

Dr. Robert Yarbrough, Pastoral Epistles, Session 11, 2 Timothy 4

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This is Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough in his teaching on the Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers, session 11, 2 Timothy 4.

Our study of the Pastoral Epistles continues and we're getting deeper and deeper into the 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Corpus. We are now at 2 Timothy 4 and we want to get a running start because this is in the middle of the final charge to Timothy, the final charge to Timothy in 2 Timothy according to the headings in the NIV. The final charge begins at 310 and then it goes to chapter 4 verse 8 at which point we get personal remarks and then final greetings.

And leading up to this in 2 Timothy after his initial greeting we've got a thanksgiving and we've got an appeal for loyalty to Paul in the gospel. We have examples of disloyalty and loyalty, the appeal renewed, and then a lengthy section dealing with false teachers. So, we've seen a lot of echoes of the kinds of patterns and language and issues that characterize 1 Timothy but the major difference is that in 2 Timothy Paul knows that he's a lot closer to dying. And so, there may be a little higher note of pathos in 2 Timothy just because Paul feels he's passing from the scene. I wouldn't call it desperation, I don't think he's desperate, but I think he's concerned that Timothy be as strong as grace can make him for the transition that's going to occur when Paul does get promoted to the presence of God and especially because as he has said in an earlier part of 2 Timothy, everybody in Asia has deserted me. And so, there's a falling away just as there's an opposition to Timothy in his ministry of the gospel. There has been a certain defection of people that Paul's aware of and it's a reminder that throughout the history of the church, the door of the church is revolving and there are people that come in and they stay in and then there are people that come in and then they go back out. This is part of the realism of the ministry that we see reflected in the pastoral epistles.

So, in 2 Timothy 4, continuing this final charge we start with this somber declaration to Timothy which is going to lead immediately into some imperatives and just a reminder the yellow on the screen is the words for God, the titles, proper names, God, Christ, Jesus, Lord and the red will be the imperatives. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who will judge the living and the dead and in view of his appearing, that is his return, and his kingdom which would be his present reign and also his eternal reign which will, get a bump forward when he does return. I give you this charge.

And how many times in 2 Timothy and now 1 Timothy have we heard this word, this word charge given? Well, here's another occurrence, and here's, here's the charge.

Preach the word and then he breaks that down. Be ready, be prepared, in season and out of season.

There are times like Holy Week or Advent, we expect to preach the word a lot. But there are other times when it doesn't seem so opportune. Maybe it's not being received, maybe it's a setting in which we could wonder should I really try to be a witness in this adverse setting or this indifferent setting.

And he says, wherever you get the opportunity to bear witness to Christ using the gifts that God has given you and the calling that he's given you, be ready, be prepared, correct, rebuke, and encourage. Now, he's telling him this, especially as a pastor, with great patience and careful instruction. So, you can see, in these exhortations you can see those two poles of pastor leadership that I keep referring to that I think are so important.

Instruction and oversight, correcting, rebuking, encouraging with patience. That implies personal interaction.

You're not just sort of preaching to the masses, but being in a position, in the course of time, being aware of people's progress and establishing relationships with people so that either directly or indirectly, you can be sure that people are getting encouraged to grow. If you have a very big congregation, you can't encourage everybody in the same way, but by careful management, you can make sure, through delegation, especially through delegation to godly women, to other women, and to their children, and delegation through men, to men that maybe you can't reach that easily. But you may have men who can, either directly or indirectly, with great patience and careful instruction, you can be a minister who serves the Word to them so that through that Word. Of course that's God's Word, then they are corrected and rebuked and encouraged by God, since it's His Word, and the Holy Spirit gives the Word and works through the Word. Now, why does he exhort them? Why does he exhort him so seriously? In the presence of God in Christ Jesus, and judging the living and the dead, why is, why are the stakes so high here? Well, he comes back to the nature of the times that we live in.

The time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. He could just even be plotting from some of his observations of people falling away. He's been ministering through the 20s, 30s, the 40s, and the 50s, and now he's in the 60s, and he might have thought, there's going to be an expansion of the gospel across the Roman world, then everybody's going to come to Christ.

