

Women's Bible Study, February 28, 2025
Holy Trinity Ev. Lutheran Church

The Pastoral Epistles
Lesson 11 (2 Timothy 4)

Highlights/Notes for 2 Timothy 4 -- The Reward of a Godly Life

1. Objectives and Introduction of this week's study

a. Theme Verse (SG p.106): "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness." 2 Timothy 4:7-8

b. Objectives (SG p.106): "By the power of the Holy Spirit working through God's Word, we will...

1) ...keep the final goal of the Christian life in mind, so that this may spur us on to greater faithfulness in the service of the Lord;

2) ...consider how God enables us to keep the faith;

3) ...gain assurance of God's promise of eternal life."

c. Introduction: This is the final chapter of Paul's second epistle to Timothy, and also Paul's final chapter of all the epistles he has written during his entire ministry. These are "the last words that Paul wrote and in which he gives expression to his feelings and thoughts as he realized that his end was near" (SG p.107). Here he finishes his charge to Timothy to continue diligently preaching the Word in its truth and purity. And then Paul focuses on his final departure at his upcoming execution when at his death he gloriously will then be with the Lord. Paul closes with personal instruction and requests for Timothy in his farewell remarks and closing greetings.

2. 2 Timothy 4:1-5 -- Proclaim the Gospel; A Well-Spent Life

a. vv. 1-2, "Preach the Word..."

1) Note that Paul reinforces his charge to Timothy to diligently teach & preach the Word of God. Paul does this "in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus," reminding Timothy that Jesus is the one "who will judge the living and the dead." This brings an urgency to continue steadfastly in proclaiming the Gospel constantly until the coming of the Lord. (TPB pp.152-153) "The Church must make every effort to obtain a hearing for its message" (SG p.107). The Gospel urgently needs to be heard!

2) Recall from last week's study, 2 Tim. 3:16, that "all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." Here again Paul reemphasizes this, including the need to be encouraging, "with great patience and careful instruction." ("Should not the patience God has with us move us to 'great patience' in our service of others?" [TPB p.155])

b. vv. 3-5, "For the time will come..."

1) vv. 3-4 -

a) "For the time will come" -- "This looks to the future, a future for which Paul wants to prepare Timothy. What Paul describes will begin even during Timothy's ministry but increase in the 'terrible times in the last days' (3:1)." (TPB p.155)

b) "when men will not put up with sound doctrine" -- It does not say what they want to hear. They don't want to hear that they are sinners. They don't want to have their own great works and prideful sense of godliness overlooked. They don't understand deliverance from sin in the Gospel; it doesn't make sense to their human reason, and it gives no credit to self-righteousness. (TPB p.157)

c) "itching ears" -- They look to teachers who will accommodate their own desires, those false teachers who will flatter their egos, who will tell them "what their itching ears want to hear." They prefer to listen to "myths" ("godless myths" [1 Tim. 4:7]) Every false doctrine is a "myth." (TPB p.157)

* "Ears itch to hear anything except God's revealed truth. Every cult and religion, and every new and different misinterpretation of Scripture, find receptive ears in a world that has grown weary of the Gospel, of 'sound doctrine.'" (TPB p.157)

2) v. 5 - Continue to stay the course. Continue to "do the work of an evangelist."

a) "Evangelist" - Literally "one who proclaims the good news." (TLSB 4:5)

* Timothy will continue to follow Jesus' command to "preach the good news to all creation" (Mark 16:15). (TPB p.158) Good news of salvation through the life, death, resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Good news of His love...for the whole world.

