

THROUGH THE BIBLE STUDY

2 TIMOTHY 3-4

Once a pastor went to the ICU at the local hospital to visit a church member who was on life support.

The pastor stood at the man's bedside, and spoke to him for several minutes. The patient grew disturbed, agitated. He reached for his pad, and wrote the pastor a note. Not wanting to further upset the fellow, the pastor smiled and slipped the note in his jacket pocket. He prayed for the man, then left the hospital. Sadly, a few hours later the pastor got a call from a relative with the news that the church member had passed away.

Well, it wasn't until halfway through the funeral service that the pastor recalled the note he'd written. *The pastor had forgotten all about it.* He reached into his jacket, pulled it out, and held it up to the crowd, "I have here a piece of paper that contains the last words of our brother." *But the pastor never read it...* The dead man had written, "You're standing on my oxygen tube."

Well, 2 Timothy 3-4 are Paul's last words. As the apostle awaits his execution, he writes of his final concerns. Timothy unrolls the scroll and discovers what Paul was thinking as he prepared for eternity.

Chapter 3 begins, ^{2 Timothy 3:1} "But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come." The Greek word translated ^{3:1} "perilous" means "savage and dangerous." Paul warns Timothy that as we get closer to the return of Jesus, society will grow worse, not better.

And here's how... ^{3:2} "For men will be lovers of themselves." Folks will become self-absorbed. They'll worship their own desires! They'll become ^{3:2} "Lovers of money..." They'll put money above conscience, and conviction, and friendship, and family, and even God.

Men will become ^{3:2} "boasters, proud, blasphemers..." They'll brag that they no longer need or believe in God.

I read of a local atheist group in Madison, Wisconsin. They erected a sign next to the city's Christmas tree. It read, "In this season of the Winter Solstice, may reason prevail. There are no gods, no devil, no angels, no heaven or hell. There is only the natural world. Religion is but a superstition that hardens hearts and enslaves minds." But evidently the atheist group was concerned their sign might get stolen, so they had printed on the back of the sign, "Thou shalt not steal."

It's amazing that the people who blaspheme God still lean on His laws to protect their own self-interests. Atheists mock the idea of God, but without His moral standards of right and wrong, they can't construct an orderly world worth living in. Life turns into chaos.

Also in the last days folks will become ^{3:2} “disobedient to parents...” Once, a British visitor to the US, the Duke of Windsor, was asked what impressed him most. He said, “The way American parents obey their children.”

Today, pop culture mocks parental authority, and glamorizes rebellion. Disputing authority is viewed as a rite of passage. A parent who hopes to teach his child respect for authority, won't get much help from society.

Paul continues his list, ^{2:3} “unthankful...” In the last days, people will be better off, and appreciate it less....

They'll also be ^{3:2} “unholy...” No one will fear God, or feel the need to make the least sacrifice for His sake.

Verse 3, ^{3:3} “Unloving...” The word means, “without natural affection.” Normal, natural ties will disappear.

I heard the bizarre case of a 22 year old Florida mom who shook her 3 year old son to death for interrupting her as she was playing the video game, Farmville. The baby dared to cry, while his mom tended to her virtual farm. That is ^{3:3} “unloving” and certainly *not natural*.

People will also become ^{3:3} “unforgiving...” Folks will grow bitter and self-righteous. Imagine a world where everyone carries a grudge. *That sounds like today.*

Also ^{3:3} “slanderers...” Today, we live in a social media culture where folks can tweet and post their libel.

People will be ^{3:3} “without self-control, brutal.” According to the FBI's 2019 Crime Clock, in America a violent crime is committed every 26.3 seconds. A murder takes place ever 32 minutes, and a rape occurs every 3.8 minutes. We live today in a truly violent society.

And what would you expect after sampling the brutality on our primetime TV. David Walsh, president of the National Institute on Media and Family stated, “It is tragically ironic that at the very time we are wringing our hands about violent behavior among young people, we are simultaneously entertaining them with it.”

The same people who pay \$7 million for a 30 second Super Bowl commercial turn around and tell us that TV and video games have little effect on violent behavior. *Do the media moguls really think we're that stupid?*

In the last days folks will also be ^{3:3} “despisers of good, ^{3:4} traitors...” You’ll no longer be able to trust people. There was a day in America when a man’s word was his bond, but no longer. Everyone looks for loopholes. Contracts are renegotiated. Handshakes mean nada...