I mean, God could do it, in principle, but what he's finding is there's been resistance, and there's even been relapse. And so, he says, people are not going to put up with sound teaching or doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

And this is so prophetic of our world today, where, when we travel, the true church often is in competition with groups that call themselves the church, and they're not necessarily teaching, Trinitarian, Christ-honoring gospel presentation sorts of doctrine, and they may be off in the weeds when it comes to the things they're calling on people to do, or it may be health and wealth, or it may be political, or it may be corrupt in some other way. It may be just keeping a bunch of rules, and it may be something that sort of feeds the ego of the pastor more than anything else. But it's what people may be content with.

They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations. Endure hardship.

Do the work of an evangelist almost sounds like, in English, doing something besides pastoring. But I think what he is saying here is not, make sure that you go out and preach some evangelistic meetings. I think he's saying that the pastoral task at its core is the continual unfolding of the gospel good news.

And you can deploy it in different applications. It might have to do with marriage, or it might have to do with work, or it might have to do with salvation proper, or it might have to do with child-rearing. But everything you're doing, you are a herald of the good news of Christ.

We don't outgrow the basic message of Christ the Lord, his divinity, his crucifixion, his ascension, his resurrection, his continuing intercession for us. Do the work of being a good news promulgator. Discharge all the duties of your ministry.

Don't say, I'm not a detail person, and then let a lot of things slide that are actually your responsibility. Make sure that either directly or indirectly, all the things, all the diakoniae, the ministries that God has called you to be responsible for, make sure that you are doing justice to that calling and to those duties. Now, why would Paul sort of like dump all this out in such a full and dramatic way? And he's already kind of done this throughout 2nd Timothy.

And here's why. For I am already being poured out like a drink offering. And in pagan religions, you could pour out a libation, they called it.

Pour out wine onto a rock or into a cup or something. And the image is of the sacrifice of your life and of your well-being. I'm being poured out like a drink offering, and the time of my departure is near.

Now he's being explicit. I feel like I'm about to die. I have fought the good fight.

I have finished the race. I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day.

And not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing. So just as Old Testament saints awaited the appearing of the Messiah, they thought that when he came, the age to come would arrive. And it did arrive.

And in particular, with Jesus' resurrection, it did arrive. But what they didn't see was that there would be an interim period between the first coming and the ascension of the Messiah to the right hand of God, and the second coming to finally establish his eternal reign. And he is longing for the fulfillment of the messianic promise, which was initially fulfilled in Jesus' death and resurrection.

And that is sufficient, and that is central for the salvation of all the saints from Adam and Eve until the last person is saved. The death and resurrection of Christ. That is the center point of God's salvific work in the cosmos.

But it is not yet perfected in terms of the age to come being fully ushered in, and God's people receiving their glorified bodies, and whatever form the age to come takes. And there's a lot of controversy. Is it going to be on this world, earth? Is it going to be in a transformed world? Is it going to be in a transcendent realm that we really can't imagine? Is it going to be a realm at all? Is it going to be some kind of a glorified, we call it a beatific vision of God, in which we will behold God eternally, and it will be glorious, joyful, personal, and communal, and it'll just be perfection beyond imagining.

There are books written on these various views of what the age to come will be, but the reward of the age to come is for those who have longed for his appearing and are living out their lives in accordance with that longing. The Bible teaches us to love God, but one of the things that the love of God keeps reinforcing is we don't have God fully yet. Part of our love is unrequited, not that it's not returned, but it's not fulfilled because we don't yet have full possession of our beloved.

And our beloved, while he has full possession of us in terms of what he's drawing us to, we have not yet arrived at that destination point. So that explains the pathos of Paul's counsel, is he can see the edge, the light at the end of the tunnel, the light of eternity. We see Timothy's high calling here, his first Timothy 2:12 calling, the two poles of the pastoral ministry, instruction, teaching, and pastoral oversight, for the sake of encouragement. And I've touched on that.

