It is in the process of being worshipped that God communicates His presence to men.
C.S. Lewis

Prayer Study 501
2ND TIMOTHY 4
First Love Ministries, Inc., of Perry, Georgia USA

2 Timothy 4 Amplified Bible (AMP)
"Preach the Word"

4 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: 2 preach the word [as an official messenger]; be ready when the time is right and even when it is not [keep your sense of urgency, whether the opportunity seems favorable or unfavorable, whether convenient or inconvenient, whether welcome or unwelcome]; correct [those who err in doctrine or behavior], warn [those who sin], exhort and encourage [those who are growing toward spiritual maturity], with inexhaustible patience and [faithful] teaching. 3 For the time will come when people will not tolerate sound doctrine and accurate instruction [that challenges them with God's truth]; but wanting to have their ears tickled [with something

pleasing], they will accumulate for themselves [many] teachers [one after another, chosen] to satisfy their own desires and to support the errors they hold, 4 and will turn their ears away from the truth and will wander off into myths and man-made fictions [and will accept the unacceptable]. 5 But as for you, be clear-headed in every situation [stay calm and cool and steady], endure every hardship [without flinching], do the work of an evangelist, fulfill [the duties of] your ministry.

Here Paul is coming to the end of his letter to His beloved son in the faith, and he also knows that he is coming to the end of his life. There is a sadness in this chapter, and yet a triumph. Paul is lonely and cold and bored with the long hours he is awake without his parchments or writings. Yet he knows he has faithfully kept the faith, and his time of departure to meet the Lord in Glory is near.

Even in these dark days Paul knows the presence of the Lord is with him. He also knows that Jesus will judge Christians, not for their sins, which are blotted out by the blood of Jesus, but for their deeds or what they did for Jesus in this life. Based on that, Jesus will give out rewards for our service to Him and His Kingdom.

Paul is also reminding Timothy in this first verse of this chapter that Jesus is going to appear in the Eastern sky to take His bride to heaven, in what most Christians call *The Rapture.* Afterwards, He will come in the Second Coming to set up His Kingdom on the earth, when the kingdoms of this world will become the Kingdoms of Christ. (*Then the seventh angel sounded: And there were loud voices in heaven, saying, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"*

With all this in mind, especially that Timothy will have to stand before Jesus and have his life judged, Paul is telling Timothy what he is to do in the meantime.

One of the greatest phrases to me in all of Paul's epistles is *preach the word.* If only more pastors would preach the word instead of telling cute stories from the secular world and centering the church service around entertainment, perhaps revival would break out.

Paul takes it a step further by telling Timothy he should preach when the time is right and even when it is not or as the King James puts it, "Be ready in season or out of season." There is such an urgency about the message, which literally is a matter of life and death, and those

who preach have to project this urgency to the congregation.

Furthermore, the one preaching the Gospel must convict or make sinners aware of their sin. They must rebuke or tell the congregants where they are wrong, but this must be done out of love and not from a spirit of a moral judge who is better than others. He must exhort or comfort and encourage. And he must do all of this with great patience, never giving up on anyone and never regarding anyone as beyond salvation.

Next Paul deals with foolish listeners. Someone has said that our pulpits today are full of preachers who are merely saying back to the people what they want to hear. The Roman philosopher Seneca, speaking of teachers, said, “Some come to hear, not to learn, just as we go to the theater, for pleasure, to delight our ears with the speaking or the voice or the plays.” J. Vernon McGee tells of someone who said that some people go to church to close their eyes and others to eye the clothes!

Those with itching ears like to hear strange, weird, unusual things. McGee told of one pastor who told him that today in churches across America people are more interested in Antichrist than they are in Christ. Eventually these listeners who are not grounded and have

only a minimal knowledge of scripture began to believe fables instead of sticking with the scripture. For example, we have people today who try to say that Jesus married Mary Magdalene or that he was a homosexual or that Jesus came to the United States to evangelize, etc. These fables have absolutely no biblical or academic bases.

Paul's admonishment to Timothy to do the work of an evangelist did not mean what we mean by evangelist today. He was telling Timothy that he was to be a traveling preacher or missionary. Paul closes this section by warning Timothy that he would suffer hardships for preaching the Gospel.

