

# Last Words

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[ 0 : 00 ] This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfredo, Georgia. It is our prayer that you will be blessed by the preaching of God's Word.

Well, I'm sure you knew that was our daughter-in-law, Andrea, and I'm glad and honored to have her here tonight. We're also very proud. Forty-two, forty-two and a half years ago, I started praying for my wife came and said, we're going to have a baby, and I knew the Lord seemed to impress on my heart we were going to have a little boy, and I was wrong about that, turned out to be a big boy, but we prayed for a son, and I named him Christopher before he was born because he would carry the gospel, and I'm so proud that God allowed me and Betty to raise a, Betty and I to raise a son that would preach and pastor and be a missionary, and it's a privilege to have him here tonight to preach.

It's great to be with you guys tonight, and I tell you what, I feel like I'm in a whole different place than what I know Vision to be. I started in this little room, and I still remember one of the first services hanging out with all of our friends and just thinking about one day what might happen here, and then we went to a little bit of a bigger room, and then we went to a different building, and, you know, we always chose to have the church in the weirdest places, like, we're right next to the Honda shop, like, we're right next to it, you know, and it's just crazy the kind of where you all have been, where you're at now. I was here tonight, and I asked Miss Sandy, I said, Miss Sandy, I'm supposed to talk to the youth tonight. Where do I go?

She goes, oh, you had to go. I felt like I was at Walmart, pass aisle 17, and you go down there. Like, it's gigantic in comparison to what it was. I'm excited for you guys and what's going on here at the church. It's just awesome to be with you guys and see what God's doing here.

Open your Bibles to the book of 2 Timothy. 2 Timothy. I feel privileged to be here. I love being in churches that preach the book, and I honestly believe those are few and far between today, and I'm thankful that I have a dad that models that for me, and how to preach the Word of God, and to make the Word of God matter, and what we have to say. I'm also excited to have my family with me. If you see Jacob walking around, he's about as tall as I am now, and it's kind of scary. I'm like, where in the world is time going? But he's not near as scary as Hannah is, because Hannah one day decided she was a woman. And I don't know where that happened or how that happened, but I don't like it. So be praying for Daddy through that time. So it's good to be with you. 2 Timothy, and if you've got a handout, they gave it to you. And we'll talk tonight about last words, lasting words. So the church where I'm at right now, we just got through preaching through the entire Bible. So I took a book of the Bible every week, and I would preach through that book and give the people an overview of what the Bible was about. And so this is part of the message on the book of 2 Timothy. And so we'll talk about last words, lasting words. Let's study the book of 2 Timothy and hope it can help you as you go home. And you know, last words say a lot about a person. They say a lot about a person because it kind of shows you where their heart was, what their heartbeat was. Winston Churchill had some famous ones. I love that picture. Does he not look like the happiest dude in the world? He said, I'm bored with it all. Last words, there you go.

[ 3 : 09 ] I'm bored with it all. And he slipped into a coma and died nine days later. And so that's famous last words, you know. I love Karl Marx. Karl Marx's housekeeper came to him and said, hey, we need your last words. And his response was this, go on, get out. Last words are only for fools who haven't said enough. So there's Karl Marx. And probably one of my favorites was Pancho Villa. I guess that's how you say it in English. Pancho Villa. I love what Pancho Villa said. Here's what he said. Don't let it in like this. Tell him I said something.

And so, you know, last words are lasting words. Now, I've already chosen what I want my last words to be. I've already chosen what I want my last words to be. And if I'm able to choose what my last words are, it goes like this. I left a million dollars under the...

That's what I want my last words to be because I just think it'd be fun. And I'm going to be looking down from heaven watching my kids tear everything apart. And my wife is going to be in a rocking chair on the front porch laughing her head off because she's like a million dollars. Where in the world did you get that from? But so last words, they matter a lot. And so in this book, in the book 2 Timothy, what we have is we have the last words of one of the absolute most amazing men in the scriptures. Outside of Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, Paul is a very small club of men that have truly impacted the world with the gospel. You would only have a little bit less than half of your New Testament if it weren't for Paul and his writings. And so in 2 Timothy, we find his last words and kind of a little bit different. So the last letter is a combat manual. It's a combat manual decided to build up and encourage Timothy for spiritual warfare. This is a combat manual. It's not some little book that's just thrown into the Bible. He's talking to Timothy. Last book he wrote, he's sitting there and he says, this is a combat manual and it's designed to build up and to encourage

Timothy for spiritual warfare. Now, it's easy to just take a book and speak of it coldly, but I believe that our job is to understand where it was written and how it was written so that we can kind of grasp some of the circumstances going on in those days. At this point, Paul, he's an old man.