Secondly, we see opposition to faithful ministry can be expected. That's back in 3:4. The time will come when people won't put up with it, they'll turn their ears away, and they would rather hear untruths than the truth.

Gospel grace, though, enables the fulfillment of apostolic instruction. The grace of God in the gospel that Timothy receives will enable him to keep his head in all situations, not to get confused, not to get demoralized, not to be stampeded in the wrong direction, but to stay steady so that he can endure, so that he can be a herald of the good news so that he can complete the full range of the duties that his particular pastoral office places on him. The NIV then sees a break here and they move to personal remarks.

Now the remarks that we've just heard seem pretty personal to me, but these are even more personal to Timothy and less having to do with his gospel ministry. Often when men are ordained to gospel ministry, they will receive a charge, it's called, and somebody will preach a sermon or somebody will exhort them on the occasion of their exhortation to mark the challenge that they're accepting and to place them under this gospel call that they've responded to. And I'm going to guess that probably 2 Timothy 4 verse 2 is the verse that gets used the most in ordination sermons.

Preach the word, be prepared in season and out of season, and so on and so forth. When I hear that there's going to be an ordination service, I expect to hear a sermon on that verse. So that's part of this overall passage of the final charge to Timothy.

That's the charge within the charge. But now we're moving out of an explicit charge to Timothy with respect to preaching the word. Now he's talking about Timothy's life and movements with respect to his friendship with Paul.

Do your best, there's that word that can also be translated, be zealous, spare no pains, and make every effort to come to me quickly. I think he's in Rome, wherever Timothy is, he needs to, be there. For Demas, who must have been there helping Paul, he loved this world and he has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica.

We don't know any more details, we just know he was on board with gospel ministry and now he's gone to Thessalonica. We don't know if that's to sell insurance or real estate if he's become a heretic, and there's nothing wrong with selling insurance or real estate, it's just, sometimes that's where people ministry go when they decide to leave the ministry. We don't know why Demas has deserted Paul.

It's not a good thing, for sure, but we don't know the details. Crescens has gone to Galatia and Titus to Dalmatia. And this just shows, that the distribution of apostolic work that Paul was still associated with, he was still helping to encourage and to administer the spread of the gospel in the Roman world.

So, while somebody had deserted him, a couple of people had deserted him, and Timothy was facing opposition, it's not as if he was saying, well, there's been a

wholesale collapse of the gospel everywhere. He sees that it's still going out, it's just not going out without a rub or without friction. Only Luke is with me.

This is Luke the physician who wrote the gospel of Luke and wrote the book of Acts. Get Mark and bring him with you, because he's helpful to me in my ministry. And many commentators will say this is John Mark who deserted Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey, and then when Paul and Barnabas started a second missionary journey, Barnabas said, well, I want to take along Mark, and Mark was Barnabas's cousin.

And Paul said, well, over my dead body, I don't want to take him because, you can't trust him. And it seems like Barnabas got ticked off, and he said, well, I'm not going with you. And so, Barnabas took John Mark and they went one way, and Paul took Silas and Timothy and went another way.

And you could think, well, that's terrible. There was a schism in the early church. I think it was more of a personality conflict that God used for his glory because in the end there was a reconciliation between these parties.

And here we see at the end of Paul's life, John Mark is serving Paul. And so they've been restored. I sent Tychicus to Ephesus.

When you come, bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas and my scrolls, especially the parchments. And there's no end of speculation, like what was Paul's thorn of the flesh? There are dozens of theories. No end of speculation as to what the scrolls and the parchments were.

We don't know what they were. Maybe they were scripture scrolls. Maybe they were Old Testament.

Maybe they were New Testament. I'll let you speculate about that. But what's interesting to me is on death row, Paul still wants to read.

He wants to learn. He wants to be productive in that ministry of the Word that has been a part of his life since boyhood. Because the language of Acts 22.3 is, he grew up in Jerusalem and he was a student of the reigning rabbinic teacher of the day, Gamaliel.