People will also be ^{3:4} “headstrong...” - stubborn, prejudicial. *They’re right and everybody else is wrong.*

And folks will become ^{3:4} “lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God...” If ever there was a statement that fits modern America, this is it! People today live for the weekend - *but not to go to church and pray* - but to **party** and **play**. *People will love God*, but they love pleasure more. They worship comfort and amusement.

Verse 5 continues Paul’s last day’s analysis. ^{3:5} “Having a form of godliness but denying its power.” Realize you can be *a lover of yourself*, and *of money*, and *proud*, and *headstrong* - and everything Paul warns us about, and still be religious. It’s ^{3:5} “*a form of godliness.*”

You can cloth yourself in religious accessories, yet deny God’s transformative power. People embrace *the formality without the force - the liturgy without the life.*

The Prophet Jeremiah lived among religious yet hypocritical Jews. In Jeremiah 12:2 he describes them, ^{Jeremiah 12:2} “(God is) near in their mouth but far from their mind.” People in the last days will want enough of God to feel secure, but not enough of God to *change their heart*, and *renew their mind*, and *reform how they live!*

It reminds me of a quote, “I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please. Not enough to explode my soul or disturb my sleep, but just enough to equal a cup of warm milk, or a snooze in the sunshine. I don’t want enough of Him to make me love a man of a different color, or pick beets with a migrant worker. I want ecstasy, not transformation. I want the warmth of the womb, not a new birth. I want a pound of the Eternal in a paper sack. I would like to buy \$3 worth of God, please.” Yet God doesn’t come in mini-bites or \$3 portions. **Jesus is either Lord of all, or not Lord at all!**

Notice what Paul says about people who like being religious, without being godly... ^{2 Timothy 3:5} “**And from such people turn away!**” If the believers you’re around are simply playing church it’s not your job to stay with them in hopes of changing them. You need to remove yourself.

Chances are they’ll rub off on you - not vice versa!

Verse 6, ^{3:6} “**For of this sort are those who creep into households...**” The NIV reads, ^{2 Timothy 3:6} “**they worm their way in.**”

2 Timothy 3:6 “And make captives of gullible women loaded down with sins, led away by various lusts...” Paul is thinking of the slick, smooth-talking, manipulative preacher who plays on the rich widow’s guilt or naiveté, and milks her of her money. He knows how to pluck the heart-strings of the emotionally vulnerable to pad his own pockets.

Beware of people who are 3:7 “always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” This is the Christian who is on a continual quest for *the new revelation... the secret formula... the hidden key*.

Rather than rest in the settled truth of God’s Word and let their faith mature, they run about hoping to discover a shortcut. *Oh, it’s easier to excuse my failure on ignorance, than it is a lack of faith and obedience.*

Verse 8, 3:8 “Now as Jannes and Jambres resisted Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, disapproved concerning the faith; 3:9 but they will progress no further, for their folly will be manifest to all, as theirs also was.” In Exodus 7 Moses threw down his rod before Pharaoh and it turned into a serpent, yet the magicians of Egypt were able to duplicate the miracle. Satan also has supernatural power. In Exodus 7 the sorcerers are nameless. It’s not until 2 Timothy 3:8 that we discover who they were... 3:8 “*Jannes and Jambres.*”

These occult practitioners duplicated several of Moses’ miracles. They turned the Nile to blood, and called up frogs... but when Moses brought the third plague (of lice) they threw in the towel. Exodus 8:19, Exodus 8:19 “Then the magicians said... ‘This is the finger of God.’”

Paul’s point here is yes, Satan has power, but it’s limited. The *power of God* exceeds the *power of Satan*. False teachers in the last days will demonstrate a powerful resistance to the truth, but their opposition will eventually be overcome and eclipsed by God’s power.

In verse 11 Paul’s final thoughts shift from the end of the age to Timothy’s current struggle, 2 Timothy 3:10 “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance, 3:11 persecutions, afflictions, which happened to me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra - what persecutions I endured. And out of them all the Lord delivered me.” Timothy’s hometown was Lystra in Galatia. And there, in the early days of Paul’s ministry, Timothy had watched the Jews stone his friend, Paul. He had seen firsthand the ungodly persecution his mentor had encountered.