Paul's Testimony and Hope in Death

6 For I am already being [poured out as a drink offering, and the time of [my departure [from this world] is at hand and I will soon go free. 7 I have fought the good and worthy and noble fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith [firmly guarding the gospel against error]. 8 In the future there is reserved for me the [victor's] crown of righteousness [for being right with God and doing right], which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that [great] day—and not to me only, but also to all those who have

loved and longed for and welcomed His appearing.

This is one of the most well-known passages in scripture and frequently recited at funerals. Paul uses the symbolism of sacrifice and says that his own life is a drink offering poured out before God. In Philippines 2:17, Paul had previously written: *"Yes, and if I am being poured out as a drink offering on the sacrifice and service of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all."* Paul wanted his life to be poured out in the service for Jesus. Paul knows now that his death is imminent. He will soon be departing. The word used for departure literally means in Greek "loosing." Leaving this life meant to Paul that he would finally be loosed and freed from the restrictions he had to endure on earth.

Paul has been a soldier for the Lord. There is a battle to be fought for all of us, and Paul has faithfully fought and defended the Word. He has finished the course or race. Hebrews 12:1-2 says, *"…let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.* Paul has finished his race and completed all that God had planned for Him.

Paul has kept the faith. This might be a allusion to the Greek games, and Paul is just saying that he has kept the rules. The phrase

is a business term, and Paul might be saying that he has kept covenant with the Lord and never let Him down. Finally, Paul might be saying that he has never lost his trust in Jesus, whether in freedom or imprisonment, in perils or in facing death.

There is a crown for Paul but not one of laurel leaves that will soon wilt and fade, but an eternal crown, which I am sure he will lay at Jesus' feet. This crown of righteousness will be given to those who long for the appearing of Jesus. There are at least 5 rewards or crowns given by the Lord in heaven:

a. Crown of Life is given for those who love the Lord more than they love their own lives (James 1:12).
b. Crown Imperishable is given to those who faithful endure and have self-control (1st Corinthians 9:24-27).
c. Crown of Rejoicing given to those who win souls for Christ (1st Thessalonians 2:19).
d. Crown of Righteousness is given to those who want to see Jesus come again (2ND Timothy 4:8).
e. Crown of Glory is given to faithful and obedient pastors (1st Peter 5:4).

Honorable and Dishonorable Roll Call

9 Make every effort to come to me soon;

10 for Demas, having loved [the pleasures of] this present [world, has deserted me and gone to Thessalonica; Crescens has gone to Galatia, Titus to Dalmatia. 11 Only Luke is with me. Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is very helpful to me for the ministry. 12 But Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 13 When you come bring the coat that I left at Troas with Carpus, and the books, especially the parchments. 14 Alexander the coppersmith did me great harm; [but that is no concern of mine, for] the Lord will repay him according to his actions. 15 Be on guard against him yourself, because he vigorously opposed our message.

Verse 9 is one of the saddest verses in the New Testament to me. Demas from Thessalonica had been a helper to Paul (Colossians 4:1; Philemon 24) when Paul was under house arrest in Rome. He saw the contrast of a worldly, magnificent city, the capitol of the world, to a dark, dirty, and cold cell of sacrifice when Paul was re-arrested for his final Roman imprisonment. Demas chose the world.

Also Alexander, the coppersmith, treated Paul despicably and dishonorably. Because the Greek word that Paul uses for *did me a great deal of harm* also means *giving information,*

many scholars believe that Alexander had at one time been a Christian but had gone to the government leaders with false information against Paul in an effort to destroy his ministry.

We know almost nothing about Crescens but I believe that Titus had gone to Dalmatia at Paul's bidding, for Titus was often used as a go-between for Paul and was called "*My loyal child,"* by Paul in Titus 1:4. Also, Tychicus had been sent by Paul to Ephesus and was often sent by Paul to deliver letters to the Church. Even though Paul was in prison, the work of the ministry had to go on, and Paul scattered his helpers throughout the Church of the New Testament.

Luke the faithful physician and Gentile Christian was the only one with Paul. He would write most of the New Testament as far as number of words and was the author of both the gospel of Luke and the book of Acts. Perhaps Luke also was in prison with Paul. Scripture does not make this clear nor do we know from scripture what happened to Luke.