And so, he got very, very advanced rabbinic training. He was clearly gifted. And at the end of his life, he could say, I'm old, I'm worn out, people have deserted me, I'm discouraged, where's God, I give up, I deserve a break.

None of those things. He is going to die with his boots on. And this is such an encouragement to somebody like me, who's on the old side of life.

Just an encouragement that God doesn't get done with us late in life. And as long as we can pray, we can commune with God and we can be instruments of grace in God's kingdom. And Paul is far from just being able to pray.

He can still read and he can still write, he can still dictate, he can still be growing. And this is just such a great example of faithfulness to the end. Alexander the metal worker did me a great deal of harm.

The Lord will repay him for what he has done. You too should be on your guard against him because he strongly opposed our message. Is this the same Alexander of 1st Timothy 1? We don't know.

But what we do know is Paul tells Timothy to be wary, be wary, but he doesn't say get even. He doesn't counsel Timothy in ways to fight fire with fire or to repay evil with evil. He's very consistent, leave it in God's hands, don't let him take advantage of you, but let God take revenge if revenge needs to be taken.

There are some situations, we have to leave them in God's hands. At my first defense, no one came to my support. So, he's had a hearing apparently in the court in Rome and everybody deserted him.

Did Luke desert him too? I don't know. Maybe he's speaking, all the people that I thought would come to my support didn't. And it was just me and Luke.

We don't know. But notice this attitude which is exactly like Jesus on the cross. Father forgive them, they know what they do.

Paul says may it not be held against them. It is so magnanimous and it's so discerning because with respect to Alexander the metal worker, he kind of hands him over and says the Lord will repay him. But here he doesn't say the Lord's going to repay these people.

I think he understands the weakness of the flesh. He may even think back to Jesus' betrayal and Jesus' trial and how all the disciples fled. And it wasn't because they were bad people.

They were weak and sinful people who didn't really see straight in that situation. And Jesus forgave them and later restored them to full fellowship. Well, Paul is being Christ-like here in not taking offense at the fact that he was kind of left high and dry at this trial.

The reason that he could be magnanimous is because verse 17, the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength. I don't know if you've ever had visitations from the Lord,

but many of us have. Seasons of our life or episodes in our life when we felt the palpable presence of God directing us or encouraging us or restoring us.

And that's what Paul describes here. So that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. The picture here is that, Paul's put on trial and they would say, okay, there are these charges, what do you say? And Paul, in that situation, would say, well, this is why I'm here.

I am here because of Jesus, who I think is the Messiah. And he died in Jerusalem a generation ago, thirty years ago, thirty-three years ago, whatever. And he rose from the dead and he's the Lord of all.

And he is calling all people everywhere to turn to him and be saved. Oh, okay, well, that's consistent with the charges against you. And then there might have been a prosecutor, who was there and he would maybe even hype the charges and make more charges.

And then Paul, I'm guessing, was his own, he was his own defense here. But at that hearing, he was not convicted. And we can see that he expected to be eaten by lions.

The tradition is he was beheaded. And if he was beheaded, that would have been kind of an honor. Because beheading was how Roman citizens were executed.

The worst execution in the Roman Empire was crucifixion. But the noble Romans had to be killed, and there were a lot of really good people who were killed because Caesar often was very corrupt. And he would just kill people because, he felt threatened by them or didn't like them.

I mean, Nero killed all kinds of people in honorable and dishonorable ways. But this was an honorable way to die. At this point, Paul is not expecting to die an honorable death.

Being thrown to the lions was not thought to be, oh, that's a great way to die. That's kind of a rough way to die. But he was prepared for it and he was spared from it.

And he's confident of better things ahead. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack, whatever form it takes. The Lord will rescue me and he will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory forever and ever. Amen.

So, he's not accusing God.

He's not despairing. Nowhere is God. He's confident of God's deliverance, even if his body is given up.

In this section, we see that Paul knew the comfort of and need for human companionship. He says, Timothy, come to me quickly. Bring this, bring that.

We need friends. We need other people. And that's not a bad thing.

