

The Final Words of Paul – Part 1

Introduction

a. objectives

1. subject – Paul reviews his life and ministry, and encourages Timothy to come to him
2. aim – to cause us to see our lives as a drink offering being poured out by Christ to the glory of God
3. passage – 2 Timothy 4:6-22

b. outline

1. Paul Reviews His Life (2 Timothy 4:6-8)
2. Paul Reviews His Ministry (2 Timothy 4:9-18)
3. Paul Invites Timothy to Come to Him (2 Timothy 4:19-22)

c. opening

1. the **final words** of Paul
 - a. certainly his final words *in this letter* – the “closing” of the letter
 1. very typical for Paul, to close each letter with some *personal remarks*
 2. often making reference to common acquaintances with the audience
 - b. also his final words *in the New Testament* – the “closing” of his apostolic ministry
 1. not his “last” words *period* (spoken or written), but the last words that the Spirit *inspired*
 2. true, Titus, Philemon (and Hebrews) “follow” in the canon, but they were clearly written earlier
2. the **final review** of Paul
 - a. Paul *summarizes* (i.e. analyzes, **see below**) his life and ministry while (at the same time) *encouraging* Timothy to visit with him before time runs out between them

I. Paul Reviews His Life (2 Timothy 4:6-8)

Content

a. the end of his life (v. 6b)

1. “*departure*” = clearly a euphemism for his own death; the end of his life
 - a. but, Paul does *not* use “death” – he uses a concept that is more *consistent* with a Christian worldview = death is only the “end” of this *physical existence*, not the end of the life of the soul
 - b. so, Paul is expressing the normal Christian idea of “*absent from the body, present with the Lord*” (2 Cor. 5:8) – to leave this mortal body is to enter *still living* into the presence of Christ
2. “*departure*” (Gr. *analysis*) = a word used *nowhere else* in the N.T. – loosing; unyoking; or (**IMO**) the concept of what death *really is*: the moment of **analysis** in the life of the individual
 - a. **question**: why do human beings do funerals; why do we come together when someone dies?
 1. obviously, not to pay “tribute” to the deceased (who is not there)
 2. rather, to “analyze” the life of the individual (i.e. who was he/she, what *impact* did he/she have on me/world, how will he/she be missed, etc.)
 - b. **but also**: death is (from a Christian perspective) an *analysis of the individual by God*
 1. i.e. Heb. 9:7 KJV – “*it is appointed unto man once to die, but after this the judgment*”
 2. death is that moment in which the individual enters into the presence of God to be judged
 3. judgment is the *analysis* of the individual to see *who that individual really is*
 4. i.e. Rev. 20:12 – the “books” are opened before the Great White Throne of Christ, and everyone is “analyzed” to see *what their deeds prove about them* (are they in the Book of Life?)
 - a. do their deeds indicate that they *love God* (as sheep of Christ) or *hate God* (as goats)
 - b. **judgment is the determination of the state of the individual by analyzing their life**
 - c. so, Paul uses this word to describe his “*departure*” because he believes that an *analysis* by Christ will demonstrate that he is worthy of reward *because his life has reflected faithfulness*
 1. an analysis that he *now* puts forward for himself ... **see below**

b. the analysis of his life (v. 7)

1. Paul uses two (2) *metaphors* and a descriptive statement to make his point
 - a. they are metaphors Paul has used elsewhere (e.g. 1 Tim. 6; 1 Cor. 9)
 - b. however, *here* they are being used a bit differently – each is used in the *past tense*
 1. Paul is using each to describe *what he has accomplished* – his *analysis* shows that he has been successful in maintaining his trust in Christ *all the way to the end*