b) "In a religiously confused world that will not put up with sound doctrine, it is vitally important that the church and its pastors remain [clear headed], and not succumb

to the temptation to adapt their teaching to what people want to hear. Our teaching must be sound according to God's revealed truth." (TPB p.158)

c) Devotional note: "Faced with the thought of his imminent death, Paul impresses upon Timothy the importance of carrying on where Paul will leave off, preaching the Word faithfully. We should not judge our pastors' preaching on whether they say the things we personally like to hear. We should judge preaching instead on God's Word. God's Word sometimes cuts like a knife when it exposes our sin. But after the law comes the Gospel of peace, binding up the wounds inflicted by the Law with the sweet Gospel, which proclaims Christ's forgiveness for all our sins. ~~ 'Make me an ever-ready hearer of Your Word, O Lord. Do not let me seek preaching that satisfies my sinful desires, but give me preaching that will continually return me to the forgiveness You have given me through Your Son. Amen.' " (TLSB 4:1-8)

c. Discussion questions (SG #90-92, pp.53 & 107):

1) #90. When may it be said that a Christian has lived a useful life?

a) "Hark, the Voice of Jesus Crying" (CW 745, stanzas 2-4)

If you cannot speak like angels,
if you cannot preach like Paul,
you can tell the love of Jesus,
you can say He died for all.
If you cannot rouse the wicked,
with the judgment's dread alarms,
you may lead the little children,
to the Savior's waiting arms.

If you cannot be a watchman,
standing high on Zion's wall,
pointing out the path to heaven,
off'ring life and peace to all,
with your prayers and with your offerings
you can do what God demands;
you can be like faithful Aaron,
holding up the prophet's hands.

Let none hear you idly saying,
"There is nothing I can do,"
while the multitudes are dying,
and the Master calls for you.
Take the task He gives you gladly,
let His work your pleasure be;

answer quickly when He calleth,
"Here am I, send me, send me!"

b) Our lives are "useful" when we remain faithful to the Lord's calling in our lives, when we keep the Word of Christ abiding in our hearts, and when we share Christ's love through our lives and through the Gospel grace we speak.

c) "The most useful lives we can live and the best service we can render our neighbor is to guard faithfully our spiritual treasures, not let the hardships that we must suffer as Christians discourage us, and live lives of faith in Christ and love to neighbor that testify of God's saving grace. When our lives have been led in this way, they will be useful and fruitful in God's kingdom." (SG p.107, #90)

2) #91. Why and how should every Christian take an active part in the work of evangelism [proclaiming the good news] and missions?

a) Why? -- Because people can be so easily swayed by "myths" (vv.3-4). And people are dying!! We are all part of the church called to be part of the mission work the Lord gave to His disciples, to get the Word out, by baptizing and teaching. We must support this needed work; as well as constantly share the Gospel with great patience (v.2).

b) Why and how? -- "Although the work of baptizing and teaching all things is the work of public ministry and is ordinarily carried out by pastors, all believers are responsible to see to it that this is done. Therefore, they are to call and ordain pastors. In addition, they themselves [we] are called to be lights in a dark world and hold forth the Gospel to unbelievers (Philippians 2:15-16)." (SG p.107, #91)

c) How? -- "Each individual believer can have a part in this great work... Though he or she is not called to perform the work of public ministry...he or she can bear witness to Christ and tell others about the Savior. Believers can support those who preach the Gospel and be a powerful and living sermon to the world by their example. Laypeople are of greatest benefit to the Gospel when they receive the ministry of their pastors and go forth into the world and in their vocations and communities [to] live out their faith. The world needs the Gospel." (SG p.53)

3) #92. Why should the nearness of Judgment Day (4:1) spur us on to greater efforts in serving our fellow mankind (neighbors, family, coworkers, strangers, etc.) with the Gospel?

Because the time of grace is becoming shorter. We want all to know the need for faith in Christ Jesus for the forgiveness of sins and a life eternal most glorious.

3. **2 Timothy 4:6-8** -- The Prospect of a Heavenly Crown

a. v. 6, "poured out as a drink offering" -- An allusion to the OT sacrificial system in which wine was poured around the base of the altar in connection with certain sacrifices

(Exodus 29:38-42; Numbers 15:1-12). Paul regards his eventual death, a martyr's death (i.e., the pouring out of his blood), as an offering to Christ. The process that would lead to his martyrdom was "already" well along. (TLSB 4:6; CSB 4:6; TPB p.159)

b. v. 6, "departure" -- A reference to Paul's death, which he believes to be near. (TLSB 4:6)

c. v. 7, "fought the good fight... finished the race... kept the faith" -- Recall earlier in this epistle (2:3-6), Paul's illustrations of seeing himself (and Timothy) as "soldier...athlete...farmer."