Jesus was just like that. He had the 70, he had the 12, he had the 3. And on the night he was betrayed, when he went into Gethsemane, he took along the three. He took Peter, James, and John with him a distance from the others.

And he said, watch and pray with me. They fell asleep. He had to go on alone.

It was only Jesus who saved the 12 and the church. It wasn't Jesus, plus some hero that helped him out. But we see even the Son of God longed for the comfort of human companionship.

And that's one of the great provisions of the gospel is that we get companions who pray for us. And in this age, maybe we email each other. And we are living life side by side.

And sometimes we're separated by continents. Other times, we're in the same room. And we're serving in the same staff.

But, this is what Paul is reflecting, beginning in verse 9, with all these names and these places and these movements, and especially his relation with Timothy, human companionship. Also, the reality of betrayal. Judas betrayed Jesus.

Demas betrayed Paul. It can be a shock. It can be a setback.

But the older we get, it's always, in a sense, bitter and unfortunate when people fall away. But it does happen. Ministry produces enemies as well as friends.

Verses 14 and 15. Alexander did me a great deal of harm. This implies that Paul, to some degree, was dependent on Alexander, and had trusted Alexander.

They had some kind of connection relevant to Paul's apostolic ministry. And what happened? Alexander somehow turned on him. And Paul has the grace to leave it in God's hands.

Finally, the Lord gives comfort and perspective in life and in death. That's verses 16 through 18. He's in a life-and-death situation.

Those verses are full of a heavenly vision that does not deny anything right down to the lion's teeth. But it's a vision of deliverance so that Paul, in the end, is not whining. He's not despairing.

He's not accusing. But he's ascribing glory to God in that situation. He's dying the way that he lived.

Hebrews talks about people's senses being trained to discern between good and evil. And Paul had lived a life in which he was trained to know what was right, what was godly, what was good, what was not productive. And, being faithful day by day in little things, when it came to the big thing at the end, that river we all have to cross, he's got momentum and he's got habits of character and devotion so that he can still see the truth of God's deliverance.

And I'm going to guess that, that chopping block or the Colosseum and the lions, that could look pretty big if you're sitting there and you're in prison and you're thinking, is the next knock on the door going to be for me? I mean, you got to think about those things. But he, as he dictates this letter, probably to Luke, he's thinking about God. He's full of this vision for God.

Greed for Silla and Aquila in the household of Onesiphorus, Erastus stayed in Corinth and I left Trophimus sick in Miletus. This is the very last section, the final greetings. Do your best to get here before winter.

There's another plea for Timothy to come. Eubulus greets you, and so do Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters.

So, he's aware of these people still, even though none of these people have come to his defense.

The Lord be with your spirit, that's you singular. Grace be with you all, that's plural. And that's the only plural at the end of 2 Timothy 4. We can conclude by observing effective ministry depends on meaningful networking.

I think one reason Paul was so effective and so resilient and so persevering was because he was in a social network. He didn't get isolated, in his own fears and apprehensions. He was born with the sense of God's work in the world going on because God's people were not all in prison and not all going to the lions.

He could see God's work will continue and that gave him hope. Secondly, Paul did not lose his regard for others. I mean, this is like Jesus on the cross commending his mother to John or praying for those who were crucifying him, Father forgive them.

He didn't lose his regard for others. He didn't lose his faith in the future of God's work. You are members of the body of Christ.

They are furthering the work of the gospel that Paul's ministry had helped establish. And even in the face of death, he doesn't lose his faith in what God is doing in the world. Thirdly, the Lord and his grace can bring light to the darkest hour.

The Lord be with your spirit. He could be depressed, especially if he gets this and he reads it and he hears that Paul's been executed. We don't know if he got there in time to relieve Paul or not and what a hollow feeling it would be and what an abyss of grief there might be if he can't get the cloak there or if he arrives and Paul's just been executed.

There are these possibilities that we can imagine that we can't rule out and that's why Paul says the Lord be with your spirit. Anything might happen in the future, it's in God's hands. Those are good hands, but that doesn't mean the circumstances will be easy.

