

The Second Epistle to Timothy

Part 4

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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:01] Hymn 250 From various cares our hearts retire, Though deep and boundless their desire, We've now to please but one. Hymn 250 From various cares our hearts retire, [00:01:01] Though deep and boundless their desire, We've now to please but one. Hymn 250 With this our hearty motives cast, Through the world's deserts, Ruled and raged, All through its goddess bare, [00:02:05] Whether the stones of troubled sea, Or all in debt to my destiny, To God's behold again.

O Lord, the way, the truth, the life, Exhaust their sorrow, doubt, and strife, [00:03:01] Drop off thy mortal weight, Henceforth as privileged by thee, Simple and undistracted be, The soul which to thee pleads.

Let us of evilness recline, On that eternal love of thine, [00:04:07] And human goals forget.

Child, by the day what thou wilt say, Go forth and serve thee what is gain, Nor leave us with retreat.

I charge thee, therefore, Before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, [00:05:01] Who shall judge the quick and the dead At his appearing and his kingdom. Preach the word.

Be instant, in season, out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, With all long-suffering and doctrine. For the time will come When they will not endure sound doctrine. But after their own lusts Shall they heap to themselves teachers Having itching ears.

And they shall turn away their ears from the truth And shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, Endure afflictions, Do the work of an evangelist, Make full proof of thy ministry. For I am now ready to be offered, And the time of my departure is at hand. [00:06:02] I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, Henceforth there is laid up for me A crown of righteousness, Which the Lord, the righteous Judge, Shall give me at that day. And not to me only, But unto all them also that love his appearing. Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me, For Demas hath forsaken me, Having loved this present world, And is departed unto Thessalonica, Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee, For he is profitable to me for the ministry, And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus. The cloak that I left at Troas with Coppice, [00:07:01] When thou

comest, bring with thee, And the books, but especially the parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil, The Lord reward him according to his works, Of whom be thouware also, For he hath greatly withstood our words. At my first answer no man stood with me, But all men forsook me. I pray God that it may not be late to their charge. Notwithstanding, the Lord stood with me, And strengthened me, That by me the preaching might be fully known, And that all the Gentiles might hear. And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, And will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom, To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

[00:08:04] Salute Prisca, and Aquila, And the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus abode at Corinth, But Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick. Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, And Claudia, and all the brethren. The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.

Tonight, then, the fourth of four sessions looking at 2nd Timothy.

We are aware that the selected split points for the chapters [00:09:01] is not part of the inspired text.

Nevertheless, the medieval gentleman who was responsible must have found it relatively easy in 2nd Timothy because the subject matter lends itself quite obviously to the splits where they occur between the chapters. And so we come to his final words. Not only of this epistle, but as far as we know, the last recorded written words of the Apostle Paul.

In line with the pastoral epistles generally, it's another good study to fill in those many leisure hours when you're wondering how to spend your time. The charges, the exhortations, the commands.

[00:10:02] When he says, now, here is something important that I have to communicate to you. I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, you will have noticed, I'm sure, that the way the Lord Jesus is spoken of in the Old and New Testament is always significant, appropriate to the context, once we arrive at a fair translation. And when we come to this point, the scholars present will confirm to me afterwards, I'm sure, that not this general way of speaking to the Lord Jesus, about the Lord Jesus, even there paying due tribute to his majesty, our Lord Jesus Christ, but here, more accurately perhaps, Christ Jesus. [00:11:02] Which term always takes account of the fact that the Lord came into the world, he lived that perfect life, he departed out of this world by way of the cross, God raised him by his glory, he's now exalted a prince and a saviour, and from his present exaltation, having gone through it all himself, he is now in a position and has the capacity and the desire to encourage and help those who want to follow a similar path in measure. So, wherever we get this term Christ Jesus takes account of his present exaltation and the resources he makes available that we might follow in the right path.

Things will not always continue as they are.

[00:12:01] God is long-suffering, as we know. We know from experience, happy to note it, happy to enjoy it. But we are aware, morally, that things cannot continue in the downward spiral forever. God will eventually intervene and will make his judgement known. And God will intervene personally in the person of his well-beloved son who will be manifested in glory at his appearing, the appearing of the power and the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ. And so it says, who shall judge the quick and the dead? I understand that it's said of the cities of Paris, Rome and Istanbul, maybe others, that there are only two kind of pedestrians, [00:13:02] the quick and the dead. I don't really think that that's what's being

referred to here. It's merely saying that when the Lord comes, whenever it is, there will be some who are alive at that time and there will be some who are dead, who have died.

