

2 Timothy 4:1-5
Maintaining Godward Perspective in Ministry

Introduction: We have arrived at the last 22 recorded verses of the apostle Paul. What will he say? What needs to be impressed upon Timothy's heart? Paul knows his own ministry has come to an end. Paul gives Timothy 9 commands.

1) Paul reminds Timothy that this is serious business—4:1

- a) A sobering charge: ¹ *I* (emphatic) *solemnly charge you*,
 - i) This is as serious as it gets, Timothy.
- b) A sobering connection: *therefore*,
 - i) Because the Word of God is able to make you wise unto salvation through faith that is in Christ Jesus. (cf. 3:15)
 - ii) Because the Word of God is sufficient to enable you to meet all the demands life and ministry throw at you. (cf. 3:16-17)1
- c) A sobering Witness (es): *before/in the sight of God and/even [kai,] the Lord Jesus Christ*,
 - This may be interpreted to emphasize the deity of Jesus Christ. If Timothy fails to do as Paul commands him, Jesus will witness against him!
 - i) Jesus is the imminent, inevitable Judge: *who is about to judge the living and the dead*, (those who are alive or dead when He returns)
(1) Cf. John 5:22, 27; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 1 Pet. 4:5
 - ii) Jesus is the glorious King: *in accordance with/at the time of [kata,] His appearing/becoming visible and His kingdom*:
 - Majority text reads kata,, Critical text reads kai,,
(1) Note the future nature of His kingdom

2) Timothy is responsible to fulfill this 5-fold charge—4:2

- a) What are the five commands?
 - i) Prioritize the public announcing of the Gospel: ² **proclaim** [khru,ssw] *the word*,
 - (1) This is the work of an evangelist (cf. 4:5).
 - (2) Because all Scripture is inspired and sufficient
 - (3) The kh/rux had no authority of his own and no message of his own. He was sent by his Master to communicate His message.
 - ii) Always be prepared for ministry: **be** (stand) **ready** [evfi,sthmi]
 - (1) *whether convenient* [euvkai,rwj] *or inconvenient*, [avkai,rwj]
 - (2) People will not also rejoice in what you have to say from God's Word.
 - iii) Successfully expose sin: **reprove**, [evle,gcw] (cf. 3:16)
 - iv) Strongly disapprove of sin: **reprimand**, [evpitima,w]
 - (1) Stand up to your hearers.
 - v) Come alongside and say what needs to be said: **exhort/encourage** [parakale,w]

- b) How is Timothy to do these 5 things?
- i) Respond to people with the right **manner**: *in all patience* [makroqumi,a]
 - ii) Respond to people with the right **content**: *and teaching*. [didach,]
- 3) **Paul shows Timothy why these things are necessary—4:3-4** ³ *Because ...*
- a) The guarantee: *there will be a time ...*
 - i) Paul gives a prophesy concerning the future
 - b) Their guilt is described:
 - i) They will intolerantly evaluate: *when they will not put up with* [avne,comai] *sound/healthy teaching*,
 - (1) People who reject healthy teaching are spiritually sick.
 - ii) They will indiscriminately stockpile: *but they will accumulate* [evpismwreu,w] *to themselves teachers*,
 - (1) They have set up their own standard: *in conformity to their own desires, while having a desire to hear what they want to hear*.
 - (2) They have an insatiable curiosity, a full-time job like scratching a dog's ears. There will always be teachers/pastors who will want to give people what they think the people want to know. Church growth surveys, etc. One sees this is the ceaseless succession of pastor after pastor, lasting 3 years on the average. One also sees this in those who hop from church to church, always finding problems with the church and never themselves.
 - iii) They will intentionally abandon reality: ⁴ *And on the one hand* [me,n], *they will turn away* [avpostre,fw] **from hearing the truth**/reality, (emphatic)
 - iv) They will inadvertently exchange fact for fiction: *and on the other hand* [de,], *they will be dislocated* [evktre,pw] *to fictional fables*.
 - (1) Pastor John Kitchen says it this way: Turn yourself away from God-defined truth and you unavoidably find yourself full-face before a fanciful, make-believe world constructed of your wishes and wants, but without substance and support of reality.
 - c) It is the pastor's solemn responsibility to feed and warn the flock.
- 4) **Paul shows Timothy a stark contrast—4:5** ⁵ **But you**, (emphatic, Timothy)
- a) Control your inordinate emotions: **be clear-headed** [nh,fw] *in everything*,
 - i) Don't get overly excited, don't get overly discouraged, don't pursue the latest novel trend, don't fall under the influence of what's cool right now.
 - b) Be willing to suffer emotional pain: **endure hardship**, [kakopaqe,w]
 - i) Suffering is part of pastoral ministry. (cf. 1:8; 2:3, 9) Hardship may be the divine slap in the face that keeps us clear-headed in ministry. (Kitchen)
 - c) Faithfully dispense the Good News: **do** [poie,w] *the work of an evangelist*,
 - i) Timothy was not a pastor, but an apostolic representative/pioneer church planter.
 - ii) Cf. this office in Eph. 4:11. To present the Gospel to unbelievers and to equip believers to do the same.