Discussion question (SG #93, pp.54 & 107-108): What does it mean to fight the good fight, finish the race, and keep the faith?

This is what we're about to look at further...

(Also, for those with our study guides, you can read the long explanation in the back of the book.

The highlight I took away from that is: "2 Timothy 4:7 is the victor's exalting shout.")

1) "fought the good fight" -- Paul looks back at the past 30+ years, his life of ministry as an apostle of Christ. He had battled well in Christian warfare, always a fight of faith, always calling for "resisting temptation and doing battle with those who would [seek to] destroy the Church and the Gospel." (TPB p.159)

2) "finished the race" -- Paul often referred to the Christian life of faith as an athletic event, a race.

a) In this life he had not "run like a man running aimlessly" (1 Cor. 9:26).

b) He wrote to the Church in Philippi, "I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Phil. 3:4).

c) In his farewell to the pastors of the Church at Ephesus (meeting with them in Miletus), Paul told them, "I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me---the task of testifying to the Gospel of God's grace" (Acts 20:24). And now with his approaching death his race that he had run so well was nearly complete. He was about to cross the Finish line. (TPB pp.159-160)

3) "kept the faith" -- Could refer to remaining personally in the faith that God has given him. And/or it could also refer to how he had guarded the faith, the Christian doctrine against false teaching and error. (TLSB 4:7) (Also, refer back to our discussion/study notes of 2 Timothy 1:13-14, Paul instructing Timothy to "Guard [keep] the good deposit that was entrusted to you..."

This is the Gospel, that Paul emphasized must be carefully "kept" and guarded "with the help of [or through] the Holy Spirit who lives in us.")

* Lord, "grant Your Church many pastors and many, many people who thus [continue to] keep the faith!" (TPB p.160) May these all continue to believe all their days AND continue to preserve & keep the one true faith upon the solid foundation of Your Word taught and heard in its truth and purity. Amen!

d. v. 8, "the crown of righteousness" -- Even as Paul faces death, he looks ahead, looking forward to the glory of wearing the crown of Christ's righteousness.

1) "Paul uses the metaphor of the wreath given to the winner of the race (1 Cor. 9:25)." (CSB 4:8)

a) "The picture was one familiar to the Greeks. At the successful completion of a race, the victor received a wreath or crown. Paul anticipates the crown that the Lord will award him, having finished the race in accordance with God's will. The Gospel testifies that this award is one of grace and not of works." (TPB p.160)

b) "It is a crown that consists of righteousness, a righteousness that at the Lord's coming would be Paul's... Paul indeed already possessed the perfect righteousness of Christ," as do we all who have been baptized and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 3:22) We are clothed in Christ's righteousness now, but yet we still struggle with our sinful flesh. (TPB pp.160-161)

2) "on that Day..."

On Judgment Day... "At Christ's return, this will change. This present world of sin will be destroyed, 'but in keeping with His promise we are looking forward to a new heaven and a new earth, the home of righteousness' (2 Peter 3:13)... We will be privileged to wear a glorious crown of righteousness, we who already now are clothed in the white robe of Jesus' righteousness." (TBP p.161)

3) "all who have loved His appearing" (ESV, EHV); [the NIV states "who have longed for..."]

a) This is a reference to all who have lived by faith.

b) These are probably a reference to the Christians longing for the Last Day, the day of Christ's second coming. But this might also refer to those of the OT era who were longing for Christ's incarnation (who also had lived by faith in God's promise to send the Messiah). (TLSB 4:8)

4) 1 John 3:2 - "Now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."

Discussion question (SG #94, pp.54,108): How is the crown described in...?

James 1:12 - "Blessed is the one who perseveres under trial because, having stood the test, he will receive the crown of life that the Lord has promised to those who love Him."

Revelation 2:10 - "Do not fear anything that you are about to suffer... Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life."