He's old. He's alone. Okay? He's alone. His health is failing. He's isolated from his family. He's isolated from his friends. Honestly, according to the book of 2 Timothy, he's so poor he cannot even afford a coat. So he's going to ask Timothy to bring him a coat. He has no pension. He has no medical benefits. He's in jail under capital charges. And here's the deal. If he's found guilty, he's going to be decapitated. And the problem is, there's only about 100% chance he's about to be found guilty.

[ 6 : 10 ] And that's when he writes this book. It's pretty clear he's going to be found guilty. Now, in case you're wondering, this doesn't look too successful in our eyes. And sometimes we kind of twist this idea of who Paul is and what Paul is because we had this idea that Paul almost loved going through this stuff. You know what I mean? It's like, well, that's Paul. That's kind of like his deal, isn't it? That's what Paul does. He likes getting stoned. Different kind of stone. But like, like, like he likes getting stoned. He likes getting bit by serpents. He likes going out and almost dying.

That's just kind of who Paul is, is it not? When you read this. But you know what? I don't think Paul on his New Year's resolution put, I would like to die decapitated that year. That's not at all where he's at. And Paul's in this situation. And we wouldn't call it too successful. But honestly, I don't know that Paul was sitting there going, man, this is this is what I define success as.

Truthfully, it probably isn't fulfilling all of his dreams. And it definitely wasn't ours. Many people think that this was his cell. And you can look there. You got it on your paper. And if you have a microscope, you might be able to see it because it's really small. But this is his cell that he was in. And he he he's going to he's going to die from this cell that he's in. It's in your handout.

Now, here's here's what I want you to do is we talk about Second Timothy. I want you to put yourself in that spot. OK, I want you to think about where Paul's at and what's going on as he's living in a dingy room, knowing he's about to die. And then he pens his last words. And what's really cool about it is this. He actually knows these are going to be his last words.

And this is what he says. And so and Timothy's writing to his son and first Timothy chapter one and verse two, he calls him his son in the faith. They didn't have a normal relationship.

[ 7 : 57 ] This is not only his disciple. This is his son. He's going to encourage Timothy. And what he's going to tell Timothy is this. I want you to minister with boldness in the craziest times of your life. And Timothy might be exhausted in Ephesus sitting there thinking, I don't know that I can do this much anymore. But when he's sitting there exhausted, he has to know one thing. This letter got to me from my mentor, from my friend, from my father who's sitting in a prison cell. I better man up and take it and do what I'm supposed to do. Paul's writing him this letter. And all of it's all of this is based on the fact of Second Timothy and verse chapter one and verse 12. The entire book, the entire book is based on this promise. He says, for the which cause I also suffer these things. Nevertheless, buddy, I want you to understand something. I'm in jail and they're making fun of me, but understand one thing. I am not ashamed.

I'm not ashamed. I'm in prison and they may mistreat me and they may take the head off of my body, but you mark one thing down and you understand it with every ounce of your being.

I am not ashamed. He says, I'm not ashamed, not because of where I'm at, but because I know who I have believed and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I've committed unto him against that day. He knew who he had believed and he tells Timothy not to be ashamed of him, not to be ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Because here's the deal. His God can and his God will keep them. And he can know that for sure. He's going to tell, he's going to tell Timothy to do what's right, no matter what the suffering around him looks like. You know what happens, Timothy? When everything goes wrong, you're going to do right.

When things don't do what you're expecting to do, you're going to do right. When nobody in church appreciates you, you're going to do right. When the church isn't going where it's supposed to be going, you're going to do what you're supposed to do. And he's going to actually tell him exactly what that is. He's going to tell him to do no matter what, to just do right, to do what God has told him to do. Remember, he's saying that from jail. And I can just imagine Timothy, he's sitting at the local Starbucks with a coffee, ready to open this letter. You know how all of your devotional friends on Facebook do, a great picture of coffee steaming and a little, you know, croissant on the side to eat. And he's got free. He's got it open there. And his, his Facebook status that day was something like daily bread with my buddy, Paul, you know, hashtag with my bestie, hashtag BFF, hashtag words of inspiration from my bestie. That's where Timothy's at because there's two different worlds here. Timothy's receiving the word and Paul is giving the word. And they're in two totally different places in the book of second Timothy. We're going to skip over the half, first half of the book and we're going to look at the second half of the book, but I've left the outline. If you want to look at it later, feel free to do that. In the first part, here's what Paul's going to tell Timothy. Paul's going to say this, Timothy, man up, man up.

