

“THE FINAL WORDS OF A FAITHFUL SERVANT”

2 TIM. 4:1-8

These are the apostle’s final words to Timothy, his son in the faith. It was written just before his martyrdom at the hands of Nero, the Roman Emperor. (v. 6) It gives us a clear pattern for Christians to follow in their service for the Lord.

1. The Reminders for a Faithful Servant (v. 1)

Paul charged Timothy before God and the Lord Jesus Christ. This charge was given in the light of having to give an account to the Lord in a future Day. Believers will have to give an account at the judgment seat of Christ, which will take place after His appearing for the Church. (Heb. 9:28). Unbelievers will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgment after Christ’s millennial reign.

2. The Responsibilities of A Faithful Servant (v. 2)

Keep preaching the Word – not stories, but the Word of God which is able to change lives. (James 1:18; Heb. 4:12). Be instant in season or out of season (whether it is convenient or not) ready to make good on the opportunities that come our way or that we cause to happen. Four actions to take—two are negative and two are positive: convince and rebuke and exhort and teach.

3. The Reasons for a Faithful Servant (vv. 3-4)

There will be a need for the faithful proclamation of the Word in the light of the widespread apostasy in the last days. (2 Tim. 3) Sound doctrine will not be endured and because of their desire to hear false doctrine they will heap up to themselves a plethora of false teachers who will turn away many from the truth, hence the need for faithful servants to teach a true message.

4. The Requirements of a Faithful Servant (vv. 5-7)

For this to be accomplished there are some requirements that need to be demonstrated by the faithful servant. It requires watchfulness in all things so that there is no disqualification. (1 Cor. 9:27). There

needs to be perseverance in trial and affliction; there needs to be an ongoing evangelistic mindset (regardless of our spiritual gift); and there needs to be a determination to fulfill the ministry that the Lord has called us to. Paul understood that his days were numbered and that he was nearing the end of his life.

(v. 6) He sensed he was already being poured out as a drink offering—the final offering that followed the burnt offering. His departure was close to hand. He fought a good fight—not a commentary on his own faithfulness—but a battle worth fighting for. He had finished His course (understanding that the Lord had a course for Him to run, a course that he hoped he would finish - Acts 20:24) and now could say to the glory of God that he had finished. He faithfully kept the faith as it was received from the Lord (cp. 1 Cor. 11:23) and passed on to others.

5. The Reward of a Faithful Servant (v. 8)

Paul knew from the Scriptures that there awaited him a crown of righteousness (one of five listed in the NT) for the regular practice of looking for and eagerly anticipating the return of the Lord, a promise that applies to all who do the same (Phil. 3:20-21; 1 Thess. 1:10; Titus 2:11; Heb. 9:28) and which will be realized at the judgment seat of Christ.

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Questions to ask:

1. Are we faithfully following the pattern for faithful service that the Lord has given us from this passage?
2. Are there any items that are keeping us from fulfilling our ministry in the Lord?
3. Are we doing both things –convincing and rebuking, as well as exhorting and teaching?

4. Have we realized that we will give an account to the Lord at the Judgment Seat of Christ in regard to use of our spiritual gifts and talents?
5. Are we eagerly looking for the Lord's return daily?