



THE LIFE OF
PAUL

FAMILY DEVOS

Faithful to the End

Scripture: 2 Timothy 4:6-22 (also see 1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

Memory Verse: 2 Timothy 4:8

“Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”

For My Family:

The last written words of Paul are found in his second letter to Timothy, which was written during his second imprisonment in Rome. This was different from his first imprisonment, when he was able to rent a house and have a lot of company. Now he was alone and in need. Prisoners back then were dependent on the support of friends and family to provide what they needed, like food and clothing. If no one was able to bring these things to Paul, the guards would just let him die! So he asked Timothy to come quickly, because Demas had left him and the only company he had left was Luke. He also wanted to be sure to get his cloak before winter came. Paul was a man with needs just like us! But take note that he wasn't complaining. His eyes were fixed on his upcoming departure.

It is a very hard and sad thing when someone we love dies. But as Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, we don't sorrow as those who have no hope. As a matter of fact, Paul refers to death in that letter as sleep, as Jesus did with Jairus' daughter. Here, he refers to his death as his "departure." If you go to an airport, there will be a whole list of dates and times for upcoming "departures," flights that are leaving to go somewhere else. As followers of Jesus, we too will depart one day. Death is not the end. In many ways, it's only the beginning. Yet everything we do here and now will affect what our lives will be like in eternity. This is why we should strive to, like Paul, fight the good fight. To run the race well. To keep the faith! One day we will depart to be with the Lord, and when we see Him, He will give a crown of righteousness to all those who have love His appearing. What a day that will be!

Paul wasn't perfect, but he fought hard and ran well, even when the people around him didn't. He was able to do this, not because he was strong, but because what strength he had was found in Jesus: "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). Even when no one else stood with him, he could go on living for the Lord, knowing that the Lord stood with him and strengthened him. Not only that, but the Lord delivered him from every evil work and preserved him for the heavenly kingdom. At the very end, Paul had no words of praise for himself. He knew that if it hadn't been for the Lord's help, he couldn't have done any of the incredible things he did for the Lord. God calls us to follow Him, but He also gives us the help we need to do so. Never forget that you need Him, and when you feel alone, know that He stands with you and will give you strength.

Questions for Young Children:

What did Paul want Timothy to bring to him?

Why did Paul call his death a departure? Where was he going to depart to?

Was Paul ever alone? Who stood with him, even when his friends left?

Questions for Teens and Pre-teens:

How is being a Christian like running a race and fighting a fight?

Running and fighting are active things. What does this teach us about what our lives as followers of Jesus should look like?

What does it mean and look like to “love His (Jesus’) appearing?”