

2 Timothy: The Good Fight Finishing Well in Christ

Lesson 46—2 Timothy 4:6-8

Continuing from our last study...

Prayer

Start by praying over the passage and asking the Holy Spirit to give you fresh insights and wisdom in understanding it. Then read through the entire passage two or three times. The depth of theology is so great that I would strongly advise using the New Living Translation for one of your Scripture readings.

Scripture Meditation/Memorization

One of the most fundamental and rewarding Christian disciplines that pays back in full spiritual dividends is Bible meditation/memorization. It is an absolutely fundamental in the formation of your spiritual development, spiritual walk and faith growth. In Psalm 1:1-2 (NLT), the Psalmist warrior, King David said,

*“Oh, the joys of those who do not follow the advice of the wicked,
or stand around with sinners, or join in with mockers.
But they delight in the law of the Lord,
meditating on it day and night.”*

Memory Verse

*“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”—
2nd Timothy 4:7 (NKJV)*

Study Format

We have all had weeks in which the time available for preparation of our Bible study evaporates under an unexpected event or a pressing project at work. To enable everyone to complete the study, even when time is at a premium, questions are being divided into two categories: essential and expanded. The Essential Questions are those necessary to understand key points of the passage. The Expanded Questions or growth questions help expand knowledge and gain deeper insight into the Scripture.

If you are concerned about having enough time to complete the whole study, it is suggested that you start by first answering the Essential Questions for each day and answer the Expanded Questions as time permits.

2 Timothy 4:6-8—*Paul's Epitaph*

You can almost sense the satisfaction and contentment in Paul as he surveys the landscape of his life and proclaims that a crown of righteousness awaits him just beyond the finish line. It is interesting that the word *crown* should bookend the life of the apostle. In the Greek there are two words for crown: *diadem*, being a crown for a monarch and *stephanos*, referred to here, being the crown of laurels given to victors in the Olympic Games. When we are first introduced to Paul in Acts 8:1, he is removing a crown as he presides over the martyring of Stephen (*Stephanos*). At the end of his life following his radical conversion and a life of service Paul is set to receive his crown.

Essential Questions:

1. In the Old Testament sacrificial system, the drink offering was the finale that followed the grain and burnt offerings (see Numbers 15:1–16). In a similar fashion, Paul viewed his departure as the last in a succession of sacrifices he had made in his ministry.

a. In verse 6 what does Paul mean by his departure?

b. What is Paul's attitude towards his "departure" based upon this passage and Philippians 2:17–18?

c. *How else does the Bible picture the believer's death?¹

i. Philippians 1:21

ii. 1 Thessalonians 4:13-14

2. In one of Paul's most quoted sayings, how does he summarize his life in v. 7?

3. *Look again at verse 7. In what way would you like to claim the promise of this verse for your life?²

a. What do you want your epitaph to be?³

¹ Milne, D. J. W. (1996). *1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus* (p. 182). Scotland; Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications.

² Stott, J., & Johnson, L. (1998). *2 Timothy: Standing Firm in Truth* (p. 48). Nottingham, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press; IVP Connect: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press.

³ *Ibid*

b. What can you do this week to begin to make it a reality so you have no regrets when you die?⁴

4. What wonderful hope does Paul share with us in verse 8?

Expanded Question:

5. In this passage Paul is speaking of his legacy. Russell Wilson, quarterback of the Seattle Seahawks was quoted just before the Super Bowl in January of 2015 as saying, “In terms of my legacy off the field, I want to be a Christian man that helps lead and helps change lives and helps serve other people. It’s not about me, you know,” Wilson told reporters on the Media Day that took place January 27. “It's not about me and it's about just helping other people. So that’s kind of where I keep my focus.” Just like Wilson, we as believers should be concerned about the legacy that we leave for others. What steps or actions can you take now to ensure that your legacy will have a positive impact?

a. 2 Corinthians 5:9–10

b. 1 Corinthians 3:10–15

⁴ Stott, J., & Johnson, L. (1998). *2 Timothy: Standing Firm in Truth* (p. 48). Nottingham, England; Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press; IVP Connect: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press.

6. Ultimately, what will happen to the rewards we receive according to Revelation 4:10–11?

Lesson 46 Summary/Take Away

If one of your friends at work or a neighbor were to ask you what you did on Tuesday, you would tell them you went to a Bible study. The next question would likely be, “What did you learn?” We often summarize an entire athletic contest or a movie in a few brief sentences and easily convey the essence of the event. Now apply these same skills to give a summary of the passage in a sentence or two. Then, in an additional sentence or two, describe what impact this passage will have on how you live.

Memory Verse
“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”—
2nd Timothy 4:7 (NKJV)

Key Words/Phrases

Write out the definition of these key words. You can use a regular dictionary or go to one of the Greek sources listed in the Tool Box at the end of the study. You may also use a concordance to see where else and how the word is used in the Bible.

Crown of Righteousness (2 Timothy 4:8)

Tool Box

Step 1: The Bible. Read the passage in a couple of different versions. If you are having trouble understanding a passage, choose a more dynamic version such as *New Living Translation*. To focus in on the exact meaning of a verse, choose a more literal translation such as *New King James Version*, *New American Standard Bible* or *English Standard Version*. *The Amplified Bible* is another excellent version.

Step 2: Study Tools. Use these to help you dig deeper. Background Information: 1) Unger's Bible Dictionary, 2) Bible Dictionaries online at biblestudytools.com and blueletterbible.com. (recommend both David Guzik and Chuck Smith's commentaries/study notes); Word Studies: 1) Zodhiates' *The Complete Word Study New Testament*, 2) Vine's *Complete Expository Dictionary*, and 3) Strong's *Dictionary of Bible Words*.

Step 3: Commentaries. Commentaries should not be used in place of studying God's Word directly, but they can give you additional insights. Some good commentaries include: Warren Wiersbe, J. Vernon McGee, F.F. Bruce, *the Expositors Bible Commentary*, *NIV Application Commentary*, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* (edited by Walvoord & Zuck), *the Tyndale New Testament Commentaries*, and William Barclay (*great for background and culture, but be careful of his spiritual applications).

Step 4: Online Assistance. Should you have a specific question about the study please e-mail your inquiry to: mannyqwcm@gmail.com