1 Peter 5:4 - "And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive an unfading crown of glory."

1 Corinthians 9:25 - "Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever." (This is NIV)

(The EHV: "They do it to receive a perishable victor's wreath, but we do it for an imperishable one.")

(The ESV: "They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable.")

Concerning the second part of question #94: "Will all the saints in heaven possess the same degree of glory (2 Cor. 9:6; Daniel 12:3)?"

1) This from study guide: "Paul here is not thinking of special honors and glory that God will bestow upon those who were most faithful in His service. In heaven there will indeed be degrees of glory (2 Cor. 9:6, Daniel 12:3)." (SG p.108 #94)

2) This excerpt from WELS Q&A:

"Your question provides the opportunity to marvel at the gracious love of God Christians enjoy in equal measure and in unique ways.

"...Our works do not contribute in any way to our salvation (Titus 3:5,6). The salvation we enjoy is God's doing.

"...While all Christians enjoy the same gift of salvation, Scripture speaks of God customizing his gracious blessings.

"Rather than speaking of levels of heaven (as the Mormons do), we understand Bible passages like Daniel 12:3; Matthew 25:23,28,29; Luke 19:17,19; 1 Corinthians 3:12-15; 2 Corinthians 9:6; and Revelation 14:13 to address the subject of 'degrees of glory'. That expression describes the individual

blessings God will graciously bestow on his followers in connection with their faithful earthly lives. We will have to wait to see what that specifically means.

“What it means now is that we do not serve the Lord with the idea of getting something from him in the future...Such an attitude can easily plague Christians.

“I once had a number of conversations with a person who was interested in joining the church I served. The person’s profession of faith and our church’s statement of belief matched until she brought up ‘once saved, always saved.’ In spite of citing Bible passages that speak of people falling from faith (for example, Matthew 13:20,21; 1 Timothy 1:19), she regarded apostasy as an impossibility. Hypothetically conceding to her position, I asked what reason she had to attend worship services in church. Her answer made everything clear: ‘To get more jewels in my crown.’

“Now I got it. Her stated motive for doing God’s will was to get something in return. That is an attitude we need to reject. Any way that God chooses to bless our Spirit-driven lives of love (Philippians 2:13) is grace. Pure grace.”

3) This from "Forward in Christ" Q&A:

Q. I’m struggling with the concept of degrees of glory in heaven as a reward for good works. Doesn’t this concept promote work-righteousness?

A. The concept of degrees of glory in heaven as a reward for good works is a scriptural one but must be explained correctly.

Note: These are rewards of grace, not rewards of merit

The Bible clearly teaches that we are not saved by our good works. “It is by grace you have been saved . . . not by works, so that no one can boast” (Eph. 2:8,9). In fact, the Bible teaches that our good works on their own are “like filthy rags” (Is. 64:6) Therefore, we cannot expect a reward because we earned it.

Instead, all we have, all we are, and all we do are by God’s grace from start to finish. God gives us faith in his forgiveness won for us by Jesus—grace (Eph. 2:8,9). God gives us the abilities and opportunities to respond to serve him with good works—grace (Eph. 2:10). In addition to all of that, he gives us the will to want to accomplish those good works—grace (Phil. 2:13). God deserves the glory, and yet grace beyond grace, he rewards us for his work in our lives. Amazing!

These rewards of grace are for this life and the life to come. Numerous passages illustrate this truth but consider these two: “Everyone who has left houses or brothers or sisters or father or mother or wife or children or fields for my sake will receive a hundred times as much and will inherit eternal life” (Matt.19:29). “Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the

heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever" (Dan. 12:3). Again, it is a reward of grace, not merit.

Remember: We will be perfect in heaven

Our motivation to do good works ought never to come from selfish motives that desire greater glory and blessings than others. The blessedness of all the believers in heaven will be perfect. No one will have less joy in heaven than another.

