

**2 Timothy Study**  
**Week 4**  
**2 Timothy 3:14-4:10**

**Day One**

14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, 15 and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

v. 14 – When all is said and done, it’s not about what anyone else is doing or saying. It’s about what **you** do. At the end of the day, you can’t change or control anyone else. You can only change or control yourself. Paul warned Timothy that many would fall away and do strange things. After that warning, however, he then gave Timothy instructions that began, “as for you.”

**Are you uptight about what someone else has done or isn’t doing? Have you allowed your own faith to waver or wane because of someone else’s failures or problems?** Then it’s time to get back on track! It’s time to pay less attention to someone else’s walk and more to your own.

Paul urged Timothy to “continue.” That means he was already doing the right things; he just needed to keep doing them. **What were those right things?** I don’t know specifically, but they were things that Timothy learned, personally convinced that those things were true and right. I would see those as Timothy’s values.

**What are your values?** If you have never developed a formal list of values, perhaps it’s time you did. I have an article entitled, “How To Develop Your Governing Values,” on my website at <http://www.purposequest.com/articles.htm>. **Why not take some time to go through this process so you can see what really is important to you. Then determine whether or not you are living out what you believe. It is an important but sometimes painful process to confront the gap between what you believe and what you do.**

Timothy had learned these values from his family as they used the word of God as a guide. Family is a great place, perhaps the best place, to learn and impart values. **Is your family a breeding ground for values? How can you do a better job? One way would be to openly discuss and identify your values as a family. Is your church a place where values are presented and discussed?** I certainly hope so.

v. 15 – The holy Scriptures are the foundation for values. You will see how I have made them a part of my personal values statement if you access the article on my site. I incorporated one of my favorite passages into each value I described. Notice that Timothy had known the Scriptures since infancy. That means someone in his household did the work of teaching the Word to him:

I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also (2 Timothy 1:5).

Of course the Scriptures are not enough. You must couple a love for the Word with faith in Jesus:

“You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life” (John 5:39-40).

There is life in the Word because of Jesus. **Are you maximizing your contact with the Word by maximizing your faith in Jesus?**

### Day Two

16 All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, 17 so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

v. 16 – Here is one of the greatest insights into Scripture that we have. It is “God-breathed.” In other words, God instills His very life in the Word, since breath is a sign that someone is living. Here is what Matthew Henry had to say about this verse in his historic and magnificent commentary:

That the scripture was given by inspiration of God appears from the majesty of its style — from the truth, purity, and sublimity, of the doctrines contained in it — from the harmony of its several parts — from its power and efficacy on the minds of multitudes that converse with it — from the accomplishment of many prophecies relating to things beyond all human foresight — and from the uncontrollable miracles that were wrought in proof of its divine original: God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will (see Hebrews 2:4).

The Bible is useful for four things: 1) teaching; 2) rebuking; 3) correcting; 4) training in righteousness. Everything we need to live a godly life and to help others live the same is found in Scripture. **What are you doing to grow in your understanding of the Bible and its doctrines? What are you doing to teach others?**

We have much to say about this, but it is hard to explain because you are slow to learn. In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil (Hebrews 5:11-14).

v. 17 – I have never understood that the Bible can equip me for every good work there is, but for every good work I am supposed to perform.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do (Ephesians 2:8-10).

**Do you know what your good works are, things that God has prepared in advance for you to do? If so, are you doing them? If not, how can you discover them? (hint: you can seek Him and trust that He will show you.)**

### Day Three

1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: 2 Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

v. 1 – Paul set the mood for a solemn declaration and charge to Timothy. He invoked the presence of God and Jesus, which indicates that the two are separate persons, yet both God. What three things will Jesus do? He will judge the living and the dead, He will return to earth for His Second Coming and He will establish His kingdom once and for all. All three of those activities indicate that Jesus is indeed Lord and God.

As Paul concluded his letter, Paul wanted to give Timothy instructions that were clear and urgent. When you give someone a charge, it is a duty or responsibility that they are to take most seriously. Paul wanted Timothy to understand the gravity of what he was about to tell him.

**What is your charge, do you know? What has God given you to do that only you can do, so that, if you don't do it, it won't get done? (That's because no one else can do it like you can do it.)**

v. 2 – **What was the charge?** It was to preach the Word! Timothy wasn't to preach philosophy or social ethics. He wasn't to develop teaching themes that would help people succeed or be happy. He was to preach the word of God! To preach the Word is both a freeing and restrictive exercise. On the one hand, one is free to make a life study of God's word and learn how to impart the truths therein. On the other hand, one is restricted to preach what is in the Word, and not opinions and pet doctrines that may be related to but not contained in the Word.