You're going to have to be a man and you're going to have to deal with it. Timothy, stop the whining, stop the wow-wow party, stop all that stuff, man up and do what you're called to do because I know it's tough. I know life isn't going the way you might've expected it. I know you might want to give up. I know you might be discouraged, but son, and he looks him straight in the eyeballs and he says, son, I'm not your normal guy. You're not reading some self-help book. This is your father in the faith talking to you and he loves you like a son and you know that, but I'm taking you by the lapels of your shirt, pushing you up against the wall and saying, son, you will not quit. You're going to man up and do what you know you're supposed to do. That's the first half of the book of second Timothy. The second thing he says, if you're filling in the notes is this, own it. I need you to own it. What is he going to own? What he's going to say this, you need to understand you are perversion of the word of God is coming. People are going to pervert the word of God.

[12:05] So because of that, you have got to stand. And he says that in second Timothy chapter three, verse one through nine, don't have time to go through all the verses, but he says, there's a coming perversion. There's a coming perversion you have to be careful with. Paul contrasts the false teacher with the teacher of the word of God. And he says, there's a difference here. Don't mistake it. The second thing he says is this, because see, as a pastor, what I really like doing is I almost like ignoring the issues, you know, because it's a lot more comfortable. If you just ignore it, it's going down. But Paul looks at Timothy and he says, no, you're not going to ignore it. You're going to understand that people are going to pervert the truth. And when they pervert the truth, you're going to confront the perversion. You're going to confront the perversion. You're going to preach the word. You're going to confront the perversion. And so Paul saw the defeat of false teaching as critical to the church's future success. Paul understood this. False doctrine will not let the church do what the church is supposed to do. Now, let me just tell you this. If there's any place that needs this message, it's the good old United States of America, especially the Bible Belt, because our idea of a church is really messed up. Like our idea of a church is really messed up.

Don't you know how we shop for churches? It's almost like shopping for restaurants. The food was a little bit cold, but the service was good, so I'll give them another chance. That's not what you find in the Bible. We live in a day and age where this stuff is happening right and left. And Paul saw this. The defeat of false teaching is critical to the church being successful in the future. And so he says in 2 Timothy 3, verse 14 through 15, the Bible says this, But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom you have learned them, and that from a child that thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith, which is in Christ Jesus.

And then here's what he's going to say. 2 Timothy 3, verse 16 and 17, he's going to say, I need you to understand how precious the Word of God is. I wish you could understand this, but in the year 2017, I want you to understand something. All of us will hold a miracle in our hands this year, and it is the miracle of the Word of God that you hold in your hands, and it still matters today. This is the miracle of all miracles. God sent his Son in the flesh, and then he gave you a miracle that is beautiful, more beautiful than any other temporary miracle that would help you, is the fact that you have in your hands the blessed, almighty Word of God.

You have that in your hands, and what he's going to tell them is this. He's going to say, I need you to understand how precious this book you hold in your hand is. He says, all Scripture, verse 16, is given by inspiration of God. Chapter 3, it's profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be made perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. He says, here's the deal. You need to understand that this book that you hold, the Word of God matters. By the way, I'm thankful that I'm in a church where the Word of God matters. I'm thankful that we're in a church where their missions money goes to places where the Word of God matters. This Word matters. Now, remember that this is the context that's coming on here. 2 Timothy chapter 3, verse 16 and 17 is the context for what's coming up, and what he says is this, letter B on your paper is this, preaching the Word.

Preaching the Word. Chapter 3 and 4 teaches us this, the Word of God in doing what's right is not going to be easy. It's going to be a fight. It's funny because sometimes I'll take my kids with, my wife probably does it, not probably, my wife does it a lot more than I do, but you take them to these jump places, you know, the place they have all these trampolines everywhere for kids to jump on. And I love it because sometimes the kids will come out and they'll go, Daddy, I am so tired.