Yet God will give greater honor to some. Consider what the apostle Paul or the prophet Isaiah have done for the Lord and how we have all been blessed by what God had done through them. It would be natural for God to accord them greater honor in heaven; we would all agree, even in our experience, that some have done so much for the kingdom of God. They will enjoy the same bliss, joy, and perfection as all the saints in heaven, and God will grant greater honor to some by his grace.

But won't we be jealous of those who have greater honor? One of the great blessings of heaven is that jealousy and envy will not diminish our joy. Sadly, those sins plague us regularly while we are here on earth, but they will be gone in the perfect bliss of heaven. In earthly terms, a weak picture of the concept is when parents genuinely rejoice when their child is honored for an achievement. If you have greater honor in heaven, I will praise God for his work in your life.

Realize: The purpose of this teaching

The purpose of this teaching is to encourage us as we carry out our Christian callings in this sin-darkened world and look forward to the perfect joy of heaven. "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:18).

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4. 2 Timothy 4:9-18 -- Final Deliverance; Personal Comments

a. vv. 9-13, "Make every effort to come to me quickly..."

1) v. 9 - Longing to see his dear friend and beloved son in faith. (Also expressed this earlier in 4:4.)

"In a time of crisis, what a comfort a dear friend who shares our faith can be!" (TPB p.163)

2) vv. 10,12 - Experiencing an aloneness (and sadness) without those who had been with him.

a) Demas, who had been with him during his first imprisonment, a fellow worker in Paul's letters to the Colossians (Col. 4:14) and to Philemon (Philemon v. 24), had now deserted Paul, "because he loved this world." He may have left the faith entirely for earthly pleasures or gain, or he was overcome by fear of imprisonment. (TPB p. 163; TLSB 4:10)

* **Discussion question (SG #95, pp.55,109):** In what respect is Demas a lesson of warning?

From SG: "Demas at one time had received favorable mention (Col. 4:14). But he showed himself weak when the test came and hurriedly withdrew from Paul when he was threatened with persecution. Love for the world drew him away..."

From TPB (pp163-164): "Was it that Demas loved this life so that he was not willing to expose himself to possible persecution? Life was safer and more pleasant in Thessalonica. Or was he attracted by the allurements of the world so that he felt Christianity too restrictive? Whatever it was, he had deserted Paul and, possibly, the Christian faith. One can sense Paul's disappointment as he reports this. Pastors and fellow members feel deep disappointments when the newly confirmed soon fall away and leave the church or when a once faithful member deserts the faith, tempted by sexual, financial, or social allurements."

b) Others were absent due to other mission assignments.

* Crescens in Galatia (mentioned nowhere else in the NT)

* Titus in Dalmatia (more about him next lesson)

* Tychicus (v. 12) in Ephesus (a "dear brother, faithful minister and fellow servant in the Lord" [Col. 4:7; Eph. 6:21]; previously traveled with Paul and Timothy. Paul probably sent him to Ephesus to deliver this letter and take Timothy's responsibilities so Timothy could travel to see Paul. [TLSB 4:12])

3) v. 11 - "Only Luke is with me... Bring Mark with you..."

a) Luke - Paul's dear friend, physician, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit authored the third Gospel. Also, as we recall from our study of Acts, Luke was a travel companion with Paul during his missionary journeys and which he documented as "breathed out by God" (ESV, 3:16) the book of Acts. Luke stayed with Paul during his first imprisonment and seems to have been his sole companion as he now faced martyrdom! He was one of those friends 'who sticks closer than a brother' (Proverbs 18:24). (TPB p.164)

b) Mark - As we studied in Acts, Mark had a shaky start with Paul: Mark (also known as "John Mark") had deserted Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:13). Paul then refused to take Mark (who was a cousin of Barnabas) with them on their second journey. When Paul objected, Barnabas and Paul "had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company" (Acts 15:39). Barnabas separated from Paul, taking Mark with him on a mission to Cyprus (Acts 15:36-41). Thus Mark had been the cause for the breakup of the first mission team. (TPB p.165; CSB 4:11)