- iii) During times of persecution, being an evangelist can be dangerous.
- d) Finish your responsibilities: **complete** [plhrofore,w] *your ministry*.
 - i) Don't go half-way and quit; leave nothing undone.
 - ii) Do the ministry God has given to you, not someone else's ministry.

5) Things we need to remember:

- a) How well do you think Jesus will do as your Judge? (McCune)
 - i) He is the all-knowing and all-wise God (cf. Col. 2:3)
 - ii) He is genuine and perfect man, understanding human life "from the inside" by personal experience. (cf. John 5:27; Heb. 2:17-18)
 - iii) He is the only mediator between God and man. (cf. 1 Tim. 2:5)

2 Timothy 4:6-8
Godward Perspective of the Future

Introduction:

- 1) **Present: I am ready to go—4:6** Paul's example of completing his ministry
 - a) Sacrifice illustration (Num. 15:1-10): ⁶ *For I (emphatic) am already being poured out as a drink offering* [pres. pass. ind. spe,ndw],
 - i) Paul had earlier anticipated this process (Phil. 2:17).
 - ii) This was the final act of the entire sacrificial ceremony. Paul reminds each of us live our life as a sacrifice to God. (Rom. 12:1-2)
 - b) Travel illustration: *and the time of my departure/loosening the ropes (of a ship or tent) [avna,lusij] has arrived* [pf. act. ind. evfi,sthmi].
 - i) Cf. Phil. 1:23; 2 Tim. 4:6
- 2) **Past: I made it to the end by God's grace—4:7**
 - Note the absence of winning, being first, etc. The emphasis is on completing one's task.
 - a) Wrestling/boxing illustration: ⁷ *I have competed in* [pf. mid. ind. avgwni,zomai] **the good** [kalo,j] **contest** [avgw,n], (emphatic)
 - i) Cf. 1 Tim. 6:12
 - ii) The contest is good because it is for God's glory and our good.
 - b) Running illustration: *I have completed* [pf. act. ind. tele,w] **the race course** [dro,moj], (emphatic)
 - i) Jesus ran the race course first: cf. John 19:30; Heb. 6:20
 - ii) Paul's goal was to finish: cf. Acts 20:24
 - iii) Our goal is the same: Heb. 12:1-3
 - c) Stewardship/guard illustration: *I have kept* [pf. act. ind. thre,w] **the faith** [pi,stij]. (emphatic)
 - i) The objective body of faith entrusted to Paul by God.
- 3) **Future: I am confident Jesus Christ Himself will reward me—4:8**
 - a) Paul clearly anticipates a reward for serving Christ: ⁸ *In the future there is reserved/safely stored away* [pres. mid. ind. avpo,keimai] *for me the reward* [ste,fanoj] *of righteousness*
 - i) There are 5 specific rewards/crowns mentioned in the NT:
 - (1) An incorruptible crown for leading a disciplined life—1 Cor. 9:25
 - (2) A crown of rejoicing for evangelism/discipleship—1 Thess. 2:19
 - (3) A crown of righteousness for loving His appearing—2 Tim. 4:8
 - (4) A crown of life for enduring trials—James 1:12; Rev. 2:10
 - (5) A crown of glory for shepherding God's flock faithfully—1 Pet. 5:4
 - ii) The crown of righteousness could be:
 - (1) A reward for righteous living as God's child
 - (2) A reward consisting of eternal righteousness

