

# Bible Reading Plan

WEEK OF NOVEMBER 15, 2020

**WEEKLY READING: 2 TIMOTHY 1-4; TITUS 1**

**PASSAGES REFERENCED: 2 TIMOTHY 1:8; 3:11; 4:2, 6-7, 10-14, 17-18;  
2 CORINTHIANS 11:23-28; ISAIAH 53:3**

I can vividly remember some of my family members' last words. Like when my uncle passed a few years ago – he couldn't talk, but as soon as my aunt said one last, "I love you," he groaned to say it back to her. Or right before my grandpa passed away a year ago, I can remember sitting there with him and my now-husband talking about the proper amount of sweetener to put in tea and hearing his childhood stories of walking to and from school with a shotgun 80 years ago. I'll remember those last words forever.

While reading Paul's second letter to his friend and ministry partner, Timothy, I realized these words were essentially Paul's "last words." In 2 Timothy 4:6-7, Paul says that "...the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."

As I studied this letter, Paul's eternal perspective on life was radiating off the pages. Rather than focusing on himself in his "last words," he focuses on God and His Word. Paul continues to instruct Timothy on how to continue spreading the Gospel after his passing (see 2 Timothy 4:2). And from experience, Paul knows that with spreading the Good News of Jesus' death and resurrection, comes suffering, prompting Paul to also warn Timothy of what may be to come. Paul encourages Timothy to "*share in suffering for the Gospel.*" (2 Timothy 1:8)

We have to remember that Paul was a prisoner when he wrote this letter. He had suffered through beatings, shipwrecks, imprisonments, danger, hunger, thirst, and anxiety throughout his missionary journeys (see 2 Corinthians 11:23-28). Not only that, but people failed Paul. In 2 Timothy 4:10-14, he lists companions who deserted him throughout his ministry: Demas, Crescens, Titus, and Alexander. He even goes on to say in verse 16 that, "*at my first defense, no one came to stand by me, but all deserted me.*" Paul knows what it looks like to suffer for the Gospel.

But where was God during Paul's suffering? All you have to do is look at 2 Timothy 3:11 and 4:17 to see that God was always with Paul:

*"The Lord rescued me."* (2 Timothy 3:11)

*"The Lord stood by me."* (2 Timothy 4:17)

*"The Lord strengthened me."* (2 Timothy 4:17)

When circumstances were unpredictable, God was steadfast. When people were unreliable, God was trustworthy. God promises never to abandon us, and Paul was living proof that God keeps His promises. With all that Paul lived through, at the end of his life, he still proclaimed, "*the Lord will rescue me from every evil deed and bring me safely into His kingdom. To Him be the glory forever and ever.*" (2 Timothy 4:18) Paul trusted God and wanted everyone to know and glorify Christ. Let's take his "last words" to heart. – *Madison Murphy*

Take a few moments to reflect on the following:

- Who remained with Paul during his imprisonment? What traits of God did you glean from these passages?
- What is the importance of preaching the Gospel? Why do you think this was a main topic of Paul's last letter to Timothy?
- Think of a situation where you felt no one was on your side except for God. Take a moment to pray to God, praising and thanking Him for His steadfast love and support.
- Think of a current struggle where you feel alone. Ask God to show you His comfort, love, and support through this hard time.
- Read Isaiah 53:3 with Jesus in mind. How does this verse give you hope?