And Paul makes a disturbing promise to Timothy. 3:12 “Yes, and all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.” Christians, love to claim God’s

promises... Matthew 6:33, ^{Matthew 6:33} “Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness and all these other things shall be added to you.” Philippians 4:19, ^{Philippians 4:19} “My God will supply all your need according to your riches in glory by Christ Jesus.” Hebrews 13:5, ^{Hebrews 13:5} “I will never leave you nor forsake you.” We love to recall these promises. We turn them into bumper stickers, or refrigerator magnets. But you never see the promise in 2 Timothy 3:12 embossed in a Hallmark card, ^{2 Timothy 3:12} “*all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will suffer persecution.*” - and yet it's God's promise nonetheless.

Hey, we might as well expect this - and prepare for it. If this world hated Jesus; then it will hate us too!

Verse 13, ^{3:13} “But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. ^{3:14} But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them...” The key is not a new revelation, but continuing in the-once-and-for-all truth of Scripture.

^{3:15} “And that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.”

Realize, you never graduate from the Bible! You don't study it for a semester; then sell it back to the bookstore. It's your curriculum for life. In the Bible is all we need to sustain a right relationship with God.

Paul assures us in verse 16, ^{3:16} “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God...” In Greek it's “*theonuestos*” or “*God breathed.*” The Bible is literally the words of God.

And ^{3:16} “*All Scripture*” is equally inspired. Certain sections are not more *God-breathed* than others. That's why we teach book by book, chapter by chapter, verse by verse. Leviticus is as inspired as Luke. There're truths we can glean from all the Bible. In fact, “*It takes a whole Bible to make a whole Christian.*”

And not only is ^{3:16} *all Scripture* inspired, it's beneficial. Verse 16 calls it ^{3:16} “*profitable...*” There are pastors today who suggest the OT is arcane and irrelevant to Christians. *Not* so. The OT is as instructive as the New. In different ways, but ^{3:16} *all Scripture* is definitely needful.

Paul says the Bible is ^{3:16} “*profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness.*” ^{3:16} *Doctrine* is *what to believe...* ^{3:16} *Correction* is *what not to believe...* ^{3:16} *Instruction* is *how to live...* ^{3:16} *Reproof* is *how not to live...* And the Bible accomplishes all four tasks!

The Word of God has been given to us ^{3:17} “that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.” All you need to know to *grow* and *go* as a Christian is found right in the pages of the Bible!

Chapter 4, ^{2 Timothy 4:1} “I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom...” Jesus is returning to Earth to establish His throne on this planet, *from which He’ll judge every soul that has ever lived.*

Once, a lady was accused of a crime. She was guilty and she knew she needed a crack defense attorney. A lawyer was recommended. She wrote down his name and address. *But she delayed in contacting him.*

When her trial date grew closer she realized she needed to act, so she called the attorney. Sadly, it was too late. He explained that if she had called just a week earlier he would’ve been happy to take her case, but two days previous he’d been appointed judge. *Instead of being her advocate, he had now become her judge!*

And this is going to happen to millions of people. Today Jesus is our advocate - our attorney. He’s willing to plead our case and secure for us God’s mercy and pardon. But soon, when He returns, He’ll be appointed Judge. And Jesus will condemn everyone who has ignored or opposed Him... *Don’t wait to call Jesus...*

This is why Paul tells Timothy to ^{4:2} “Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season.” When it’s *convenient or inconvenient - planned or spontaneous.*

^{4:2} “Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.” We need to proclaim God’s Word with as much persuasive power as we can muster... *convince, rebuke, encourage, teach, and stay at it! Don’t give up!*

Here’s a poem you don’t want to hear said to you one day, “My friend, I stand in judgment now, and I feel that you are to blame somehow. On earth we talked together day by day, but never did you point the way. You know the Lord in truth and glory, but never did you tell the story. My knowledge then was very dim; you could’ve led me safe to Him. Though we lived together on the earth, you never told me of new birth. And now I stand, this day condemned, because you failed to mention Him.” We all have friends who need Jesus!

Verse 3, ^{4:3} “For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; ^{4:4} and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.” In the last days truth will no longer be sought. Instead people will listen to what *pleases* and *teases* - what *tickles* rather than *teaches*. And pastors

will cater to their demands. They'll water down the Word of God, and pass out defective doctrine - *fables not truth*.