None will miss the judgement. The dead will be raised and they will be judged for their responsible lives while they were living. We know from other scriptures what is true of individuals will be true of nations as such.

Now, for those who are alive upon the earth, it will certainly be a point of climax when the Lord appears in power and great glory. Revelation 19 tells us that heaven will be opened and the Word of God, he who speaks on behalf of God [00:14:02] because he is God, he will come out from heaven with his armies, he will deal with the enemies of God and set up a righteous kingdom.

He will judge those who are alive and then finally, a little more than a thousand years after that, probably at the final judgement, the great white throne, every man will be judged according to his work. But, speaking to living believers, living believer Paul, speaking to Timothy, he said now, do not be discouraged.

As we considered last night, Timothy, man of God, acting for God, being true to God when everybody else seems to be against God, you need the consolation of knowing that in the final analysis, [00:15:03] there will be personal intervention by the Lord himself. He will set things right and it is your position at the moment, you cannot roll the tide of evil back but you in your day can testify to what is right and you can act in accordance with the truth. And he went into detail, he says now this is what you do, you preach the word.

There's always encouragement to preach the word.

I'm very happy indeed that in the Lord's mercy, from being a toddler, I've enjoyed reading the scriptures. That's not a boast, it's just a statement of fact. The Lord gave me the capacity to enjoy reading the Bible from my earliest memories.

[00:16:05] Many are not so fortunate. Many earnest Christian believers, committed Christians tell me for them it's hard work.

Oh I pray for you if that is the case. You either enjoy a thing or you feel you have to do it as a duty. May the Lord give us all grace not only to do it because it's the right thing but to enjoy it.

And when we are communicating the truth to others it should not only be that it contains the word or it's about the word but it's the presentation of the word itself. Not vain repetition of scripture verbatim although it will be largely that but that essentially it is the word that is communicated. I'm going to be hoist on my own petard now. [00:17:02] I don't like padding out addresses with anecdotes but when I used to be gainfully employed as some used to say there was a very important gentleman used to visit me now and again knowing me to be a believer he would always ask some questions. He was very interested. Very religious man. But quite soon in every discussion he would sound exasperated and say it's no good talking to you all you do is tell me what the Bible says. Oh may the Lord help us all. That if anybody is interested and asks us questions we don't give our opinions. We don't say what worthy expositors of former or the present day say. [00:18:01] We preach the word.

Increasingly where the word is not read another little thing I suppose maybe there was a time when in

speaking to anyone believer or unbeliever it could have been a fair assumption that the miracles and the parables and the narratives of the Old Testament were familiar to most people and you could immediately save time by applying the scripture. How sad that we are now at a stage in history where you can no longer assume that they know the story. You have to spell it out ABC say what the word says and then apply it. It takes longer but it's no good applying a scriptural narrative [00:19:01] and applying it morally or for the salvation of the soul if the listener has no idea at all never heard the story before. But again the best illustration of any scripture truth I am convinced is found in scripture itself. Every necessary truth that needs to be applied to us or anybody else is illustrated somewhere in scripture the Old or the New Testament. Be instant, in season, out of season that's difficult.

The general impression I get from that is the word is always in season. It's always appropriate provided you find the right one.

How do I talk about the detail?

I suppose I can only say [00:20:03] the word guided by the Lord and the power of the Spirit scripture is always seasonable even if the circumstances may suggest to my natural mind that this is not the appropriate moment.

In season, even if to man's thinking it's out of season. I leave you to meditate upon that. Reprove, rebuke, exhort, well we had in verse 16 of the previous chapter that it's profitable for every kind of way as we outlined doctrine, reproof, correction instruction in righteousness.

Exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine. Have you ever heard anyone say [00:21:02] and it sounds so right don't give me doctrine, give me Christ.