"Ultimately Mark proved himself to Paul, indicated by his presence with Paul during Paul's first Roman imprisonment (Col. 4:10; Phm 24), and by Paul's request here for Timothy to bring Mark with him to Rome ['because he is helpful to me in my ministry' (v.11)]." (CSB 4:11)

4) v. 13 - "bring the cloak... my scrolls, especially the parchments"

a) Paul's cloak: He must have been at Troas shortly before his imprisonment. A need for the cold damp prison, and the upcoming winter. An essential comfort. (TBS p.166; CSB 4:13)

b) Scrolls, parchments: Scrolls were made of papyrus; parchments from animal skins were durable and expensive... these may have been copies of the OT Scriptures which would have been "especially" of prime importance to him. ("What could be of greater comfort to him in his loneliness than the Scriptures, which 'equip a man of God for every good work' [3:16]? In our loneliness Scripture assures us of God's presence, for there He speaks to us." [TPB p.166]) These may also have been "copies of his correspondence, as it was customary for writers of letters to retain copies, which were published later." (CSB 1:13; TPB p.166)

b. vv. 14-15, "Alexander the coppersmith... The Lord will repay him..."

1) The man -- Some study notes (TLSB; CSB) suggest this could possibly be the Alexander of 1 Timothy 1:20. However, TPB Commentary suggests otherwise... neither the "Alexander" of Acts 19:33 or 1 Tim. 1:20 is called a metalworker (coppersmith). "Alexander was a common name. Paul, it would seem, adds the designation metalworker to distinguish him from other Alexanders. Since Paul has just been urging Timothy to come to Rome, it is possible that it was there that Alexander had done Paul 'a great deal of harm,' and Timothy should be on his guard against him when he comes," (TPB pp166-167)

2) "great deal of harm... he strongly opposed our message" -- In opposing "our message" he was doing harm to the Gospel, to Christ, "damaging to the entire cause of the Gospel" (TPB p.167) "Message" here is literally in the Greek: "logos" - often translated "word" as in John's Gospel (John 1:1,14 where it describes not only divine

self-expression, but the pre-existent Christ; God's Word was embodied, "the Word became flesh..." (TLSB - 2 Timothy 4:15, John 1:1,14)

3) "The Lord will repay..." -- Paul does not seek personal retribution. Paul here practiced what he preached. God will see that justice is done... "Do not repay evil for evilDo not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: 'It is mine to avenge; I will repay,' says the Lord" (Romans 12:17,19). (TPB p.167)

c. vv. 16-17, "The Lord stood at my side and gave me strength..." -- Paul remained confident in Christ's abiding presence. (Recall Acts 23:11). He knew the suffering he would expect in the Lord's service (Acts 9:15-16), but he also knew the Lord would be with him. As with so many other trying times, while he stood alone without human help, he was definitely not alone. And through the Lord's strength with him, at his trial he was able to "fully proclaim" the Gospel message of Jesus Christ to "all the Gentiles" there (in the imperial court). (TLSB 4:17; CSB 4:17; TPB pp.168-169; SG p.54)

d. v. 18, "The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to His heavenly kingdom..."

1) "Whatever evil he has to suffer at the hands of Rome will not destroy him. The Lord is with him, will rescue him and will bring him 'safely to His heavenly kingdom.' Martyrdom will lead to eternal glory." (TPB p.169) "Since Paul fully expected to die soon (v.6), the rescue he speaks of here is spiritual, not physical." A rescue to his heavenly home in Christ's kingdom. (CSB 4:18) Paul realized that his martyred death would "mean final deliverance from all evil." (SG p.55)

2) "As Paul thinks of his glorious deliverance and being forever with the Lord, his heart shouts out these words of praise: 'To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen'---'Yes so shall it be.' May that be the joyful response of every Christian as he confidently awaits the Lord's eternal deliverance." (TPB p.170)

3) "Verse 18 is a fitting ending to the letter proper. Only a few greetings and comments follow." (TPB p.171)

e. **Discussion questions (SG #96-97, pp.55,109-110):**

1) #96. What are the final impressions the Bible leaves us of Timothy? Mark? Paul?

