

*1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. 5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up 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 loved His appearing. 2 Tim 4:1-8*

Paul is coming to the end of his second letter to Timothy and he is nearing the end of his life. He instructs Timothy, his child in the faith, to *preach the word; to be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction*. Timothy was a leader and elder in the Ephesian church. Paul exhorts him to *preach the word of God, (a word, as embodying an idea, the truth of God)*. Timothy was to proclaim openly the truth of the Gospel of Christ. Luke began his gospel stating, he was giving *an account of the things accomplished among us, just as they were handed down to us by those who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and servants of the word. Luke 1:1,2* Luke was being faithful the testimony of Christ as declared by the apostles and this is what Paul desired of Timothy.

This is similar to Paul's exhortation of Timothy to *preach the word. Be ready in season (when the opportunity occurs, when you have a chance) and out of season (out of season, when it is untimely, those times when it is hard to share and your hearers don't seem receptive to the message)*. Paul instructs Timothy to declare the gospel; *reprove (criticise harshly), rebuke (to express disapproval), exhort (parakaleo; to call alongside, counsel, to call near with great patience and instruction)*. The gospel has this edge that makes it lead to repentance and thus turn sinners from behavior that misses the mark. Timothy was a preach but what of normal, ordinary Christians? What of regular, run of the mill, believers? Peter seems to encourage all of us Christians to defend and proclaim our faith.

*15 always being ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, yet with gentleness and reverence; and keep a good conscience so that in the thing in which you are slandered, those who revile your good behavior in Christ will be put to shame. 1 Peter 3:15, 16*

This instruction is important since there is a tendency for believers to be corrupted, to veer from the basic tenants of the Gospel. Paul warns Timothy of Christians who *will not endure sound doctrine, wanting to have their ears tickled*. They will want teachings that will tell them what they want to hear and not in line with sound doctrine. The Gospel of Christ does not tell us how wonderful we are, how we can make ourselves pleasing to God. Instead it teaches of our fallenness, *there is none that does good, no, not one. Rom 3:12 and all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Rom 3:23, 24* Paul wrote Timothy,

*3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths. 5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry. 2 Tim 4:3-5*

Paul warns Timothy that a time is coming when believers will *not endure sound doctrine*. They will embrace *teachers in accordance to their own desires*, according to their own passionate longings and lusts. They will turn to myths (*false accounts, yet posing to be the truth; a fabrication (fable) which subverts (replaces) what is actually true*. Strong's). Believers will turn to fables, myths and stories that aren't true. True believers are not to embrace these myths. Peter wrote, *16 For we did not follow cleverly devised tales (myths) when we made known to you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we were eyewitnesses of His majesty. 2 Peter 1:16* These myths existed in *Jewish theosophists (mystics)* (Greek *theos* "god(s)" and *sophia* "wisdom", thus meaning "god-wisdom", "divine wisdom", or "wisdom of God" and *Gnostics, especially concerning the emanations and orders of the aeons Thayer*. Gnosticism was early deviation, a myth, a prominent heretical movement of the 2nd-century Christian Church, partly of pre-Christian origin.

Paul wrote earlier in this book for Timothy to put believers in remembrance of these things, *charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers. 15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. 2 Tim 2:14,15* Timothy was encouraged to study so that he could *rightly dividing the word of truth*, so that he could keep those he ministered to in line with correct truth. Paul is attempting to pass on the truth to Timothy, his child in the faith. As Jude encourages *to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints. Jude 1:3* Paul tells Timothy to *be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry*. Finally he tells Timothy three things: 1) be sober, *in the N. T. everywhere tropically, to be calm and collected in spirit; to be temperate, dispassionate, circumspect*. 2) endure hardships, be willing to suffer (*endure*) evils (*hardship, troubles*) and 3) work as an evangelist, be a *bringer of good tidings, a truth teller*. By living this way Timothy would *fulfill his ministry*.

We have here the encouragements of a spiritual father to his child in the faith. It is fitting because these are Paul's final instructions to Timothy in a written letter. This is important because Paul is *already being poured out as a drink offering*. His time of death is near and at this point he wants Timothy to understand Paul's faithful witness for the Lord. He writes,

*6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. 7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith; 8 in the future there is laid up 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 loved His appearing. 2 Tim 4:6-8*

Paul wants Timothy to do as he has done. Paul has fought a good fight, he is finishing his course and he has kept the faith. As a Christian it matters how we live, we are to do our utmost for God's highest design for our lives. This letter has the spiritual father appealing to his child in the faith. Paul warns and instructs Timothy on proper behavior and instruction but he knows that his greatest appeal is the record of his life. He is convince that an award is waiting for him. Earlier in this book Paul wrote this to Timothy,

*For this reason I also suffer these things, but I am not ashamed; for I know whom I have believed and I am convinced that He is able to guard what I have entrusted to Him until that day. 2 Tim 1:12*

May we all have a testimony like Paul. So we can say, we have finished race knowing that in due season we will reap. As parent, teachers, children and friends let us all do the work of the evangelist. *Let us not lose heart in doing good, for in due time we will reap if we do not grow weary. Gal 6:9*