You cannot give Christ you cannot minister Christ without referring to the scriptures. The scriptures are the only source of any information that we have about the Lord Jesus Christ. We don't get it in dreams we don't get it in a flash of inspiration the complete canon of the word of God is our sole source of information about the Lord Jesus Christ. Of course, we know what many mean when they say that. Not the cold, vain repetition or recitation of the text verbatim without any attempt at applying it to our souls or but let us remember that it is the word of God [00:22:02] that is expounded and taught. Another good line right through the New Testament are these occasional references to doctrine teaching there are many of them in the pastoral epistles. Time is short the time will come when they those that you're trying to speak to will not endure sound doctrine but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears it's the listeners that have the itching ears not the teachers. What does it mean? What a wonderful teacher he is always telling me something I've never heard before and my ears are itching for some new thing like the Areopagites [00:23:01] didn't they come together every day hoping to hear some new thing they had itching ears. It's dangerous to make a plea to the most gifted teacher and say please carry on giving us something new if you demand something new very soon the point will come where to provide something new the teacher has to go outside of Scripture and that's where the deal it's happened we know of cases where it's happened so preach the word in a balanced way drawing from not just a favourite line of teaching but the balanced layout of what Scripture presents and the natural mind resists the straightforward exposition of the truth [00:24:04] and the ears and the fancy are tickled when we hear something we've never heard before beware safety edification is in the presentation of what the word of God has to say Watch watch thou I understand this is watch with intent always be on the lookout be alert you're on sentry duty Timothy you're a relatively gifted young man you have to use the talent that God has

given you but it will need vigilance concentration alertness and he says [00:25:02] this as in the other chapters means that suffering of one sort or another misunderstanding the Lord said didn't he to the disciples in those early days a man's foes shall be chiefly those of his own household what does that mean? it could mean your natural family well might the sphere where you should get the greatest understanding may well be is where the opposition arises again that may be my own fault isn't it true that if the mask slips it slips it home [00:26:01] when I'm with other people with the brethren in the world at work I keep a tight rein self-discipline applied I don't want to give the wrong impression of what a believer is I get home I relax someone touches me on a raw nerve I blow up answer back I'm immediately ashamed but I've done it so it may be that my family who know me most and best are in the greatest position to criticise or it may be like me my family also relax their vigilance at home and because of this these things arise true in the meeting isn't it [00:27:01] when we meet other brethren in other places we are on our best behaviour everything's fine but the brethren that we know the best and love the most when we are just together privately shall we say in local assembly that again may be well the time when we just relax our vigilance and speak to each other in a way that is most improper how sad that would be well these are pointers along the way Paul says thou he's previously called him a man of God he says you will watch your tongue oh yes not original to me or anyone here I'm sure when you're in the world [00:28:01] watch your activities when you're at home watch your tongue when you're on your own watch your thoughts how easy it is to slip isn't it well in all those fears Paul says to Timothy and through Timothy to us he says watch be careful get on with the job do the work of an evangelist it doesn't say that Timothy has a particular gift in that direction be very easy for me whatever you ask me to join in and help with I might say oh that's not my gift I'm waiting for the Lord to tell me the way to find out what gift is you see a job that needs to be done you're willing to help it will soon become obvious whether or not you are particularly gifted in that direction the Lord will make it plain [00:29:03] but in the meantime be available to be a help if there's any work to be done verse 6 he says I'm ready to be offered my time of service is over the time of my departure is at hand isn't that nice my exodus I'm going out I'm going away but I've done what I could as long as I was available and he picks up the teaching that we had in chapter 2 the soldier the athlete the farmer and he says I can honestly say as before the Lord I have fought the good fight definite article I have finished the course I have kept the faith [00:30:01] yes he was in this war and picking up from the Proverbs I suppose he accepted the fact there is no discharge in this war as long as he was in the flesh he was available to the Lord to take his place in the ranks of those who defended and taught the faith he finished the course in accordance with the rules and he kept the faith it's to me it's this last phrase I didn't mention this the other night when we were looking at chapter 2 it is this phrase the answer to the third part of that trilogy in chapter 2 it is because of this phrase keeping the faith acting on the promises of God that causes me to accept without any question that the farming analogy is right in chapter 2 [00:31:02] because of Genesis 8 22 that the farmer acts upon the fact that God has always kept his promise in giving the full cycle of the seasons every year each of which is appropriate to some stage in the development of whatever is being grown henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness oh yes the crowns of scripture more homework for you if you haven't done it before the crowns of scripture one pointer there are crowns which are displayed as a right by the king say and there are crowns [00:32:03] which are deserved which are earned scripture speaks of many of them and personified I suppose in Stephen whose name means crown wherever crowns are bestowed and this again is related to the appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ after the rapture before the appearing each servant of the Lord will have been interviewed personally by the Lord some people think appraisals are something new you know the word might be new but it's been in scripture from the start that the Lord will give an appraisal interview to every responsible believer that's lived on the earth [00:33:02] and will make his assessment and will bestow honours and these honours will be displayed when the Lord appears in power and great glory now there's something consistent about