So, he wishes him the same presence of the Lord that he is thriving in the presence of. And then he wishes grace to Timothy's whole ecclesial setting. Grace to everybody, Timothy, that you are associated within the body of Christ.

We can summarize 2 Timothy with highlights like these and first, we can just remind ourselves of Paul's imprisonment and of his charges to Timothy. Then we can see that the doctrines that he touches on most explicitly and persistently are first of all God. There's no panic in the letter, there's no gloomy self-absorption.

He continues to talk about the Lord, about God, about Christ, Christ Jesus. And then words that are directly related to communion with him like faith and word and truth. All these words point to trust in God and commitment to God's honor and contentment in God and praise of God.

So that's one big takeaway from 2 Timothy, just like 1 Timothy, is the sufficiency of God and the beauty of God and the fullness of God and his generosity in opening himself up to his creatures who are at the crown of his creation and in their position are so rebellious and so wayward. But that waywardness is offset by our Savior and so there is a communion with God in this world that is just a harbinger of a glorious perfected communion that lies ahead of us. At the same time that we hear so much that's glorious about God, we hear a lot about suffering in Christ's service.

And every chapter of 2 Timothy mentions and urges Timothy to be ready for suffering. And this is not a morbid preoccupation, it's not a pessimistic projection, oh there's nothing but doom and gloom ahead. It's a recognition of the cost of discipleship especially if you are a pastoral teacher in many settings.

I see it again and again in the current literature on persecution. Christians are a problem in China. Christians are a problem in Islamic realms.

Christians are a problem in every place. How do you shut down Christians? Well, the way they're organized, the way you shut down Christians is you go after their leaders. And just an aside here, and you may or may not agree with me on this, but for me, this is one of the many reasons why, practically speaking, I don't like to see women being promoted to the position of pastor.

Because as the church grows in areas where people don't want the church when the church is cracked down on, the first people that are going to be brutalized are going to be the leaders. And frankly, I don't want my sisters in the faith, I don't want my daughters, I don't want my wife, she does a lot of Christian ministry, I don't want her to be the person that gets put in prison and gets subjected to torture. It's bad for anybody, but I think part of the pastoral protection of the church is we protect women, we protect children, we protect orphans, we protect the people who are less able to be protected, and there's nothing in the Bible that encourages us to gratuitously expose people who can be harmed by authorities to those authorities just for the sake of, well you have to suffer to be a Christian.

When Jesus was arrested, he said turn these people loose, I'm the one you're after, and by the grace of God, they did. Jesus did not appoint, he was helped by many women, he elevated and advanced the cause of women, but he did not make them people who would be exposed to the first line of attack of the church. And we can argue about the culture and why this and can we do this today, and I just say thank God that there's not a view that if the church is a problem the first thing we should do is kill all the Christians.

That may be a mob response, but more typically there are strategies like in India or in Nigeria, or like in China, there are strategies by higher-ups, how do we get rid of the Christians? Pastors in particular are exposed to arrest, to suppression and repression in these scenarios and this is a big part of early church growth and it continues to be a big issue in two ways. Number one, around the world there's persecution and the church needs to continually get ready for it. Number two, in a lot of parts of the world the church is not a big enough threat to draw any resistance because the church is conforming to the world and people don't want to be more Christian because they realize, ooh, this is going to cost me.

And the blood of the martyrs around the world today is a mark of shame on the rest of the church that is lazy and indolent and unwilling to put themselves on the line because they're afraid they're going to have to pay a cost. And for a lot of people, it comes right down to this, they don't even want to give money to the church, they got money, but they're stingy when it comes to the ministry of the church. They could relieve a lot of the suffering in the church and other parts of the world in various ways, but they don't even do that because they want their vacation money

and they want their gambling money and they want their drinking money and they want their real estate, they want their money to do what they want it to do.

They don't want to put it at God's disposal. That's a form of evading suffering. Fulfill your ministry, Paul says to Timothy and Paul says to all of us, and if it hurts, well maybe that's a sign you're doing something right.