2. the race metaphor
 - a. **e.g.** my own relationship with running; the idea of running a marathon of 26.2 miles
 - b. “hitting the wall” = that point where you lose the mental, emotional, and physical stamina to go on
 - c. however, the runner must *will* himself to continue – he must *choose* to keep going, overriding the pain in his mind and body of fatigue and the desire to quit
 - d. **to have any chance of winning the race, you have to finish the race (at a *minimum*)**
 3. the fight metaphor
 - a. to have any chance of winning the match, you have to go all 12 rounds, you have to *finish* the fight
 1. true, sometimes the opponent will land the perfect punch to the jaw, your knees will buckle and you’ll go down – but, you have to *will* yourself to get up and continue to fight
 4. Paul’s analysis of his life – he has “*kept the faith*”
 - a. **note:** there will be many who will *not* finish the race – they will (according to the **Parable of the Soils**) “*receive the word with joy*”, but will fall away in apostasy as the pressure of the world comes
 - b. **e.g.** Josh Harris; James White’s warning: the “tsunami” of apostasy coming soon
 - c. **i.e.** Jesus in **Matt. 10:22; 24:13** – “*the one who endures to the end will be saved*”
 1. true, we will (at times) “hit the wall” or buckle to the canvas in sin – but, we must pick ourselves up, look to this Christ, seek forgiveness, repent of our sin, and carry on trusting him
 - d. **Paul’s analysis of his life demonstrates that he has persevered to the end, and is worthy of the reward that comes for doing so ...**
- c. the outcome of his life (v. 8)**
1. “*crown of righteousness*” = the crown that *recognizes* the righteous man; the bestowal by “*the righteous judge*” of the glories already inherent in the one that *is* righteous in his sight
 - a. **again:** judgment is to determine the *state* of the individual by *analyzing* his or her deeds – it is *not* to “earn” a righteousness *by* deeds, but to simply acknowledge *through the evidence* what is true
 1. Paul would never say that *his* “running” produced righteousness – rather, he would say that his running *demonstrated what he already was* by virtue of his trust in Christ
 2. Paul has consistently held that the righteousness of the elect is *entirely* the righteousness of Christ *imputed* on the basis of simple faith *alone*
 3. **the crown is the person of Christ himself – the reward (in the end) is the presence of Christ and to receive from the Father all that is entrusted to him**
 - a. **i.e.** to “depart” is to be “*absent from the body, and present with the Lord*” (**2 Cor. 5:8**)
 2. “*all who have loved his appearing*” = all who are eagerly awaiting the “analysis” of the Lord
 - a. but ... might there be some *in the church* who are not looking forward to the coming of Christ?
 1. **i.e.** I hope the Lord doesn’t return quite yet because ...
 - b. (**again**) there will be many *in the church* who are more in love with this world than with Christ

d. the use of his life (v. 6a)

 1. **saved to the end for two (2) reasons ...**
 2. “*being poured out as a drink offering*” (*Gr. spendo*) = another **metaphor**
 - a. a verb used only here and in **Phil. 2:17** – a word that *might have* been gleaned from the LXX
 3. a connection to the **drink offerings** of the O.T. (**Num. 15:1-10**)
 - a. the pouring out of wine or strong drink at the foot of altar during the burnt offerings
 - b. designed to be a “*pleasing aroma to the Lord*” (**Num. 15:10**) – the smell of the wine, mingled with the smell of the burning animal would rise up to God for atonement
 - c. Paul implies that his entire life has been a drink offering, poured out by the great high priest, Jesus Christ, *over himself as the sacrifice*, to bring forth a pleasing aroma before God
 4. **question:** how many actually believe that Christianity is something you “add” to your existing life?
 - a. **i.e.** another descriptor (**e.g.** husband, father, grandfather, Christian, etc.), another resume bullet
 - b. **i.e.** that you only need to add “faith” to all of your current hopes, dreams, aspirations, goals, plans, purposes, directions, etc.
 - c. Paul perceived that, when he came to Christ by faith, the *entirety* of his old life was ended, and all of its hopes and dreams were *replaced* by a new life *poured out by Christ to his ends and purposes*
 5. some proofs of this view of the Christian life:
 - a. the Rich Ruler (**Luke 18:18-27**) – his entire life was *defined* by the aspirations of his wealth
 - b. to take up the cross (**Matt. 16:24**) – **e.g.** as in the two thieves (**Matt. 27:38**)
 - c. Paul on the road to Damascus – the old life of being the *consummate* rabbi ended
 - d. the judgment words of Christ (**Matt. 7:21**) – “*the one who does the will of my Father in heaven*”
 1. **i.e.** a “pleasing aroma” to the Lord, not the fragrance of death (**2 Cor. 2:15-16a**)

“For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life.”

- e. **principle: the Christian life is to be a drink offering in the hands of Christ, being poured out over *him* as our sacrifice of righteousness, our entire life rising up to God as a beautiful fragrance of love and obedience (Gal. 2:20; Romans 12:1)**

"I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me ... present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God"

1. **clarification:** does this mean that Christians must be full-time preachers or missionaries?
 - a. **no:** in whatever vocation the Lord ordains for you, live to advance the cause of Christ

e. the meaning of the Lord's Supper (v. 6a)

1. **the second reason to hold this metaphor to the end ...**
2. the Lord's Supper holds a number of *symbolisms* of the connection of Christ to the sacrificial system
 - a. when Jesus took the cup, he said: *"this cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood"* (Luke 22:20) – a picture of the *drink offering* that he would pour out over *himself*
 - b. the Table is a reminder of the *food offerings* – the bread as a reminder of his body offered on the altar as a burnt meat offering, and the cup as the drink offering poured out over it
 - c. **IOW:** it is an opportunity for us to remember that our lives are completely given over to this Christ, that he is "pouring out" of *us* the life that he has ordained
 - d. we **testify again**, as in baptism: we have "died" to the old life with all of its hopes and dreams, and have been raised to a new life in which Christ lives in us and *through* us