To me one of the scariest passages in the Bible is Jeremiah 5:31, [Jeremiah 5:31](#) "The prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule by their own power; and My people love to have it so." Christians tolerate the deception and corruption. We end up getting the leaders we deserve.

[2 Timothy 4:5](#) "But you (and he's speaking to Timothy, the faithful minister) be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry." "Perilous times" have a way of discouraging faithful servants. Paul tells Timothy to stick to his calling and finish well.

And to illustrate perseverance, verse 6 Paul speaks of himself, [4:6](#) "For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand."

Graduation day is right around the corner for Paul. He's about to depart from this world to be with Christ. And he describes the life he's lived as a drink offering.

In antiquity, a sacrifice was soaked with liquid spices that made the meat tender and gave off an aroma. And this was how Paul saw his ministry. The believers under his care were living sacrifices for Jesus, and his influence tenderized their hearts and flavored their lives. Paul was truly an A-1 servant of Jesus Christ.

And notice too, Paul's life wasn't taken from him, for it had already been given to God and poured out on others! You can't take from me what I no longer possess. Paul had left it all on the field - given his all to Jesus. He passed into eternity with no regrets.

He even speaks of his impending execution not as *death*, but as [4:6](#) "the time of my departure." The Greek word translated [4:6](#) "departure" is a wonderful word. Author Warren Wiersbe provides at least four definitions...

First, "to hoist an anchor and set sail." And that's what Paul was doing. He was headed for new waters.

Second, "to take down a tent." Paul's physical body had been but a temporary dwelling. He strikes the tent.

Third, [4:6](#) "departure" means "to free a prisoner." Death for Paul was God's jailbreak. It was God's means of delivering him from *prison and persecution* to *paradise*.

Fourth, "to unyoke an ox." Paul had spent 30 years of tireless service. Now, he's entering into his rest.

Paul continues in verse 7, ^{4:7} **“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”**

Paul was like a marathoner crossing the finish line, or a fighter going the distance, all 15 rounds... Paul refused to tap out. He's now about to break the tape. All his Christian life he ran to win. Now the stretching and straining will finally be rewarded. *What a moment!*

Once, a little boy received a yellow parakeet as a birthday gift. He was painting its cage with a coat of varnish, when he reached inside to remove the bird.

But the parakeet fell into the varnish and drowned. It was tragic! The boy was terribly upset.. *in tears...* His older brother found him, and comforted him as only a big brother can, **“Cheer up little buddy, at least your bird had a good finish.”** And here Paul is finishing well. He's fought... He's ran... and He's kept the faith.

And don't gloss over how Paul viewed his life... He didn't say, *“The party's over.”* But, ^{4:7} **“I fought the good fight.”** **“I finished the race.”** I went toe to toe with all life could throw at me, and I ^{4:7} **“kept the faith,”** **“I finished.”**

Paul fought Judaizers and Gnostics - illnesses and weariness - jealous people, pagan people, greedy people - physical assaults, and personal attacks, and vicious lies - close friends forsook him - churches denied him - his Christian life had been an uphill fight.

How do you view your life? *A stroll in the park? A tiptoe through the tulips?* I believe if you live for God's glory, your life will be nothing short of a brawl!

Do your job with integrity and you'll fight your co-workers who like to cut corners... Hold high standards at home and you'll fight your kids' compromise... Desire holiness in your heart and you'll fight with your own flesh... Open up your home for a discipleship group and you'll probably fight the neighbors next door... This world is hostile to God. Remember, it killed Jesus, don't expect it to roll out the red carpet for you. Hey, *buckle your chinstrap*, fight the good fight, finish well!

And the winner of a fight receives a belt, a crown, an award. This is what Paul had his eyes on... He says in verse 8, ^{4:8} **“Finally, there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give to me on that Day, and not to me only but also to all who have loved His appearing.”**

Two types of crowns are mentioned in Scripture. The Greek terminology is **“diadema”** and **“stephanos.”** The *diadem* was the **king's crown**. It was inherited rather than earned... But the *stephanos*, or laurel, was the **victor's wreath**. It was given to the winners at the Olympic Games, and worn by conquering generals...