Timothy was to be prepared in season and out of season. I'm not sure I know what that means, but there are times when people are responsive and you "feel" the power of the Word flowing in and through you. Then there are other times when it doesn't seem or feel like anything is happening at all. I think Paul was urging Timothy to give himself to

the systematic, regular and disciplined study of and instruction from God's word regardless of how or what he felt.

Timothy was to correct, rebuke and encourage. We learned in yesterday's study that the Word is the perfect source for material to carry out those duties. This is why I am back in school at the age of 57. I want to learn more about the Word and how I can more effectively communicate it, whether by speech or writing.

Timothy would be able to do those things if he followed two regular habits: being careful and patient. I have found that just because you have said or written something doesn't mean that people have understood it or even heard it. You must patiently restate your points and themes and even allow people to question them for clarity's sake. That requires patience and an exacting process of getting the point across in a manner that people can comprehend.

**What is your relationship to the Word at this point in your life? Are you growing in your knowledge and understanding? Are you imparting that understanding to others? How? Are they grasping what you are saying? How do you know?**

#### Day Four

3 For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

v. 3 – I am sure this dynamic took place in Timothy's lifetime, where people did not want to entertain sound doctrine, but fantasies. And there would be money to be earned by giving those people what they wanted to hear. I suppose Paul was warning Timothy that his audience isn't his only barometer to determine whether or not he was fulfilling his charge. Audiences can sometimes pick and choose those teachers they want to hear and not the ones they need to hear.

Notice that Paul said men would surround themselves with a great number of teachers who would tell them what they wanted to hear. This is why I try to listen to and read from a wide variety of theological and world perspectives. I don't want to limit myself to those with whom I would agree from the outset.

This is why we must be careful about preaching surveys, which ask people what they want to hear. I think preachers and teachers must teach what the Spirit knows people need to hear and not what the people think they need to hear.

Notice too that Paul said men would gather teachers around themselves. I would think it's the other way around, that teachers gather an audience. Paul, however, saw the tendency that people get and gather the kinds of teachers they want and deserve.

**So who are you favorite teachers, speakers and authors? Do you need to expand your world of who is influencing your life and message?**

v. 4 – When I think of myths, I can't help but think of those who have enriched themselves by publishing myths and fantasies about the return of Jesus. They cloak their beliefs in religious terminology and biblical references, but they are peddling their myths to enrich themselves, not to enrich or edify God's people. The effect of their myths is fear and confusion, and it has hindered the work of world evangelism by causing people to be pessimistic and not optimistic about the Lord's work in the world today.

What's more, people want to read these books because it takes the focus off holiness and puts it on foolish doctrines and speculations about the end times. Ridiculous! All we need to know about the end is summed up in what Jesus said to His disciples when they asked about the doctrine of the future:

So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?" He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:6-8).

**Are you infatuated with end time doctrines and speculation?** If so, I urge you, no, I beg you to cease and desist and rather to study and teach the full gospel and doctrine of the Bible. I don't mind if you read such books about the end, just don't treat or teach them as biblical positions on the subject.

### Day Five

5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. 6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure.

v. 5 – Paul gave more good advice: Keep your head! I think that means maintain your common sense! **Why do some believers think that common sense no longer applies when faith is concerned?** In most cases, the adage "If it's too good to be true, it probably is" applies in Christian circles as well. I have seen many ripped off by scams, making bad business deals, investing in can't-miss schemes and doing other things they ordinarily would not do because those involved were supposedly Christians.

Paul actually gave four directives here: 1) keep your head; 2) endure hardship; 3) do the work; and 4) discharge all your duties. Paul cut Timothy "no slack." He had high standards for Timothy and expected him to perform well no matter what was going on around him or who was failing to do their own work.

**Do you help maintain high standards for other people? Do you maintain high standards for yourself?** These four directives are still good advice for *anyone* involved

in ministry. What are the duties associated with your life and ministry? Paul understood this and wrote:

But I have not used any of these rights. And I am not writing this in the hope that you will do such things for me. I would rather die than have anyone deprive me of this boast. Yet when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, for I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel! If I preach voluntarily, I have a reward; if not voluntarily, I am simply discharging the trust committed to me (1 Corinthians 9:15-17).

**What is your trust? What work would bring woe to you if you did not do it or finish it?**

v. 6 – I have always been intrigued with the simile of a drink offering. I have preached on this verse and carried a glass or bottle of water to the pulpit and then poured it out on the ground while I’m speaking. My point is that a drink offering wasn’t consumed; it was poured on the ground or into the offering fire. Once poured, a drink offering was known and remembered by God and God alone; there was no trace left for anyone to see or evidence of the sacrifice that was made.

