

Letters to Lead By

2 TIMOTHY 4:1–8

FIRST DAY: Introduction

It is God's Word alone that is God-breathed! It is God's Word that is able to lead us to salvation through Jesus Christ. It is God's Word that is profitable for doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness. It is God's Word that is able to thoroughly equip us for every good work. There are forces all around us that are trying to deter us, distract us, and detour us from God's Word in order to keep us from its power and strength working in us. Therefore, it is essential that we keep God's Word as the central focus and authority of our lives!

As Paul neared the inevitable day of his execution by Emperor Nero, he gave Timothy a strong charge to keep the Word of God first and foremost in his life and ministry. Paul warned Timothy that this would require constant maintenance, and at times, it would directly conflict with those in opposition to the authority of God's Word.

The atmosphere surrounding the Word of God has not changed in the centuries since Paul's charge to Timothy. There are still many who want to lure believers away from the authority of the Bible by putting an emphasis on feelings, stories, and entertainment. Therefore, Paul's charge to Timothy is extremely applicable to us today! We also need to be vigilant to keep the Bible as the ultimate authority over our lives.

*Ask God to show you any area where God's Word
is not the authority in your life.*

SECOND DAY: Read 2 Timothy 4:1–2

1. Having reminded Timothy concerning the great power of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:15–17), Paul then gave Timothy a solemn *charge*. Before Whom was this *charge* made? 2 Timothy 4:1a

a. From 2 Timothy 4:1b, record Paul’s description of Jesus in this *charge*.

(1) How does this accentuate the solemnity of his *charge*?

b. The Greek word used for *charge* is the same word used in 1 Timothy 5:21; it refers to testifying under oath. What does this convey to you about the fact that Paul **charged** Timothy rather than simply encouraged him?

2. From 2 Timothy 4:2a, record Paul’s three-word *charge* to Timothy:

a. _____ !

b. The Greek word for *preach* is *kerusso*. It has the sense of proclaiming or announcing openly like a herald. A herald was commissioned by a ruler and not allowed to negotiate. What does this suggest to you?

3. According to 2 Timothy 4:2b, when was Timothy to *be ready*?

a. Link this with 1 Peter 3:15 and share your thoughts.

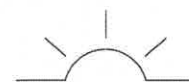
4. Use 2 Timothy 4:2c to explain in the chart below the specific means by which Timothy was to *preach the Word*:

WORD	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE
<i>Convince</i>		
<i>Rebuke</i>		
<i>Exhort</i>		

a. What attitude was Timothy to exemplify in his *teaching*?
2 Timothy 4:2d

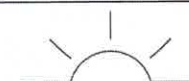
(1) Why do you think this was needful?

5. Drawing from your study today, why do you think it is essential for believers to be constantly exhorted by God's Word?



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Long-suffering in Greek denotes *divine patience* and is used concerning God (Romans 2:4; 1 Peter 3:20; and 2 Peter 3:9, 15). It is also listed as a fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22.



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Rebuke is the Greek word *epitimaui*; it is used twenty-seven times in the gospels in reference to the work of the Lord. Jesus rebuked storms, demons, fevers, and even His disciples. The word means *a threatening command, warning, or correction*.

THIRD DAY: Read 2 Timothy 4:3–5

1. To underscore the importance of preaching the Word, Paul warned Timothy of what he would be up against in the *time* to come. From 2 Timothy 4:3–4, comment on the following:

a. *They will not endure sound doctrine*

b. *Their own desires*

c. *Itching ears*

d. *Heap up for themselves teachers*

e. *Turn their ears away from truth*

f. *Turned aside to fables*

(1) Notice the dynamic nature of these actions. What does this imply?

**FOOD FOR THOUGHT**

In Timothy's day, there were teachers and philosophers called *sophists* who traveled from city to city offering to teach clever or false arguments for pay.

2. In contrast to those who would *not endure sound doctrine*, Paul gave Timothy four directives. Use 2 Timothy 4:5 to fill in the blanks with these directives:

a. *But you be _____ in _____ things*

(1) The Greek word used for *watchful* can also be translated *sober, calm, and collected in spirit*. Why do you think Timothy needed this as a pastor?