- (3) A reward that is righteous because it comes from a righteous Judge.
- b) Christ will reward Paul accurately: *which (reward) the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award* [fut. act. ind. avpodi,dwmi] *to me in that day—*
 - i) This is a specific time in the future: 1:12, 18
 - ii) This is a delegated responsibility for Jesus: John 5:22; Acts 17:31; 2 Tim. 4:1
 - (1) Jesus will do this judging in perfect conformity to the Father's standard.
 - c) Christ will reward all who have loved the return of Christ: *and not to me only but to all* (including you, Timothy) *who have loved* [pf. act. ptc. avgapa,w] *His appearing* [evpifa,neia].
 - i) Cf. Phil. 3:20-21; Titus 2:13
- 4) Things we need to remember:** (based on remarks by pastor John Kitchen)
- a) Death is the final act of faith for the believer.
 - b) God never allows faithfulness to go unrewarded.

2 Timothy 4:9-15
Godward View of Individuals in Ministry

Introduction:

- 1) **Get here as soon as you can, Timothy: 4:9-12** ⁹ *Make every effort to come to me without delay*, (before winter, cf. 1:4; 4:21)
 - Because [ga,r] I am alone, except for Luke
 - This trip would cost much financially, in time, and personal safety
 - a) Some were short-sighted; Demas has discarded me: ¹⁰ *because Demas has abandoned [evgkatalei,pw] me*,
 - i) Why did Demas do this? *since he loved [avgapa,w] the present age*,
 - (1) With its values, beliefs, and morals in contrast to God's.
 - (2) He had once served God (cf. Col. 4:14; Phm. 1:24)
 - ii) Where did Demas go? *and has departed [poreu,omai] for Thessalonica*. (the capital of Macedonia)
 - b) Some have been re-deployed to important responsibilities; two other coworkers have left:
 - i) *Crescens has departed for Galatia/modern Turkey*,
 - ii) *Titus to Dalmatia/modern Croatia, Bosnia, and Herzegovina*.
 - (1) Apparently after setting things in order on Crete (cf. Titus 1:5)
 - c) Luke is still here: ¹¹ *Only Luke* (emphatic) *is with me*.
 - i) Perhaps Luke needs encouragement being all alone?
 - d) Some have grown significantly; bring Mark with you: *Pick up Mark and bring him with you*,
 - i) *because [ga,r] he is useful [eu;crhstoj] to me in ministry*. (cf. Phm. 1:11)
 - ii) What a change in both Mark and Paul (cf. Acts 13:13; 15:36-41)
 - e) Another coworker has left: ¹² *And Tychicus I have sent [avposte,llw] to Ephesus*.
 - i) Cf. Acts 20:4; Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7; Titus 3:12
 - ii) Perhaps to carry this letter and to temporarily take Timothy's place.
- 2) **Don't forget to bring specific things with you, Timothy: 4:13** ¹³ *When you come, bring*
 - a) Physical concerns; winter clothes: *the cloak/poncho that I left in Troas with Carpus*,
 - i) It is not inherently unspiritual to desire some physical comfort.
 - b) Mental/spiritual concerns; things to read and study: *as well as the* (cheaper papyrus) *scrolls [bibli,on]*, *especially the parchments/more expensive animal skins, vellum [membra,na]*.
 - i) These were probably copies of the Scriptures.
 - ii) It is not inherently unspiritual or impractical to want intellectual stimulation.