[ 16 : 22 ] I'm like, so what did you think? We brought you to a jumping place so that you would feel like you took a nap? Is that like, is that really what you thought would happen? What Paul's saying is this, I need you to understand something, buddy. Life is not going to be easy. It's not going to go the way you planned it. Everything's not going to be cozy. But here's what he says, I want you to prepare for it. And see, here's the problem with what we do. We love 2 Timothy chapter 4 and verse 2 where the Bible says, preach the Word. Be instant in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. And here's why it matters because we're supposed to preach the Word. But the problem is when we say that, we put the emphasis on the wrong syllable.

You know what I mean? Like we've got it all messed up because here's what we think. What we think is this, preachers like to read it. And by the way, I'm a preacher. Preachers like to read it like this, preach the Word. But there's a problem with that. It's not a small problem. It is a foundational issue because here's what happens. Our mandate is to preach the Word, but don't get the emphasis on the wrong syllable. The thing that matters is not preaching, but the thing is the Word. The way it should be stated is this, preach the Word. Because that's what truly matters. It's our mandate. When we mess this up, we begin to think that the center of our attention is the preacher and the preaching. When the center of our attention is the book that we hold in our hands. This is dangerous on levels that most people cannot even grasp and do not understand.

The pastor and the preaching becomes the ultimate goal if we look at it wrong. It becomes the ultimate goal. And the problem with that is this, then the preacher becomes the hero of the story.

Who's the hero of the story? Oh, the preacher. Let me just tell you, man, my preacher, he's awesome. By the way, I'm a preacher. They become the hero of the story. Sorry, guys, but the position of hero has been taken. And the only way you can take that position away, there's one way you can take it.

If you'll die and resurrect three days later and go sit on the right hand of the Father, then you're welcome to take that position. But guess what? Good luck with that one. Because we're not just supposed to preach. We're supposed to preach the Word. The Word matters. Good luck on that one. Trying to you take that place. Here's what you find. Jesus alone is the hero of all of our stories. Our mandate is this.

[ 18 : 56 ] Preach the Word. The Word is what matters. It gives us our guidelines. It gives us our boundaries. We are to preach the Word. Timothy is to preach the Word. And here's the deal. Timothy has no license to preach anything but the Word. Let me just tell you something. I have spoken publicly thousands of times, but I am not a professional speaker. And guess what? I don't want to be a professional speaker. Because what I get is a lot better than a professional speaker. I have the power of God if I'm preaching the Word of God. And it's sharper than any two-edged sword. So even an idiot like me, you can walk home and go, man, the Word of God is pretty awesome on that.

The preaching of the Word. We are to proclaim the Word when others are hesitant to do so. And let me just tell you, that's needed in Arequipa, Peru. And that's needed in Quito, Ecuador, in Guayaquil, Ecuador. But you know where else it's needed? It's needed in Alpharetta, Georgia, in Akworth, Georgia. And can I just tell you that preaching the Word isn't fun sometimes?

For those of you that know your Bibles, I'm now going through the book of Romans. And my next message is Romans chapter 1, the last part. I really wish I could skip it.

It'd be really nice if I could skip it. But I can't. Because I'm not supposed to preach my opinion. I'm supposed to preach the Word. Our society will not like what be said. And truthfully, there might be even people in our church that don't like it either. But my command as a pastor and a preacher of the Word is to preach the Word. And that's what I've got to do. Whether people like it or not, it really doesn't come into the equation. And if it does, then we cease to preach the Word and we might as well watch another episode of Seinfeld. If preaching the Word is not the mandate and not something we want to follow, then just go home and watch TV. Because there's honestly, they entertain better than I do. But that's not what we are. We are people that preach the Word.

We've already been warned in 2 Timothy chapter 3 verse 6 and 9 of this current that's going to drag people away. And because of that, Paul says this, here's your duty. Because of all the problems, here's what you're supposed to do. You're supposed to, help me out, you're supposed to preach the Word.

[ 21 : 12 ] Let's do it again. Because of all these undercurrents going, you're supposed to preach the Word. When all else fails, you're supposed to preach the Word. When nobody likes what you have to say, you're supposed to preach the Word. That's our duty is to preach the Word. Preaching the Word is essential in the world that offers falsehood as answers. All you have to do is turn that TV on in your house for about 15 minutes to understand the falsehoods that your kids are being taught.