This is the reward Paul expects: 2 Timothy 4:8 “the stephanos of righteousness.” The Bible teaches crowns are passed out to Christians at the Judgment seat of Christ. The Lord Jesus Himself will reward believers who remain faithful to Him in their life and in their service.

In fact, the NT mentions five different crowns...

1 Corinthians 9:24-27 lists an **imperishable crown**, which is given to the believer who lives a disciplined life... In 1 Thessalonians 2:19-20 Paul mentions a **crown of rejoicing**, it goes to the person wins souls for Jesus... James 1:12 talks of a **crown of life**. This is awarded to believers who resist temptation... And 1 Peter 5:4 speaks of a **crown of glory**. This is the reward that’s given to faithful church leaders...

And finally, here is the **crown of righteousness**. It’s received by all believers who keep their hearts primed, and stay undistracted by the world, and live their lives longing for the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ...

The 2 Timothy 4:8 “**crown of righteousness**” is given to folks who 4:8 “**love His appearing.**” I have a friend who used to call himself “Pan-trib.” When it came to the return of Jesus for His Church he figured “*however it pans out...*”

But I don’t like that attitude. I’m **pre-trib**. I believe the next thing to happen on God’s prophetic time table is the rapture of the Church... **Love the Lord’s appearing!** Long to see Jesus! **Jesus is what’s next!** You won’t endure if you don’t keep your eyes on the prize.

As a kid I loved my mom, but I didn’t always love her appearance. When my hand was in the cookie jar, and she walked into the kitchen I loved my mom, but I didn’t necessarily love her appearing at that moment. A special crown goes to the man who keeps his hands off the cookies, and lives ready to meet Jesus.

For the rest of the chapter, Paul deals with practical issues. We get a rare glimpse into his personal world.

In verse 9 he writes to Timothy, 4:9 “**Be diligent to come to me quickly...**” Paul’s legal proceedings weren’t going so well. His appeals were almost exhausted. An execution date hadn’t been set, but it would be soon.

Paul would love to see his son in the faith one more time. Nobody should have to die alone. *Hurry Timothy!*

Verse 10 tells us why it’s so vital that Timothy come to him, 4:10 “**for Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world, and has departed for Thessalonica...**”

Demas was a once trusted ally of Paul, but the world stole his heart. Demas sold his soul to selfish desires.

I know Demas' last words before he bailed out. They're not in the Bible, *but I know them*. I've heard them so many times before... "I just want to be happy."

Recently, I bumped into a fellow at the Waffle House who'd once been part of CC. I hadn't seen him in months. He told me he was considering a divorce. And this was his excuse, "I just want some happiness."

That's what Demas said - but that's not what he meant! He meant I just want to get drunk. I just want to be free from responsibility. I'm tired of my job, and my wife's disrespect, and the kids rebellion, and all the ingratitude... Life has gotten hard, and I want out!

"Hey, Demas, regardless of how attractive it sounds, escaping God-given responsibilities is not anyone's ticket to happiness." Demas swapped his *commitments* for a few *jollies*, but there was no *satisfaction* in that. On top of his emptiness he added alimony, child support, shame, guilt, the loss of his children's respect.

Life is a fight *with or without Jesus*... **Without Jesus** life is a wild goose chase with no goose. But **with Jesus** there's a prize worth having after the fight!

Paul was now alone. 4:10 "Crescens had left for Galatia, Titus for Dalmatia. 4:11 **Only Luke is with me.**" Luke was not only the NT historian, but Paul's personal physician.

4:11 "Get Mark and bring him with you, for he is useful to me for ministry." In Acts 15 on his first missionary journey, Mark abandoned Paul and Barnabas. When it came time for a second mission trip, Paul refused to take Mark. It created a split with Paul and Barnabas.

But now at the end of Paul's journeys he desires to be with Mark. Obviously, he harbored no grudges. He had forgiven Mark, and given him a second chance. Now Paul considers him 4:11 "useful to me for ministry."

Verse 12 4:12 "And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus." Timothy was the pastor in Ephesus. And Tychicus is delivering this letter to Timothy. Paul is sending him as Timothy's replacement so Timothy can come to Rome.

In verse 13 Paul adds, 4:13 "Bring the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas when you come..." Apparently, winter was right around the corner. It was getting cold in his Roman jail cell, and Paul needs a coat to stay warm.