3) There are still dangerous people out there, Timothy: 4:14-15

- a) A realistic report: ¹⁴ *Alexander the metalworker/blacksmith did/exhibited great harm to me.*
 - i) Perhaps during one of Paul's legal proceedings.
- b) A Godward faith demonstrated in prayer: *May the Lord* (Christ the righteous Judge, 4:8) *reward* [avpodi,dwmi] *him according to* [kata,] *his works.*
 - Some MSS have this as a future (a prophecy), not an optative (a prayer)
 - i) This is not a desire for personal revenge. (cf. Ps. 28:4; Rom. 12:19; 2 Thess. 1:5-9)
 - ii) Consider other "imprecatory prayers" in the NT: 1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:8-9
 - McCune notes:
 - (1) This demonstrates a spirit of meekness and deference to God as the ultimate judge.
 - (2) A God-like, holy hatred of evil.
 - (3) A desire for God's vindication, not personal vindictiveness.
 - (4) Faith and confession that God will certainly judge the resolutely wicked.
- c) A reasonable precaution to a known threat: ¹⁵ **You** (emphatic) must *also guard yourself* [fula,ssw] *against him*
 - i) Why? *because* [ga,r] *he strongly opposed* [avnqi,sthmi] *our words.* (cf. 3:8)

4) Things we need to remember:

- a) We may never know if Timothy made it in time.
- b) Pastor John Kitchen reminds us: there is always a place in God's service for those who are willing to do God's will without recognition.
- c) Loneliness is ministry is a real challenge.

2 Timothy 4:16-18
Godward View of Christ's Faithfulness

Introduction:

1) Here's how things went for me in my first trial: 4:16

- a) Paul does not hide the uncomfortable truth: ¹⁶ *In my first defense* [avpologi,a] *no one supported/*came together with *me* [sumparagi,nomai],
- Probably a reference to his preliminary public hearing.
- i) *but* [avlla,] **everyone** (emphatic) *abandoned* [evgkatalei,pw] *me*.
- (1) Same word as what Demas did (cf. 4:10)
 - (2) Apparently, those who did have the social and political clout chose not to assist Paul during this trial.
 - (3) Timothy was with him during his first imprisonment (cf. Phil. 1:1)
- b) Paul understands and offers a negative prayer request concerning the weakness of people: *May it not be reckoned/*attributed to their account *against* [logi,zomai] **them** (emphatic).
- i) Cf. Jesus (Luke 23:34) and Stephen (Acts 7:60)
 - ii) This is Paul choosing to exercise mercy, but not excusing their behavior.

2) Christ's faithful preservation contrasted with human infidelity—4:17-18

- a) The past preserving work of Christ: ¹⁷ *But the Lord ...*
- i) Did what?
 - (1) The presence of Christ: *stood with* [aor. act. ind. pari,sthmi] **me** (emphatic)d
 - (a) In contrast to the people who abandoned Paul.
 - (2) The strength of Christ: *and enabled* [aor. act. ind. evndunamo,w] *me*,
 - (a) Cf. 2:1; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 4:13
 - ii) Why? *so that* [i[na] ...
 - (1) *through* [dia,] *me the message* [kh,rugma] *might be completely fulfilled* [aor. pass. subj. plhrofore,w],
 - (a) God's grace in Paul's suffering led to more opportunities to share the Gospel.
 - (b) Remember what Paul had told Timothy in 4:5, 7.
 - (2) *and all the Gentiles/people groups might hear* [aor. act. subj. avkou,w].
 - (a) The opportunity to hear the Gospel was given to a wider audience.
 - iii) *And so I was rescued* [aor. pass. ind. r`u,omai] *out of the mouth of the lion*.
 - (1) Cf. Ps. 22:21
- b) The future preserving work of Christ: ¹⁸ *And the Lord ...* (cf. 1:12)
- i) Negative context: *will rescue* [fut. dep. ind. r`u,omai] *me from* [avpo,] *every evil work*
 - (1) Perhaps a reference to the disciples' prayer in Matt. 6:13
 - ii) Positive context: *and will deliver me safely* [fut. act. ind. sw,zw] *into* [eiv] *His heavenly kingdom*. (cf. 4:1)

(1) A reference to the heavenly origin of His future earthly kingdom. Paul did not view himself as being presently in the kingdom.