Paul was content to be like a drink offering, poured out and then gone without a trace. It seems that Paul thought his end was near, but he had no regrets or remorse. He compared himself to the drink offering in one other place:

But even if I am being poured out like a drink offering on the sacrifice and service coming from your faith, I am glad and rejoice with all of you (Philippians 2:17).

**What if God wants to pour you into a situation where He is the only one who knows that you are being or have been poured out? How would you feel about that? Would you consider it a good investment of your time or life?**

### Day Six

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 8 Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

v. 7 – Paul made three critical statements here. For him to write those things – he fought, he finished, he kept—means that he had to know his course, his race and his faith respectively. Paul was certainly writing like a man who saw that his end, or at least his earthly end, was near. Most believe he was released from the prison where he wrote this letter, only to be arrested a few years later and beheaded.

**So what is your “fight”? What is your race? What is your faith?** Much of this letter to Timothy was a reminder to be a man of purpose and values, and not to let anyone or anything deter him from his mission. Paul was giving the advice that he himself had

followed. That made him one of the most effective men to ever serve the Church of Jesus Christ.

**So how purpose-focused are you? What can you do to be even more focused?** One of the things you can do is say “no” more often. You can’t do everything or even most things, so stop trying. Notice in the passage below how the apostles said “no” to helping the widows and then see how the church continued to grow and prosper because they did. **How can you apply this same principle in your own life?**

In those days when the number of disciples was increasing, the Grecian Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews because their widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. So the Twelve gathered all the disciples together and said, "It would not be right for us to neglect the ministry of the word of God in order to wait on tables. Brothers, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them and will give our attention to prayer and the ministry of the word." This proposal pleased the whole group. They chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit; also Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas from Antioch, a convert to Judaism. They presented these men to the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. So the word of God spread. The number of disciples in Jerusalem increased rapidly, and a large number of priests became obedient to the faith (Acts 6:1-7).

v. 8 – Paul was in store for a crown of righteousness not because he was holy, although he was, but because he had fought, finished and kept. Most believe they will get a crown if they don’t do wrong things; I think you will get one if you do correct things. **Do you agree? God will judge our deeds at the end, and not our non-deeds. Does that make sense?**

Paul indicated that he was no one special, something that is hard for followers not to think. We tend to put our leaders on a pedestal, thinking that they are somehow more spiritual than others. When they don’t fulfill our high and unrealistic expectations, then we can become disillusioned or cynical. But the crown of righteousness awaits anyone and everyone who fights, finished and keeps. **Are you looking forward to your crown? If so, what are you doing that will merit receiving one?**

### Day Seven

9 Do your best to come to me quickly, 10 for Demas, because he loved this world, has deserted me and has gone to Thessalonica. Crescens has gone to Galatia, and Titus to Dalmatia.

v. 9 – The nature of apostolic ministry, of which Paul and Timothy were involved, was one of being together, then being separated to carry out the work and then trying to be reunited. Paul wanted Timothy to come to be with him as quickly as he could. I suppose Paul was lonely in his work and the next verse tells us why. In another letter, here is how Paul described the nature of his work.

What anyone else dares to boast about—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast about. Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they Abraham's descendants? So am I. Are they servants of Christ? (I am out of my mind to talk like this.) I am more. I have worked much harder, been in prison more frequently, been flogged more severely, and been exposed to death again and again. Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked. Besides everything else, I face daily the pressure of my concern for all the churches. Who is weak, and I do not feel weak? Who is led into sin, and I do not inwardly burn? (2 Corinthians 11:21-29).

**So who is on your team? Of whose team are you a part? I am not only referring to church work. Who is on your business team? Education team?**

v. 10 – Demas, whoever he was, had loved the world, deserted Paul and went to Thessalonica. **I wonder what that departure looked like? What did Demas do that warranted the assessment that he had loved the world?**

While I accept Paul's assessment of what happened, I also think that Paul was a difficult man with whom to work. Barnabas left Paul over a dispute with Barnabas' cousin, John Mark. It seems that Paul was perfectly suited for the work he was doing, for he worked best when he was taken in short, intense doses. Anything more or longer than that produced interpersonal tension.

**How do you work best? When do you thrive and when do you shut down in your life and work? Stop fighting who you are and find ways to maximize your strengths and minimize your weaknesses?**

I have mentioned that there are those who call themselves apostles today. I have no problem with that. I just think it's funny that these so-called apostles never go anywhere and, if they do, it's to speak at a conference! Apostles traveled to strengthen churches by their presence, which included but was not limited to speaking.