The story of John Mark is an encouraging one. His mother Mary's home was a favorite meeting place of the disciples in Jerusalem. We believe that Peter had led Mark to Christ, since Peter refers to him as "*Marcus my son"* (1st Peter 5:13). Mark is introduced in the Bible narrative at a prayer meeting at Mary's, his

mother. James had just been beheaded by Herod, and Herod had Peter arrested presumably to also have him put to death. The Christians in Jerusalem met to pray, and the Lord wonderfully answered those prayers (Acts 12:12), supernaturally setting Peter free.

Later Mark would join his uncle Barnabas and Paul on a great missionary journey. Things, however, heated up and the pressure was too great for Mark, and he quit and returned home. This made Paul angry, and he refused to take Mark the second time. This refusal made Barnabas angry, and he refused to go with Paul, and so Paul took Silas. Years later Mark grew-up and matured, was reinstated and became a valuable helper to Paul.

Last Words and Final Greetings

16 At my first trial no one supported me [as an advocate] or stood with me, but they all deserted me. May it not be counted against them [by God]. 17 But the Lord stood by me and strengthened and empowered me, so that through me the [gospel] message might be fully proclaimed, and that all the Gentiles might hear it; and I was rescued from the mouth of the lion. 18 The Lord will rescue me from every evil assault, and He will bring me safely into His heavenly

kingdom; to Him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.
19 Give my greetings to Priscilla and Aquila, and to the household of Onesiphorus. 20 Erastus stayed on at Corinth, but I left Trophimus sick at Miletus. 21 Try your best to come [to me] before winter. Eubulus wishes to be remembered to you, as do Pudens and Linus and Claudia and all the brothers and sisters.
22 The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you.

This was a very lonely time for Paul. He had a preliminary hearing where he was called to answer the charges against him. This would be like a grand jury investigating to see if there was enough evidence to bring charges. This did not go good, and a formal trial was now imminent, and Paul expected the death penalty. No one testified in his behalf, and he was deserted by all. It was too dangerous to testify for a man on trial for his life.

Yet Paul was encouraged because the Lord was with him. Jesus said he would never, no never, no never leave or forsake his followers. Paul was able to use even a Roman court to proclaim the Gospel. Furthermore, Paul had eternal security and knew that, even in death, he would triumph because he would get to go

to heaven.

Paul ends this wonderful chapter with perhaps final greetings to dear friends. Priscilla and Aquila, the husband and wife team who had a church in their home, had risked their lives for Paul's sake (Acts 18:2; Romans 16:3, 1st Corinthians 16:19). Onesiphorus had gone to the prison to see Paul and might have possibly paid for his loyalty to Paul with his life (2nd Timothy 1:16). Erastus had gone to Macedonia on Paul's behalf to carry a message to the Christians there (Acts 19:22) and afterwards perhaps had joined the church at Rome (Romans 16:23). Paul greets Trophimus, a Gentile, whom Paul had been falsely accused of bringing into the Temple in Jerusalem (Acts 20:4, 21:29). Finally, there are greetings from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brothers and sisters. We know little truth about these later people, although Linus was the first Bishop of Rome.

Paul ends the letter commending his friends to the presence and Spirit of the Lord and by asking grace to be with each one.

JESUS CHANGED EVERYTHING

Ernie Haase and Signature Sound

Jesus changed everything.
Jesus changed everything.
There is joy overflowing.
I am forgiven and free.
Jesus changed everything.

I was blind or maybe I just didn’t want to see,
How foolishly I tried to build my own destiny.
All my well-constructed plans failed me time and time again.
So my broken heart came to Him with empty hands.

That’s when Jesus changed everything.
Jesus changed everything.
There is joy overflowing.
I am forgiven and free.
Jesus changed everything.

I was filled with pain and guilt. But now I know His peace .
Chains of yesterday have now been released.
The bitterness I once knew, the anger that inside me

grew
Were all washed away by the grace that made me new.

Because Jesus changed everything.
Jesus changed everything.
There is joy overflowing,
I’m forgiven and free.
My Jesus, My Jesus, Jesus changed everything.
Changed everything,
Changed everything.