Timothy -- His love for Paul, his desire to come to him, his heartache for Paul, while yet still rejoicing with Paul to his being able to hear his Savior words, "Well done, good and faithful servant!"

Mark -- "Mark reminds us that God's grace, and not our failure or weakness, determines our service and usefulness for Him." (SG p.109 #96)

Paul -- Faithful to the end, fully living for Christ, for the sake of the Gospel, with the constant desire to always proclaim Christ so that others could cherish the same salvation, the same grace that had embraced him. Paul's deep love for the Lord and for the work of the Lord. Paul was extremely human, endured overwhelming suffering, and yet kept his eyes truly fixed on Jesus alone. Christ always with him, in life and death, Paul would always glorify the Lord.

2) #97. What comfort does verse 18 contain? Of which petition does this verse remind us?

Comfort: "Assurance that "God's saving power may always be trusted in to grant deliverance to His children and servants. In every situation, especially those in which it appears sin and evil people have the upper hand..., Christ stands over them victoriously working His good and gracious will in and through all things." (SG p.110 #97)

Petition: "Deliver us from evil," the Seventh Petition of the Lord's Prayer. "This means we are asking God not to exempt us from all suffering, but that the wicked plans and intentions of the devil will not prevail. Sin and the devil have designs to destroy and damn us. God's promise given to us in Christ is that He will work to realize His good and gracious purpose in those very works. The devil means it for ill; God means it for good." (SG p.110 #97)

* Luther's Explanation to the Seventh Petition:

"We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would deliver us from every evil that threatens body and soul, property and reputation, and finally when our last hour comes, grant us a blessed end and graciously take us from this world of sorrow to Himself in Heaven." (Luther's Small Catechism, p. 285. Note: A reading through of this section in our Catechism is so faith-strengthening and encouraging, pp. 285-291.)

5. 2 Timothy 19-22 -- Closing Greetings and Final Blessing

a. With these few closing personal greetings and a final blessing upon Timothy and upon the Church, Paul will be laying down his pen for the last time. (SG p.55)

b. v. 19, "Priscilla and Aquila" -- We became acquainted with this wonderful tent-making couple in our study of Acts. They quickly became dear friends of Paul, as he lived with them for about 18 months and worked with them. They were influential in teaching Apollos more about the faith, and in helping establish and encourage new churches, and in supporting the work of Paul (in Corinth, Ephesus, & Rome). They had even "risked their necks," putting their lives in danger because of their support for Paul. (Acts 18:2-3,18,26; Romans 16:3-4; 1 Cor. 16:19)

c. v. 19, "the household of Onesiphorus" -- Recall Paul speaks well of Onesiphorus earlier in this epistle of 2 Timothy. He had encouraged and refreshed Paul in his imprisonment here in Rome, when others had turned away from Paul. He had also been of great service in Ephesus. (2 Timothy 1:16-18). "Apparently Onesiphorus himself was not at Ephesus since the greetings are not extended to him personally. If he were still at Rome, we could expect Paul to mention him with those who send greetings to Timothy. Where was Onesiphorus? Had he perhaps died? Had he been martyred? We do not know. Perhaps Timothy knew. At least Paul saw no need to tell him" (TPB pp171-172)

d. v. 20, "Erastus, ... Trophimus" -- Paul updates Timothy as to where these two are, as Timothy may have wondered why they weren't with Paul in Rome. Perhaps Paul had been with them both in these places before his imprisonment. (TPB p.172) Both had been helpers to Paul: Paul had sent Erastus together with Timothy from Ephesus to Macedonia (Acts 19:22). Trophimus was from Ephesus and had accompanied Paul to Jerusalem after his third missionary journey (probably one of the representatives of the Gentile churches who were to bring their gifts to the poor Christians in Jerusalem [TLBS Acts 20:4]). (Acts 20:4; Acts 21:29)

e. v. 21, "...come before winter" -- There's an urgency here in Paul's request. With winter coming, Timothy's journey could become delayed and/or dangerous. Paul knew this too well. (Acts 27:9-12). And Paul urgently wanted to see Timothy, not just for the warm cloak for winter that he had requested, but also knowing his execution is soon approaching, not knowing if he'd be able to see Timothy this one last time if the winter delays the trip. (TLBS 4:21; TPB p.172)

f. v. 21, Paul extends greetings to others not mentioned anywhere else in Scripture. But they were obviously known to Timothy. While Paul has expressed his being alone, except for Luke, he had made that comment in reference to his coworkers. The Lord still had a faithful few from the fellowship of believers in Rome, in spite of the persecutions. (TPB pp172-173)