He also asks for 4:13 "the books, especially the parchments." And this amazes me, Paul wrote half the NT. He took the Gospel around the globe - started churches everywhere - *yet he really needed his Bible!*

Here's a man who stayed in God's Word to the end; *until the day he died.* [Romans 10:17](#) "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." And that's true whether you've been a Christian for 30 minutes or for 30 years.

Verse 14, [2 Timothy 4:14](#) "Alexander the coppersmith did me much harm. May the Lord repay him according to his works." Paul pulls no punches. This Alexander did him [4:14](#) "much harm." Paul levels the worst of curses on this man. He affords *him no grace, no mercy* - just give the guy what he deserves. Repay him according to his works.

Paul had enemies, as well as friends, and before he departs this earth he points out to Timothy the guys who'll give him the most trouble. [4:15](#) "You also must beware of him, for he has greatly resisted our words."

Verse 16 is one of the most heartbreaking verses in the Bible... [4:16](#) "At my first defense no one stood with me, but all forsook me. May it not be charged against them." Roman courts had preliminary hearings where evidence was presented *for* and *against* the accused.

A time was scheduled for the prosecutor to parade his witnesses before the court. Then the defendant brought his witnesses to *affirm his innocence* and *attest to his character*. Evidently, on the day Paul defended himself nobody showed up - *not one friend*. Paul led thousands of people to Jesus, yet when he needed a friend no other human showed up to help.

And Paul held no resentment, for he'd learned a lesson. Verse 17, [4:17](#) "But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that the message might be preached fully through me, and that all the Gentiles might hear." At his trial before Nero, only Jesus stood with Paul, but he realized Jesus was all he needed.

I love this paraphrase of verse 17, [2 Timothy 4:17](#) "At my preliminary hearing no one stood by me. They all ran like scared rabbits. But it doesn't matter - the Master stood by me."

At the end of verse 17 Paul remarks about his first imprisonment, [2 Timothy 4:17](#) "And I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion." It could be that Paul was literally thrown to the lions, *a torture of Rome*. Could it be God saved Paul by striking the big cats with lockjaw, like He did for Daniel.

Or Paul could've been speaking metaphorically - of Nero - or even of Satan himself. [1 Peter 5:8](#) refers to Satan as [1 Peter 5:8](#) "a roaring lion." The point Paul makes is God delivered him once, He can do it again if He chooses!

Verse 18 declares boldly, [2 Timothy 4:18](#) "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work and preserve me for His heavenly kingdom. To Him be glory forever and ever. Amen!"

4:19 “Greet Prisca and Aquila...” Everywhere this couple is mentioned in Scripture we find Priscilla and Aquila hosting a Bible study in their home. Here’s a couple that opened up to Jesus both their hearts *and* home.

4:19 “And (also greet) the household of Onesiphorus.” Onesiphorus was also visiting Paul in Rome. Perhaps he asked Paul to mention his family back in Ephesus.

Verse 20, 4:20 “Erastus stayed in Corinth...” Erastus was a Corinthian official, mentioned several times in the NT.

In 2015 a group from CalvaryCSM followed in the footsteps of Paul, and we visited the ruins of Corinth. And guess who’s name we saw engraved in the street? The Corinthian official Paul mentions here, 4:20 *Erastus!* It’s just another proof of the Bible’s historical reliability.

4:20 “Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick.” If it’s God’s will to heal all illnesses, *why did Paul leave behind a sick Trophimus?* The truth is, God can use illness for our growth and His purpose.

Paul continues to address Timothy, verse 21, 4:21 “Do your utmost to come before winter.” *And why the rush?* Remember Paul was counting on Timothy to fetch the coat he left in Troas. He needed it - it was turning chilly.

4:21 “Eubulus greets you, as well as Pudens, Linus, Claudia, and all the brethren.” All believers in Rome.

And here are Paul’s final words, 4:22 “The Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Grace be with you. Amen.”

And what will be your final words? A cry for help? Remorse? Regret? Or like Paul will you and I be able to say, 2 Timothy 4:7 “*I have fought the good fight. I’ve kept the faith.*”

The first step is to give your life to Jesus. *If you haven’t done that you can today.* The second step is to keep giving your life to Jesus, *everyday, in new ways.*