these crowns which are earned bestowed because they've been deserved and it's this each crown is appropriate to the way in which the individual has served the Lord can't follow them all through I'll give you this one we've read more than once that the world is becoming increasingly unrighteous we know it we live in an unrighteous world Paul foresaw this and included in the scripture [00:34:02] those servants of the Lord whose service involves acting righteously in an unrighteous environment will be given a crown of righteousness again what does that mean? the Lord John's epistle tells us is the righteous judge we are told that for a thousand years act 17 30 31 he will rule the world in righteousness and he will be delighted to associate with him in his day of glory those who have been righteous in an unrighteous generation and he will say look at them these were the few who were righteous in an unrighteous day [00:35:02] and it is right that they should have the kind of crown which displays the kind of righteousness that they assured in their life and service upon earth the only other one by way of passing just to clinch it like Stephen in act 7 we learn in the book of Revelation there will be some who are faithful unto death and they will be granted a crown of life follow them through it's absolutely consistent that the crown bestowed to the faithful servant is entirely appropriate to the circumstances and the difficulties through which he served which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day again the emphasis in this last epistle [00:36:01] as far as doctrine is concerned the term that day this day can be so horrible that day is going to be glorious the day when everything will be revealed in its true colours when the Lord Jesus Christ will be King of Kings and Lord of Lords this is personal it's individual as he said before but he says not just me I'm not unique he's already called himself a pattern in the first epistle hasn't he I'm not unique I'm not boasting about anything that isn't available to any believer and he says not to me only but unto all them also that love has appeared oh what does that mean some believers love his appearing [00:37:02] and some don't and those who do will be blessed honoured, rewarded and the ordinary common rank and file like me will have nothing to show it's not saying that at all it is speaking of normal Christianity surely it is normal that a believer loves the appearing of their Lord, Saviour and Master in this sense when we look at the unrighteousness in the world when we see the double dealing and the hypocrisy when we see when we hear the name of the Lord taken on lips as an oath and a curse and blasphemy instead of with honour and homage [00:38:02] we long for the day when he will be given his right place when everything that hath breath shall praise him when he will be given due honour I'm sure that is what it is it is consistent it is normal Christian thinking to mourn at the present day and to long for the day when he shall be given his rights it will occur chronologically at his appearing in power and great glory but we instinctively long for that day and however lacking in spiritual intelligence we are it's the instinct of the normal Christian attitude and then just for a few moments he launches into some comments about individuals I'll come back to the individuals in a moment but just before that [00:39:04] verses 16 and 17 at my first answer no man stood with me notwithstanding the Lord stood with me I haven't looked at the prepositions closely here others may have done and can tell me afterwards but the truth is right whether or not I'm hanging it on the right verse you tell me in the Acts there are times when the servants of the Lord well it's doubtful whether they are doing the right thing they may be making mistakes maybe they're not always acting in the right way for the right motive nevertheless those who have committed themselves to the Lord's service the Lord stands by them and supports them oh but there are [00:40:02] other occasions where not only does the Lord stand by us through thick and thin but because what we are doing is right and in accordance with his will he can identify himself with us in what we are doing in other words it's a greater thing to have the Lord standing with us than standing by us I leave that for you to pursue in other scriptures verse 18 the Lord the one in control the master he will deliver me from every evil work and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom oh yes his confidence was in the Lord David remember King David well maybe before he was king [00:41:02] he was fleeing for his life and we read that when he had nothing else to rejoice in instead of him he rejoiced in the Lord one of the reasons we are allowed to feel lonely and