(2) In the times in which we live, why is this an important word for Christians? See also 1 Peter 5:8.

b. *Endure _____*

(1) Use Romans 5:3–5 and James 5:11 to remark on the hope that endurance gives the believer.

c. *Do the _____ of an _____*

(1) Why do you think this is important?

d. _____ *your* _____



FOOD FOR THOUGHT

In the Bible, only Philip is identified as an evangelist (Acts 21:8). However, we are all called to *do the work of an evangelist*.

(1) God has called every believer to a ministry. Read 1 Peter 4:10–11 and share how this speaks to you.

3. How is today's study applicable to the days in which we are living?

FOURTH DAY: Read 2 Timothy 4:6–7

1. Paul knew his death was imminent and stated he was *already being poured out as a drink offering* (2 Timothy 4:6a). The *drink offering* was part of the sacrificial system under the Mosaic Law in which wine would be poured out on the altar before God (Numbers 15:7). What do you think Paul was conveying with this statement? See also Philippians 2:17.
 - a. Pastor David Guzik notes, *Poured out has the idea of a complete giving, with no reservation.*¹ How does this speak to you?
2. Paul declared that his *departure* was *at hand* (2 Timothy 4:6b). Bible scholars note that the word *departure* was used in connection with unloosing a boat from its moorings, hoisting an anchor and setting sail, or pulling up tent stakes. What does this suggest to you about Paul's attitude concerning his execution?

- a. Bible scholar John Stott noted, *The two images correspond to some extent, [because] the end of this life (poured out as a drink) is the beginning of another (putting out to sea).*² How does this minister to you concerning the death of believers? See also 2 Corinthians 5:6–8.
3. As he continued his closing words to Timothy, Paul made reference to his earlier analogies of the soldier, the athlete, and the faithful worker (2 Timothy 2:3–15). Use 2 Timothy 4:7 to connect these declarations:
- a. *I have* _____
- (1) The word used for *good* can also mean *praiseworthy, noble*. Share something you find *good* about the spiritual *fight* in which we are engaged as believers.
- b. *I have* _____
- (1) Use the following to describe what this looks like for believers:
- (a) Acts 20:24
- (b) Philippians 3:13–14
- (c) Hebrews 12:1

c. *I have* _____

(1) Pastor Warren Wiersbe noted, *The third image is that of a steward who had faithfully guarded his boss's deposit.*³ Link this with Matthew 25:20–21 and share how this speaks to you.

4. Which of Paul's declarations resonates with you today?

FIFTH DAY: Read 2 Timothy 4:8

1. Paul knew he would soon be departing for heaven where a *crown of righteousness* was *laid up for* him (2 Timothy 4:8a). Link this with Matthew 6:19–21 and share your thoughts.

a. The Greek word used here for *crown* is *stephanos*. It refers to a victor's *crown* given as a prize in a sporting event. What do you find remarkable about this? See also 1 Corinthians 9:24–25.

2. Use 2 Timothy 4:8b to comment on the following about this *crown*:

a. Who would *give* this to Paul

(1) Connect this with Colossians 3:24. How does this minister to you?

b. When He would *give* this to Paul

(1) Link this with Job 19:25–27 to express your anticipation of *that Day*.

c. The prerequisite for those who receive it

3. Use the following Scriptures to highlight the *crown* that awaits believers:

a. James 1:12

b. 1 Peter 5:4

c. Revelation 2:10

d. Revelation 3:11

- (1) Take a moment to consider the *crown* Jesus wore (Matthew 27:29 and Mark 15:17). He wore this in order to someday give you a glorious *crown*. How does this minister to you?

SIXTH DAY: Review

1. In this week's study, we read Paul's final words before his execution. With this in mind, share what stood out to you most concerning:
 - a. Paul's *charge* to Timothy (2 Timothy 4:1–2, 5)
 - b. Paul's warning to Timothy (2 Timothy 4:3–4)
 - c. Paul's personal testimony (2 Timothy 4:6–8)
2. From your study this week, why is it essential that believers remain focused on God's Word?