

# Guard the Gospel – 2 Timothy

2 Timothy 4:6-8

“Finish the Race” – August 4, 2019



## Introduction

What are you giving your life to? What *should* you spend your life on? No one wants to waste their life – living for something, laboring a goal, spending our time, money, energy and affections on something only to learn that it was the *wrong* thing, that we were headed the *wrong* direction is frustrating and heart-breaking. As Paul starts to close out his letter to Timothy, he knows the pressures the young pastor is under with all the competing voices calling for his heart. So, to encourage him (and us), to help him know what he should give his life to so that he (and the church) may guard the gospel, Paul holds up his example for Timothy to follow.

## Pray

Before you begin, take some time to ask God to help you understand His word, to reveal what needs to change in you, and for the grace to follow Him in response. To help, use [Psalm 119:33-40](#) as a prayer for God to open His word up to you.

## Sermon Outline

- I. Keep the faith (4:6-7)
- II. Love His appearing (4:8)

## Read & Discuss

- 1) Read [2 Timothy 4:6-7](#)

The time of Paul's departure is just around the corner (in other words, he's about to die). How can a man who's given his life to serve God and others end his life in a dingy prison, abandoned by many and not be bitter? How can he see his life and coming death as worship? Think about us today...what can we learn from Paul's example in this regard?

Trusting God *should* be the easiest thing in the world because God is good and His commands are good – leading us to life. The reason faith takes the endurance of a runner and is something we must fight for is because of the indwelling sin in our hearts ([Galatians 5:17](#)). In light of the fight of faith, the race of faith we must run to *keep* the faith, we talked about three applications. Reflect on these and think thru specific application for yourself this coming week:

- i) Fight for faith with God's word – Since faith comes from and is strengthened by God's word, we must hold fast to God's promises in the fight against temptation and the fight for faith. Is your life characterized by a clinging to, hunger for, and devouring of God's word? What are ways you can grow in your consumption of God's word?

ii) Fight for faith with God's people – We need each other, especially when we grow weary in the fight for faith. Are you neglecting the weekly gathering God graciously gave us to strengthen our faith? Are you leaning on other members throughout the week for prayer, encouragement and accountability?

iii) Fight for faith because it is a *good* fight – There are many things we can give our life to – the world has no end of things we can live for and worship. What do you need to cut out of your life to better focus on God's word and grow in faith? What do you need to prioritize more?

Additional Reading: Romans 10:17, Hebrews 10:23-25, Philippians 2:17

1) Read [2 Timothy 4:8](#)

Keeping the faith is not just about fighting, it's about love. A love for God (and others) helps to fuel our efforts in pursuing God and fleeing from sin. Have you noticed how no one needs to tell you to do what you love? We can't manufacture a love for God and a longing for His appearing, but in gazing upon who God is in the pages of Scripture, looking ahead to what God has promised the Christian, *and* praying for God to change our hearts, we start to love what we should and hate what God hates. Spend some time even now, asking God to grow you and your brothers and sisters at First Baptist Church to *grow* in our love for God and of each other. Ask Him to open our eyes to see the wonderful, life-giving truths about Him such that we taste and see His goodness.

Additional Reading: 2 Corinthians 3:18, Philippians 2:5-11

### **Prayer of Response**

1) After hearing God's Word, what sin do I need to *confess*? From what do I need to *repent*?

2) How should my life be lived this week based on what I have heard? What should I *understand, believe, desire, or do*?

Spend time praying together in response to God's word asking for His help and greater faith to follow Him in the week to come.

If you missed the sermon on Sunday or would like to listen again, visit our website at <https://fbcum.org/sermons-new/>

**\*Next week's sermon text:** we turn to **2 Timothy 4:9-22** "The Lord stood by me"