Even with the nice stuff that you watch on TV and even though your parental control it to where they can't watch anything that's rated anything above a P3, anything above the 3H group, you still, you know what? People are going to be influenced by it. Because of that, you've got to understand our goal and what we have to do is preach the Word. Because guess what? Our kids are being offered falsehoods as answers at school every single day. And they're being offered falsehood at their homes in front of their TVs. And they're being offered falsehood by their friends that they're going to school with. And they're being offered falsehood by everybody and anybody around them. And there's one thing that will keep people stable and it will keep people.

And that's when we say, I'm going to preach the Word. That's what matters. We owe the Word the same reverence we owe to God because it has proceeded from Him alone and has nothing belonging to man mixed in it. The job of the preacher is that of a mailman. A mailman's hired to solely and exclusively bring you the messages that someone else has written and he's supposed to deliver it.

That's his job. His job is to deliver it. It's the true responsibility of the one that preaches the Word. Stop worrying about being original. OGTC, listen to me. Stop worrying about being original.

Stop worrying about being cool. Stop worrying about saying something that nobody else has ever said before. Understand one thing. Your duty is not to be original. Your duty is to preach the Word. Your duty is not to be inventive. Your duty is to preach the Word. That is what matters. Preach the Word.

[ 23 : 16 ] We have no need to come up with something that meets the demands of our days because there's no other book in the world that is more relevant than the book that you hold in your hands. People are like, come to a church that's relevant. You are in a church that's relevant if they're preaching the Word.

And they lose their relevance the day that they become a self-help counselor and they might as well call it a life coach seminar for everybody on Sunday mornings because the Word is neglected. They jump off of it. They don't preach it. It's time that we preach the Word.

We must be faithful to deliver the message of being entrusted to our care. A friend of mine got injured on the job and he went to file a workman's comp claim. He went in later to pick up the file and the boss said, the district manager came in and he saw it and he said, I wish we could help him, but he chunked it in the trash can.

In case you're wondering, that's illegal. And it's illegal as well for a pastor to stand up and give opinions that are not the Word of God.

He has one job. Deliver the message. And if any of you have ever seen those blog posts, you had one job. Have you ever seen those? Those are funny. You had one job and it'll have a guy that has two yellow lines going down the middle of the road and one line's as straight as an arrow and the other one looks like it had three too many cups of vodka or something, whatever you call that.

[ 24 : 28 ] Like, it's horrible. It's hilarious. You had one job. Back to school sell at Walmart and they have knives on the front. Like, that doesn't go in the back to school. You had one job. You messed it up.

As preachers, we have one job. Not two, not three, not five, not seven. One, our job is to preach the Word. It's my job. I'm not to cry or make you cry.

I'm not to laugh and make you laugh. I'm not to entertain or to be entertained. I'm to preach the Word. The Word that I preach is sharper than any two-edged sword and that's the promise because it's the Word of God. Let me just tell you, if anything that I say impacts you in any way, I know the guy preaching to you.

You don't deserve to get anything that's going to help you tonight. But if I preach the Word, it's sharper than any two-edged sword. He'll do the job it was intended to do. Paul entrusts this job to Timothy who was entrusted to his flock, who in turn entrusts it to us.

We are to preach the Word. I'm not a professional preacher, speaker. I'm a preacher of the Word. If I venture outside of the Word, I've wandered outside of the area of my expertise.

[ 25 : 32 ] The Word truly matters. I, as a pastor, have no authority to declare any other message but His Word. If we want the gospel to continue spreading, I don't know of any other church that's as crazy about this as you guys are, and I'm hoping that the church that I pastor will become as crazy as you guys are at it, but y'all tend to want the gospel to spread in crazy ways.

Like it's insane what you guys do. If you want the gospel to spread, tomorrow preaching must be today's priority. The preaching of the Word.

The Word is for all of us to share. As you're sitting there listening, here's the deal. You're sitting there thinking, Man, I hope preachers are listening to this. All these pastors, all these guys in training, it's great for them to listen to this because they need that.

That's awesome. I'm glad they're listening to this. You know what's so funny? What's funny is this. Our pastors, maybe they're listening. Go ahead and brace for impact because what you'll find in 2 Timothy, it's interesting how congregational the passage is.

