

THE PASTORAL EPISTLES

God's Vision for the Church as His Faithful Family

Week 13: Fidelity Until The End

O God, almighty and merciful, you heal the broken-hearted, and turn the sadness of the sorrowful to joy, let your fatherly goodness be upon all whom you have made Remember in pity all those who are this day destitute, homeless, elderly, infirm, or forgotten. Bless the multitude of your poor. Lift up those who are cast down. Mightily befriend innocent sufferers, and sanctify to them the endurance of their wrongs. Cheer with hope all who are discouraged and downcast, and by your heavenly grace preserve from falling those whose property tempt them to sin. Though they be troubled on every side, suffer them not to be distressed; though they be perplexed, save them from despair. Grant this, O Lord, for the love of him who for our sakes became poor, your Son our Savior Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

COLLECT FOR

**THE DISCOURAGED
AND DOWNCAST**

FIDELITY UNTIL
THE END

On Last Words

In a sense, our lives include many last words: the last words we share before going to sleep, or on a voyage, the last words we speak in this class session, this semester, or this career, the last words we say to this person or that person, and so forth. Each parting statement has at least a faint resonance with the final parting... Separation points are also points of emotional vulnerability and cognitive instability. They are occasions when one often wants to say—and hear—reassuring words.

– Robert Kastenbaum, “Last Words,” *The Monist*, Vol 76, issue 2, 1 April 1993

FIDELITY UNTIL
THE END

Outline

- St. Paul's Last Charge (2 Tim 4.1–5)
- St. Paul's Last Reward (2 Tim 4.6–8)
- St. Paul's Last Wishes (2 Tim 4.9–18, 21a)
- St. Paul's Last Word (2 Tim 4.22)

ST. PAUL'S LAST CHARGE

- **The Final Charge: Preach the Word**
- **The Reason for Urgency**

ST. PAUL'S LAST CHARGE

> **The Final Charge: Preach the Word**

The Reason for Urgency

2 Timothy 4.1–2

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable, convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.

ST. PAUL'S LAST CHARGE

> **The Final Charge: Preach the Word**

The Reason for Urgency

Coram Deo

- In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus
- who is to judge the living and the dead
- in view of his appearing and his kingdom,
- I solemnly urge you...

Preach the word! Be ready, regardless of whether the time is favorable or unfavorable. Convince, rebuke, and encourage. Do all this with the utmost patience and teaching. (my translation)

ST. PAUL'S LAST CHARGE

The Final Charge: Preach the Word

> **The Reason for Urgency**

2 Timothy 4.3–5

For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

ST. PAUL'S LAST REWARD

ST. PAUL'S LAST REWARD

2 Timothy 4.6–8

I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have loved his appearing.

ST. PAUL'S LAST REWARD

2 Timothy 4.6–8

- “The time of my departure has come”
- Allusions to the soldier, athlete (and farmer?) from 2 Timothy 2.3–8:
 - “I have fought the good fight”
 - “I have finished the race”
 - “I have kept the faith”
- St. Paul’s reward: the Crown of Righteousness

ST. PAUL'S LAST WISHES

ST. PAUL'S LAST WISHES

2 Timothy 4.9–18, 21a

Do your best to come to me soon, for Demas, in love with this present world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful in my ministry. I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus. When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas, also the books, and above all the parchments. Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; the Lord will pay him back for his deeds. You also must beware of him, for he strongly opposed our message.

(verses 9–15)

ST. PAUL'S LAST WISHES

2 Timothy 4.9–18, 21a

At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed, and all the Gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Do your best to come before winter.

(verses 16–18, 21a)

ST. PAUL'S LAST WORD

ST. PAUL'S LAST WISHES

2 Timothy 4.22

The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

ST. PAUL'S LAST WISHES

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me.

I once was lost, but now I am found,
was blind, but now I see.

'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved.

How precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come,

'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
and grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me;
his word my hope secures;

He will my shield and portion be,
as long as life endures.

Yea, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
and mortal life shall cease,

I shall possess within the veil
a life of joy and peace.

When we've been there ten thousand years
bright shining as the sun,

we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we've first begun.

TODAY'S SOURCES

- Robert Kasenbaum, “Last Words,” *The Monist*, Vol 76, No. 2 (April 1993).
- William D. Mounce, *Pastoral Epistles*. Vol. 46 in Word Biblical Commentary.