

Hope Reflecting Out of a Roman Dungeon

2 Timothy 4:9-18

As Paul passed the baton of ministry to Timothy, he urgently called him to preach and teach the God-Breathed Word of God, to preach and teach the Bible. (2 Timothy 4:2, 5)

Paul was lonely and longed to see his closest friend, Timothy. He wanted him to come quickly, bring his cloak so he could keep warm and he requested his books which almost certainly refer to the Scriptures. Paul wanted his friend, his cloak and God's Word. (2 Timothy 4:9-18)

1. In life and Gospel ministry: Paul knew that he'd reached the finish line.

Paul knew that that his time was short. (2 Timothy 4:6-7, Acts 20:24, 2 Timothy 4:9)

Paul was standing at the finish line of life and eagerly looking forward to his heavenly reward.

How did Paul make it to the finish line? (2 Corinthians 4:16-18, 18)

Standing at the finish line, he says to Timothy (and all of us) – *I've made it to the finish. You make it too. Don't drop out of the race! Persevere!*

2. Paul asks Timothy to come and bring: Mark, his cloak and his scrolls. (2 Timothy 4:9, 21, 1:4)

When we look at maps and names, we're reminded – *Ministry involves people, Paul had a team who served with him.* We're looking at – *Real people. Real times. Real places.*

A former companion of Paul named Demas left and his departure wasn't for good reasons. This was abandonment. Demas started off well but didn't finish well. Mark started off a failure and ended well. It's possible to start off well and end in disaster. It's also possible to start off in failure and end well. (2 Timothy 2:10, James 4:4, Colossians 4:14)

In the final days of his life Paul hungered for God's Word. Ask – *Do I hunger for God's Word?* As he faced the end of life – he longed to see his close friend, he wanted his cloak to keep warm and he desired to be fed by the Scriptures. (2 Timothy 4:13, Psalm 119:103)

3. Timothy needed to beware of Alexander, the coppersmith.

(2 Timothy 4:14-15, 1 Timothy 1:20)

We need to be willing to suffer persecution. However, we shouldn't go looking for it and if Alexander did Paul great harm, then Timothy should beware. Paul was confident that God would ultimately deal with Alexander. When it feels like evil is winning remember this is not the end of the story! (2 Timothy 4:14, Matthew 6:27, Romans 2:6)

There is no glory in seeking suffering and persecution but when these realities find us, we can be confident that God will take care of it. The Gospel always has enemies and God will deal with them. (Matthew 10:16, Romans 12:19)

4. At his first defense Paul was simultaneously alone and not alone. God strengthened him and the Gospel was preached.

Paul preached the Gospel to the court in Rome. He seized the opportunity. Paul was committed to reaching his persecutors with the Gospel! (2 Timothy 4:16-18, Mark 14:50, 2 Timothy 4:16, Hebrews 13:5, Mark 13:11, 2 Timothy 4:2)

Paul expresses his complete confidence in his coming heavenly reward. God will keep those who belong to Him and bring them safely to their heavenly inheritance. Embracing our security in Christ is gloriously perspective transforming. (2 Timothy 4:18)

Paul tells his closest friend, Timothy – *I want to see you, come quickly!* (2 Timothy 4:21, 22)

In 2 Timothy we're called to courage instead of timidity when the Gospel is opposed. Here we see this lived out as Paul preached the Gospel before the Roman court.

2 Timothy shows us the realities of suffering and persecution. Here at the end of the letter we see that Paul was suffering intense persecution and expected to die for the Gospel.

In 2 Timothy we're called to hold tightly to the Word of God. And at the end of his life, Paul asked for (ESV, vs 14) – *...my scrolls, especially the parchments.* (2 Timothy 4:18)