Another focus is the scriptures and their apostolic application. Jesus taught from the scriptures, he embodied the scriptures. Paul's writings like Romans and Galatians draw heavily on the scriptures.

2 Timothy 3:15, and 16 affirm the sanctity of the scriptures, their proximity to God, their necessity for equipping the saints, and then lots of other statements like the pattern of sound words, the word of God is not bound, the word of truth, preach the word. Pastoral service rightly centers on ministering the scriptures given by the Spirit to God's people and to the world, and God's people are a conduit of the truth and the redemption of the scriptures to the world. And by the way, if you're watching this lecture, I because you are seeking knowledge of the word that will help you to grow in your service to God, and that's a great thing.

And that in itself shows that you're in sync with the spirit of the Apostle Paul who rallies us to continually new refreshment and direction in the scriptures. Then finally spiritual graces. Throughout the epistle, we get pointers to the benefits of knowing God in Christ.

You know that that's a spiritual grace. We can't know God without the grace of God. In this epistle, we see gratitude for God.

How could you have gratitude for God when you're on death row for doing God's will? Well, grace. There's a sense of spiritual heritage stretching back, in Paul's case for centuries. I have a sense of indebtedness to one of my grandfathers.

I had a very godless grandfather whom I loved a great deal, and he taught me to fish, and he was like a father to me, but he's a godless man. But my poor grandfather who worked, worked himself to death on the farm with the horses and the pigs, he was a Baptist deacon, and he went to eighth grade. That's not very far in school.

He never traveled anywhere, but he prayed, and with his old arthritic arm he led the singing in his congregation, and he finally made it. He was a deacon in his church, and I know he prayed for his grandchildren, and I think humanly speaking that's one of the reasons that God opened my eyes to my sin and to my Savior. It's because I had a heritage, a very thin heritage it looks to me like, but, it doesn't take much for God to do a great deal when people turn to him in prayer, and he blessed the prayers of my

grandfather, and I'm thankful for that, and Timothy could be thankful for his heritage, and Paul could be thankful for his heritage.

We're talking about spiritual graces. Paul's affection for Timothy, that tie they had, that's a spiritual grace. Love in the gospel for people, in friendships that are deep and rich because we've served the Lord, and maybe we've suffered a little bit, nothing compared to Jesus, but we've suffered a little bit for the gospel.

That deepens and sweetens human ties. There's the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. There's the understanding that the Lord gives.

The Lord will give you understanding and everything. Isn't it wonderful when we get perspective that eases our hearts? There's the assurance of divine approval in faithful service. There's the freedom to flee youthful passions.

Sometimes they enchain people, but Paul says to Timothy, flee because he can. That's a spiritual grace, and then he has the grace to pursue righteousness, faith, love, shalom, or peace with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart. It just sounds like church language if you just run through it, but it's not church language.

It's a very deep and poignant indicator of the work of the grace of God in the life of this young man. Then there is the crown of righteousness, and Revelation has this glorious picture of saints around the throne of God, and we sing about it in a hymn, and that hymn is holy, holy, holy, and in one of the verses it says, casting down their golden crowns around the, casting down the golden crown, around the same sea, crystal sea, that's it. Casting down their golden crowns around the crystal sea.

The crown of righteousness is in the end not for our glory, it's an award, but every award that we receive through Christ when we stand before God, we'll offer it up to God, and that will be part of our eternal glory is that we'll be able to rejoice in the excellence and the beauty and the perfection of God, which is so far beyond our human experience in imagining that eternity will not suffice to exhaust the fullness of it. So, we can say in closing that 2nd Timothy, get it right, we see what's there, we observe it, and then we draw from it, true to what's there, what we can glean from it now, 2nd Timothy ranks among scripture's sweetest testimonies to the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus now and in the age to come. Thank you for your time in 2nd Timothy with us in this lecture.

And we'll look forward in a subsequent lecture to the book of Titus.

This is Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough in his teaching on the Pastoral Epistles, Apostolic Instruction for Pastoral Leaders and Their Followers, session 11, 2 Timothy 4.