

“Dead Man/Woman Walking” as a Disciple of Christ
Bible Study – Sunday 29 August 2021

Reading the First: 2 Timothy 4:1 – 8 (Probably written in 64 or 65 AD. Suggested date of Paul’s death 64 – 67 AD)

2Tim. 4:1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: ² proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favourable or unfavourable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching. ³ For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound doctrine, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires, ⁴ and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. ⁵ As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

2Tim. 4:6 As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷ I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. ⁸ From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

Four Quick Questions – 8-10 minutes total!

- Q1. How does Paul view his life as a disciple and apostle of Christ?**
- Q2. What does he urge Timothy to do? Does this apply to you and me?**
- Q3. In his exhortation to Timothy, does Paul make any reference to Jesus’ command to “take up your cross daily”? If so, what does he say?**
- Q4. (i) As he nears his death, what “score” does Paul give his life’s work as an apostle of Christ?**
(ii) What “prize” does he look forward to?

Reading The Second: 2 Corinthians 11:16 – 33 Probably written 55 or 56 AD

Paul is countering those who boast that they are better apostles than he is and reflects on his “walk” as a disciple thus far.

Cor. 11:16 I repeat, let no one think that I am a fool; but if you do, then accept me as a fool, so that I too may boast a little. ¹⁷ What I am saying in regard to this boastful confidence, I am saying not with the Lord’s authority, but as a fool; ¹⁸ since many boast according to human standards, I will also boast. ¹⁹ For you gladly put up with fools, being wise yourselves! ²⁰ For you put up with it when someone makes slaves of you, or preys upon you, or takes advantage of you, or puts on airs, or gives you a slap in the face. ²¹ To my shame, I must say, we were too weak for that!

But whatever anyone dares to boast of—I am speaking as a fool—I also dare to boast of that. ²² Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they descendants of Abraham? So am I. ²³ Are they ministers of Christ? I am talking like a madman—I am a better one: with far greater labours, far more imprisonments, with countless floggings, and often near death. ²⁴ Five times I have received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. ²⁵ Three times I was beaten with rods. Once I received a stoning. Three times I was shipwrecked; for a night and a day I was adrift at sea; ²⁶ on frequent journeys, in danger from rivers, danger from bandits, danger from my own people, danger from Gentiles, danger in the city, danger in the wilderness, danger at sea, danger from false brothers and sisters; ²⁷ in toil and hardship, through many a sleepless night, hungry and thirsty, often without food, cold and naked. ²⁸ And, besides other things, I am under daily pressure because of my anxiety for all the churches. ²⁹ Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is made to stumble, and I am not indignant?

2Cor. 11:30 If I must boast, I will boast of the things that show my weakness. ³¹ The God and Father of the Lord Jesus (blessed be he forever!) knows that I do not lie. ³² In Damascus, the governor under King Aretas guarded the city of Damascus in order to seize me, ³³ but I was let down in a basket through a window in the wall, and escaped from his hands.

Further Questions reflecting on Paul’s life.

- Q5. (i) Verses 22 to 23a list Paul’s “earthly, religious credentials”. What are they? (Remember of course that Paul sees these credentials as “wrongful boasting”.)**
- (ii) What “earthly, religious credentials” might we claim for ourselves in 2021? Do we ever use these as “wrongful boasts”?**
- Q6. (i) Taken as a whole, how would you describe Paul’s experiences living for Christ that he lists in verses 23b – 27?**
- (ii) Taken as a whole, how would you describe Paul’s experiences in verses 28 – 30.**
- (iii) How might we reconcile being “saved by grace” with the difficulties Paul describes in verses 23b – 30? In the light of this what can “salvation” NOT mean for the Christian?**
- (iv) Discuss the relationship between your answer to Q6(iii), Q4(ii) and today’s sermon.**
- Q7. If time permits, reflect on today’s study and Matthew 7:13.**
Matt. 7:13 “Enter through the narrow gate; for the gate is wide and the road is easy that leads to destruction, and there are many who take it. ¹⁴ For the gate is narrow and the road is hard that leads to life, and there are few who find it.