3) Christ is worthy of being eternally glorified—4:18

- a) *To Whom be the glory/honor, esteem unto [eivj] the ages of the ages. Amen.*
 - i) This emphasizes the deity of Jesus Christ.
- b) Christ-centered hope produces doxology.

4) Things we need to remember:

- a) The underlying idea of ... eternal security is the promise and guarantee to be forever kept by God in a state of protection and safety from sin and Satan. This begins at the moment of saving faith and is eternally unending. The *true believer's* redemption is never jeopardized, nor can it even be justly called into question because it is guarded by the self-contained, infinite God of the Bible. (McCune)
- b) It is when others prove unreliable that we come to understand the faithfulness of Christ more fully.
- c) We should treat others with the mercy that we ourselves expect when we fail.

2 Timothy 4:19-22
Expressing Godward Concern for Others

Introduction:

1) Paul expresses his concern for individuals—4:19-21

- a) ¹⁹ *Greet* ... 2 families in particular
 - i) A husband and wife with Latin names: *Prisca/Priscilla and Aquila*,
 - (1) Co-workers, Aquila was originally from Pontus (northern Turkey; Acts 18:2), who had risked their lives for the Gospel (Rom. 16:3-4). Paul first met them in Corinth @ 16 years earlier after they had been kicked out of Rome (Acts 18:2-3).
 - ii) *and the household of Onesiphorus*.
 - (1) Cf. 1:16-18
- b) You need to know about 2 men
 - i) ²⁰ *Erastus has remained in Corinth*,
 - (1) A co-worker, possibly the city treasurer originally from Corinth (Rom. 16:23)
 - ii) *but Trophimus, being sick, I have left in Miletus* (30 miles south of Ephesus).
 - (1) A co-worker, originally from Ephesus (cf. Acts 21:29)
 - (2) Note the decline of miraculous healings during apostolic times:
 - (a) Epaphroditus was not healed (Phil. 2:27, 60 AD)
 - (b) Timothy was not healed (1 Tim. 5:23, 62-64 AD)
 - (c) Trophimus was not healed (2 Tim. 4:20, 66-67 AD)
 - ii) *but Trophimus, being sick, I have left in Miletus* (30 miles south of Ephesus).
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 - (c) Trophimus was not healed (2 Tim. 4:20, 66-67 AD)
- c) Hurry! ²¹ *Make every effort to come before winter*.
 - i) Travel was stopped during the winter months (Nov. 10 – March 10), and very difficult during Sept. 15-Nov. 10 and March 11-May 26.
- d) Greetings to you, Timothy
 - i) *Eubulus greets you*,
 - (1) A co-worker, from the Roman congregation
 - ii) Two additional men with Latin names: *as do* ...
 - (1) *Pudens*
 - (2) *and Linus*
 - (a) Linus is said to have been a pastor in Rome after the death of the apostles.
 - iii) A woman: *and Claudia*
 - iv) The Roman congregation: *and all the brothers*.

2) Paul's expresses his prayerful desires for Timothy and the Ephesian church—4:22

- a) The presence of Christ for the individual: ²² *The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit*.
 - i) Paul is asking that Timothy be practically aware of the actual presence of Christ. (cf. 4:17)

- b) The grace of God for the entire congregation: *Grace be with you^{pl} all. Amen.*
 - i) Because God is gracious (cf. Exod. 34:6; 1 Pet. 5:10)
- c) It is not necessary for prayers to be long.

3) Things we need to remember:

- a) Individuals matter to God. and should matter to us.
- b) Women were essential to Paul's ministry and to the local church.
- c) It is not wrong to long for some physical comfort while trusting God to provide for our physical and spiritual needs.