnamable vice that body and soul of him were, as someone said at the time, nothing but a compound of mud and blood; and in the prisoner's dock stood the best man the world contained, his hair whitened with labors for the good of men and the glory of God.

The trial ended, Paul was condemned and delivered over to the executioner. He was led out of the city with a crowd of the lowest rabble at his heels. The fatal spot was reached; he knelt beside the block; the headsman's axe gleamed in the sun and fell; and the head of the apostle of the world rolled down in the dust. The city falsely called eternal dismissed with execration from her gates; but ten thousand times ten thousand welcomed him in the same hour at the gates of the city which is really eternal."

Question: Why would Paul work so hard and endure so much? Why would he go to his grave? Why did he have so much joy? Why was he so driven?

ANSWER: Jesus Christ!