

Going Home!

2 Timothy 4 (July 18)

INTRODUCTION:

- Personal Exercise: Give class members a few minutes to answer this question: If you knew today was your last day to live, what would you want to say to your closest family and friends?
 - Distribute paper and pens for this exercise...(this is what Paul did)
 - If people are willing to share some of their thoughts, allow them to do so...
- 2 Timothy is Paul's last written letter. He was basically sitting on death row. He knew he needed to wrap up this letter and send it on his way. What would be the last things he felt Timothy needed to hear?

BIBLE STUDY:

1. Words of Examination (vs. 1-8).
 - a. No surprise exists that Paul begins his goodbye by probing us to examine ourselves.
 - b. First, we must examine our doctrine (vs. 1-4). The Apostle's final charge to Timothy was to "preach the word...sound doctrine...truth." Nothing remains more significant to the church's health than systematic teaching of the Word of God.
 - i. The Word must be shared seriously. Why? Christ's "appearing" will bring judgment and evaluation.
 - ii. The Word must also be shared continually — "be instant in season, out of season." Believers must always be ready to share the Word of God.
 - iii. In addition, the Word must be shared earnestly. By faithfully preaching the Word, men of God "reprove," which serves as a spiritual catalyst in forging convictions in a person's heart.
 - iv. Finally, preaching is the pastor's greatest tool to "exhort" people, encouraging them in the faith.
 - v. Paul insists Timothy grasp how significant preaching is, for the day will soon arrive — "time will come" —when people will turn away from the truth (vv. 3-4).
 - vi. *DISCUSS: How seriously do we take the preaching of God's Word/doctrine?*
 - c. Secondly, Paul pushes Timothy to examine himself (vs. 5). Timothy was to never to surrender until he finds what God intended for his life.
 - i. *How often do we quit before we know what God wants for us?* Timothy must learn the art of "watching" and, then he would be able to "endure afflictions."
 - ii. So must we. Indeed, we must watch both patiently and faithfully, keeping our passions under control and accepting life as it comes to us every day.
 - d. Third, we must examine our departure (vs. 6-8). The end for Paul was drawing near. He was facing death, and three thoughts filled his heart which we may pose as three questions.
 - i. What about the present? The watchword here is preparation. Paul is "ready" to make the journey home (v. 6). The question we all must answer personally concerns whether we are ready to meet God.
 - ii. What about the past? The watchword for the past is completion (v. 7).
 - iii. What about the future? The watchword for the future is anticipation (v. 8).
2. Words of Preparation (vs. 9-18)
 - a. Eager to see Timothy (v. 9), he faces the reality of his situation.

- b. First, he mentions some important personalities (vs. 10-12). These men signify a cardinal truth of the Christian faith.
 - i. Demas is among those who run when things get tough. Mentioned three times in Scripture (cp. Philemon 24; Col. 4:14), he may represent those who start fast but end poorly.
 - ii. Luke is among those who remain through the tough times. There are decidedly few who stick it out when circumstances become difficult. Luke started well and finished well.
 - iii. Mark is among those who return after coming to their Christian senses. Mark is a picture of the normal Christian journey. Even so, God is a God Who delights in giving second chances.
 - iv. *DISCUSS: What is your typical response to tough times?*
 - c. Second, Paul mentions some necessities he needed (vs. 13). Timothy was God's blessing to Paul to meet his need.
 - i. Paul had physical needs to which must be attended (the "cloak").
 - ii. Paul had mental needs ("books").
 - iii. Most importantly, the Apostle had spiritual needs ("parchments").
 - d. Third, Paul mentions some victories (vs. 16-18).
 - i. Being deserted, no one came to his defense (v. 16). His enemies had won the round (vv. 14-15). How did he react to being abandoned? He prayed God would not hold it against them.
 - ii. *AGAIN: How do we normally respond when we are let down? Do we get angry? Become bitter? Claim our rights are violated? The Apostle knew how to forgive. Do we?*
3. Word of Exhortation (vs. 19-22)
- a. The final utterance of Paul's recorded words remains a testimony to his spiritual greatness. Paul's final words record three exhortations to his young protégé.
 - b. First, Paul spoke about life's brevity. Life is similar to seasons of the year. The changing seasons picture life going through stages. Winter is coming, so Timothy must hurry. Do what he can while he can. *Are you maxing out your days?*
 - c. Second, Paul spoke about life's opportunity. The fact is, some things will never get done if they are not performed "before winter." *Are we making the most of life's opportunities?*
 - d. Third, Paul spoke about life's necessity. Paul continually spoke about the significance of giving one's life to Christ. To Timothy Paul simply said, "come."
 - i. The immediate context is Paul urging Timothy to see him. The wider context of the whole Bible uses "come" as the great word of Gospel invitation.
 - ii. God invites rebellious sinners to "come" and reason together with Him (Isa. 1:18).
 - iii. The Bible closes with the 3-fold appeal to "come (Rev. 22:17)." Life's greatest necessity is coming to Jesus. Life's greatest joy is getting to Jesus. And life's greatest reward is eternally living with Jesus.

APPLICATION:

- What did you like about this lesson?
- What do you want to remember from this lesson? Why?
- What is one thing we can do this week to apply this lesson?