1) A few interesting notes regarding...

a) "Claudia...and all the brothers" -- "Of all the members of the Christian family, Claudia is a woman's name. Here the Greek word for brothers seems to refer to all fellow believers, male and female." (EHV, v. 21)

b) "Linus" -- "Early tradition says he was bishop of Rome after the deaths of Peter and Paul." (CSB 4:21)

2) Devotional note: "In closing, Paul asks Timothy to greet the other Christians in Ephesus, whom Paul had earlier grown to love." [And Paul gives greetings to Timothy from Christians in Rome. An exchange of greetings, but more than that!]

"There is no Christian who lives to himself or herself alone. We are a family, joined together in Christ! Timothy faces a difficult task, but he does not face it alone. Other Christians in the Body of Christ will shoulder the load with him. God has likewise given fellow Christians to us, whom we will find gathered with us in worship. Partaking of the Word and the Sacraments in the communion of saints, our gracious heavenly Father will lighten our loads and lift our burdens. ~~ Thank You, Lord, for my fellow Christians whom I name before You in my prayers. Amen." (TLSB 4:19-22)

g. v. 22 -- "The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen."

1) It is only fitting that the last words from the pen of Paul are a benediction, a powerful blessing in the context of what we've been studying!

2) "...with your spirit" -- "your" here is singular, indicating that it was addressed to Timothy alone. What more could he desire for Timothy, to leave and bless Timothy, than the abiding presence of his Lord as Timothy continues to carry on the work Paul started and that the Lord has called him to? (CSB 4:22; TPB p.173)

3) "Grace be with you" -- "you" here is plural, showing that the letter was intended for public use, to be read to the entire Church in Ephesus. What more could he desire for the Church, for the whole family of God in Christ Jesus, than to give this benediction, this blessing of grace that spells salvation? And this includes us! (CSB 4:22; TLSB 4:22; TPB p.173)

4) "Amen" -- Yes, Lord, let it be so! (Luther's Small Catechism, p. 295)
(Note: some texts omit "Amen" here [EHV note v. 22])

References:

TPB = "The People's Bible (Commentary): 1,2 Timothy, Titus" 2nd edition, by Armin W. Schuetze. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, WI. 2000 (2nd ed.). (Originally published 1988)

TLSB = The Lutheran Study Bible, English Standard Version, General editor Rev. Edward A. Engelbrecht. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO. Published 2009.

CSB = Concordia Self-Study Bible, New International Version, General editor Robert G. Hoerber. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis MO. 1986.

SG = Study Guide used in our Women's Bible Study (by participants in-person and via Zoom): "1 and 2 Timothy, Titus: Keeping the Faith" by A.C. Mueller. Concordia Publishing House, St. Louis, MO. 2006. (This is part of the Bible study series "God's Word for Today")

CW = "Christian Worship Hymnal" as authorized by the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, WI. First edition, 2021.

"Luther's Catechism: The Small Catechism of Dr. Martin Luther" (Anniversary Edition). Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, WI. 2017.

WELS.net, Q & A, Online resource: wels.net/serving-you/wels-topical-qa/heaven-questions/ (Search for "Are there levels of heaven?" in the list provided. I copied the answer for discussion question #94 in these notes.)

"Forward in Christ," Online article from the magazine: forwardinchrist.net/reward-for-good-works/ (This is the article I copied for these notes for discussion question # 94)

Bible translations used:

EHV = Evangelical Heritage Version

ESV = English Standard Version

NIV = New International Version