unsupported is to remind us that if no one else is available the Lord is always available maybe that's sometimes why the crutches are removed and we are given the opportunity to stand apparently on our own feet so that we realize whoever else whatever else the Lord will be with us and Paul had learned that for himself the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work and then this last phrase to whom be glory [00:42:02] forever and ever amen speaking in round terms there are about 20 doxologies in the New Testament epistles beginning from Romans 1 now purists amongst you might tell me afterwards they aren't all doxologies some of them are eulogies well you can explain that to one another afterwards what we do know is this in a variety of circumstance the apostles through every kind of difficulty and in every kind of blessing the circumstances are such or in spite of the circumstances there is [00:43:02] a spontaneous upflow and overflow of praise and worship to the blessed God are our lives like that if the difficulties arise if opposition presents itself if we get discouraged do we find opportunities for praise and worship not as an act or as a formula but spontaneously overflowing in the presence of the Lord. Notice this one comes out of the sense of the Lord's deliverance in difficult circumstances and check the other 19 and you'll find that this follows a variety of circumstance a sense of the Lord's presence in blessing and in difficulty resulting in this upflow and overflow of praise again a very good [00:44:02] example to follow Priscilla and Aquila as always found together what a happy thing it is if in the Lord's work and in fellowship that husbands and wives are together in what they do Just to pick out some of these individuals before we close I'll start at the bottom and I'll take these in ascending order of appeal Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil the Lord reward him according to his works this is not a prayer for fire and brimstone to come down from heaven upon Alexander because he [00:45:02] opposed Paul not a bit it's a statement of fact Alexander did he what he chose to do Paul says I did what I found to be right before the Lord I can leave it to the Lord to put other matters right no personal animosity no personal feeling he can afford to leave the finality to the Lord but Alexander the coppersmith he didn't start at all on the Christian path and he had a very bad ending how bad how sad doesn't start on the Christian path and his end is judgment condemnation eternal death how sad having been [00:46:02] in touch with the apostle the great apostle Paul in verse 11 you have another one Mark Mark I think we've met all these kinds of individual Mark started well he had a little stutter a hiatus and we lose sight of him for a while but he ended well one or two of us one or two I've met make a good start keep going never put a foot wrong and appear consistent all through their life Mark wasn't like that but I think it's all the more commendable that even though there was that [00:47:02] slight stutter in his career of working for the Lord that to him was given the privilege of committing to writing the exposition of God's perfect servant the gospel by Mark again God chooses servants differently to what we would perhaps I might have questioned whether someone better fitted could have been chosen but the Lord said no he started right had a little bit of a difficulty in the middle but he came good again and he finished well let us not be discouraged if we recognise that we've made mistakes done things we regretted afterwards it doesn't finish our service forever it just means that we have to pick up the threads again and like the Nazarite [00:48:02] we have to let our hair grow again and we are ready for service once more well he had a stutter but he ended well Demas well he made a good start he was in that helpful little group that went round with Paul on his travels but sadly having made a good start he fizzled out began well but finished poorly Demas hath forsaken me having loved this present world let's finish with a good example dear Luke Luke the beloved physician he's one of those cases isn't he from when you first hear about him he's helpful active, diligent available, supportive and fully involved in the work of the Lord [00:49:02] there's no reason at all why our service for the Lord in the way we express our fellowship one with another shouldn't begin rightly continue steadily it's always better to be steady than spectacular and then finish the days consistent grateful to the Lord for grace given to continue in the way that it is right these examples are given that we might be alert to the opportunities available, the way lives the way service can be patterned and always we are reminded the word is in our hands

the Holy Spirit is in our hearts and while we wait for the Lord to come we love his appearing and preach the word in season [00:50:02] and out of season while we wait for him to come let us sing our closing hymn 3-1-6 we are by Christ redeemed the cost his precious blood be nothing by our souls esteemed like this great good and so on thus far by grace preserved each moment speeds us on the crown and kingdom are reserved where Christ is gone 3-1-6 we are by Christ redeemed the cost his precious blood be nothing by our souls esteemed like this [00:51:02] great good worth the last worth our own with all its bearish stone and thou Lord Jesus our Lord is still the poor our earth and vessels fray the world itself grows old but Christ our precious cross will take and freshly mold he'll give his body fire a fresher mind his own he'll build [00:52:02] the whole creation smart and precious strong thus far by grace preserved each moment speeds us on the crown and kingdom are reserved where Christ is gone when cloudless morning shines we shall his glory share in pleasant places other lines the home of hell [00:53:04] to him our weakness flees through tribulation soar and sees the but of his wings till all below and when we've run the race and fought the faithful fight we then shall see him face to face with saints in light