And what he's going to say in 2 Timothy is this. 2 Timothy 4, verse 3 through 5 tells us what brings preacher to preach anything other than the Word is the itching ears of people. Did you know that you won't find in 2 Timothy where Paul gets on to the teachers?

[ 26 : 48 ] What you do find is where Paul gets on to the congregation. Don't be asking to preach other stuff other than the Word. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts they shall heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned into fables.

But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of evangelists, make full proof of thy ministry. Paul attacks not the teachers but the people who are listening. The third thing is this, his pending death.

We're wrapping it up now, his pending death. What you find is his hope in death in chapter 4, verse 6 through 8. He says, listen, I fought my fight. I'm ready to go. He's kept the faith. He's proclaimed the gospel before Nero.

You think you're brave because you tagged a door? Really? Man, I'm awesome. I tagged 200 doors. Well, how about going to the guy who's going to take your head off of your body and proclaiming the gospel?

That's what you call backbone. He stands up and he says, I'm going to give you the gospel. He's ready for what's about to come his way. He's about to be beheaded after they pass the verdict on Paul. One thing to make sure and understand is this.

[ 27 : 52 ] Nero has one verdict, but Jesus has a verdict that's totally different. Nero says you're guilty and Jesus says he can call you guilty, but I'm not a king. I'm not an emperor. I'm the king of kings.

And let me just tell you, you preach the word. You share the gospel. And guess what? My verdict is way different than that of a man like Nero. His situation in prison.

Paul asked Timothy, and I love this. If you have the handout on the bottom, you see the map. Paul asked Timothy to come and see him in verse 9 and verse 13 and verse 21. He says, hey, come shortly to me.

Bring me my books. Bring me all these things. And you read that and you don't understand that when Paul is telling Timothy to do this, it doesn't seem like that big of a deal, right?

Like, hey, when you come into the house, stop by subway and get me a sandwich. You know, that kind of thing that you'd say. He lives 1,000 miles away from him. Like, hey, bring me my stuff in Denver.

[ 28 : 49 ] No airplane. No car. But bring me my stuff in Denver. How about it? That's kind of what's going on here. Hey, man, just drop by, drop my stuff off. Here he's going on and he says, he speaks to the Gentiles knowing that they had been freed from the lion's mouth.

And I love this verse. And we're going to close looking at this verse right here. In 2 Timothy 4, 17, here's what he says. Not with saying the Lord stood with me and straightened me that by my preaching might be fully known and that all Gentiles might hear.

Here's what he's saying. I'm about to die. They're about to take my head off. But I want you to understand one thing about what happens when that happens. He says, they think that they punished me.

But I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion. Guess what? Kill me if you want to. And when you think you're giving me the worst punishment a man can have, you're actually freeing me to serve and to be with the one that I love.



Last words, lasting words. Paul is saying, in death, he will be free. They will think that I received the ultimate punishment, but I didn't receive it. I received the ultimate reward. You threatened me with heaven.

[ 29 : 55 ] Thank you. Thank you. I'm dying as horrific of a death as exists, but I'm now free to serve the one that I have loved. I'm free to love the one that I've served as I'm in heaven.

I'm free to worship the one that gave life to me. And so, oh no. Let me just tell you something. You think you're putting me away, but you're not putting me away. You're giving me freedom that I've never had before. Because I've wanted to go to heaven before, but now you're just getting me there quicker.

Thanks for the first class ticket on the way to heaven. Because I'm excited to see my Savior. Here's what you find. When somebody's not afraid of death, it's very difficult to intimidate them. So what are you going to do?

Kill me? Yay! Let's do that one. That one sounds good. It's your choice A, B, and C. Dead, dead, dead, dead. Hey, I'll take any of them. Are all three combined? Go for it. Because I am a child of the King and I'm ready to die.

And my last words are going to be this. Son, I want you to man up. And I want you to own the fact that life isn't going to be good all the time. But you serve a risen Savior. And He's worth giving it all.

[ 30 : 58 ] His goodbye. Timothy is a large part of it, as were these others. I love these last verses in the book of 2 Timothy. Because sometimes we tend to think that Paul's the center of everything. But Paul's last words weren't really words of heroism.

They were words of thanks to the people who have made his ministry work. Can I just say, Vision, I appreciate the preachers here, the pastors. One of them I'm actually pretty close to.

I actually call him like Dad. Like he's that close to me. You know, he's like Dad. He's like a father to me for some reason. And so, like, I'm thankful for the OGTC. I'm thankful for the guy's training. But can I just tell you something?

As you sit in these pews and you understand the importance of the gospel of Jesus Christ, let me just say something. Thank you. Thank you.

Because without you, the sending of missionaries is nothing but a pipe dream that a man sits on a computer and types about that one day he might be able to do. Thank you for being people that will sit in the pews and say, The gospel matters enough to vary my life because of it.

[ 32 : 01 ] Everything about me is going to be different. Paul was pretty sure this would be the last letter he was going to write, and he was sure. What he chose to speak about is very telling. He considers these things to be crazy important.

He never sugarcoats Christianity. Paul never does. Never sugarcoats Christianity. He never makes us think that everything is going to be okay. Like, I don't think he would have done well in a lot of the churches in America.

Paul didn't get his best life now for some reason. I don't know. He says, Man up and own it. Knowing that even more trouble is heading your way. He looks at Timothy and he says, Son, I'm about to die. One of the most horrific deaths a man can die.

And you need to own the fact that you might die that same death. But I know who I have believed. And I'm persuaded that he's able.

Can I ask you how you've decided to handle a life that you don't really know is going to go the way you want it to? How many of you have ever written up five-year plans before? You know what five-year plans are awesome for?

[ 33 : 08 ] Is you get to go back in five years and look back and laugh. That's what they're awesome about. Like you, Oh, this is going to happen. Oh, man. I'm going to be the king of the world. Yeah, this is awesome. I'm going to be a multi, multi, multi, multi hundrednaire.

And so, like. And then you go back five years later and you look at him like, look at these. Life isn't going to go the way you expect it to.

Man up. Own it. Serve him. Preach the word. Let the word matter. And know that you know who you believed. And you're persuaded.

He's able. Decide that you're going to do everything that you need to as you follow Christ when things don't go right. Paul's instructions and encouragement to Timothy are as valid for us today as they were for the church in Ephesus.

Let's leave tonight not just knowing the truth of 2 Timothy. But how about we walk out and say, Lord, help me to live the truth of 2 Timothy. So exactly what is it that's going to make you stop serving Jesus?

[ 34 : 16 ] Exactly what is it that's going to make you stop serving Jesus? It's time to look with Paul as he's talking to Timothy and say, I want to be that guy as well. In a world that offers the instant and effortless, 2 Timothy gives us hope that the struggle to follow Christ is worth the sacrifices and the difficulties that we face.

It offers us the instant and the effortless. Do you realize we're living in a day and age where everything is so convenient? Like, do you realize how amazing of a life we live?

I don't even go to the grocery store for most of my stuff now. There's this awesome website. I don't know if you ever heard of it before. It's called Amazon.com. And you click stuff and in two days a dude shows up in a truck, walks out with a box in his hand, puts it at your front door and then rings the doorbell for you to come get it.

That's the life we're offered in America. But can I tell you, we still have to deal with problem after problem after problem. I understand. We're going to serve him no matter what.

The circumstances of your life will come to a day when you have to show what your true allegiance is. There's going to come a day when you've got to show what your true allegiance is and what will it be. If your heart's not right, your Christianity will only last as long as your circumstances allow it to.

[ 35 : 37 ] If your heart's not right, your Christianity will only last as long as your circumstances allow it to. Maybe today's the day when you need to reconsider the terms that you've given God for your willingness to serve him.

Because we all have that list, don't we? God, I'll serve you as long as. Maybe it's time to come to him and say, God, my wealth is yours. My reputation is yours.

My wallet's yours. My marriage is yours. My children are yours. And if you want to send them around the world, that's fine. And if you don't, that's fine. Because I want to serve you with everything in my fiber, every fiber in my being.

I want to serve you and watch what you alone can do. You say, Brother Chris, I just don't know if I'm willing for my child to go. Aren't you glad your Heavenly Father didn't think that about His child?

It's time to man up and own the fact that things aren't always going to go well. But we serve a risen Savior.

[ 36 : 42 ] And I know who I have believed. And I am persuaded that He is able. This message was recorded at Vision Baptist Church in Alfred, Georgia.

For more information, log on to [www.visionbaptist.com](http://www.visionbaptist.com) where you can find our service times, location, contact information, and more audio and video recordings.