**Sermon: A Full Life & Fulfilled Ministry** Text: 2 Timothy 4:5-8

5 As for you, always be sober-minded,

endure suffering,

do the work of an evangelist,

fulfill your ministry.

6 For I am already being poured out as a drink offering,

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 Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness,

which the Lord, the righteous judge,

will award to me on that Day,

and not only to me

but also to all who have loved his appearing.

Review: God’s Word is breathed out by God, profitable to equip God’s people, and to be preached faithfully. Paul urges Timothy to fulfill the ministry, which God has trained, ordained, and will sustain Timothy thru. Paul can ~~encourage~~ exhort Timothy to fulfill his ministry, because Paul has, only by being ‘strengthened by the grace in Christ Jesus.’ And if he/we think there might be better options (FOBO), then take heart, faithfulness to Christ is always the best option!

**SiS**: Timothy, you keep on, because Christ kept on in me, and He is worth it!

“Consistently pursue these tasks by God’s grace. If you want to be faithful to the end, there are no shortcuts in the middle.” (David Platt)

1. **Fulfill Your Ministry:**  v5-6
   1. v5b ‘fulfill you ministry’ this phrase sums up 3 phrases in v5
   2. v6a ‘For’ Paul is already being ‘poured out as a drink offering: drink poured onto whole burnt offering to bring out the aroma, emphasize the flavor, and point what’s bigger/better. Num 15:5 ‘the 1/4 hin (1/3 gallon) of wine for each lamb’ was the ‘pleasing aroma’ to accompany the sacrifice
      1. Phil 2:16-17 “…so that in the day of Christ I may be proud that I did not run in vain or labor in vain. Even if I am to be poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrificial offering of your faith, I am glad and rejoice with you all. ” My whole life is poured out for y’alls growth in faith!
      2. Rom 12:1 “…present your bodies as a living sacrifice…”
         1. Paul’s highest honor to serve his Lord and Savior was to suffer for his name and for the salvation of others - to continue the logic of the cross: If Christ’s sacrifice for His glory and our salvation is worth His death, then Paul’s sacrifice of imprisonment, and death for the spread of the Gospel and the endurance of God’s people is worth it.
   3. Is Christ worth serving? Is he worth living for? Is He worth dying for? Are lost souls worth suffering for? Are lost sheep worth my injury? Are disciples worth my perseverance? Are hurting believers worth my time? Are any/all image-bearers worth my sacrifice? ->depends on ultimate love!
      1. You are living, serving, sacrificing, and will eventually be willing to die for something: Paul’s life-message= Is Christ worth it? Do you love Him?
   4. v6b ‘the time of my departure has come’ - lit ‘loosening, releasing the ropes, moorings holding a ship in port’ - Paul is ready to set sail.
      1. He’s not in denial and using vague language, tip-toeing around the reality of his impending death.
      2. But calling death a departure combines the spiritual reality that his life is not over. Yes, ‘the body they may kill’ but he trusts in the equally impending reality of the bodily resurrection and eternal life with Christ, just as assuredly as He himself saw the resurrected Christ appear in such splendid glory it blinded him for 3 days (see Acts 9)
   5. Even in the moment of his death, his faith is flourishing.
2. **Life Poured Out and Faith Filled Full:** v7
3. v7‘The good fight I have fought, the race I have finished, the faith I have kept.’
   1. Paul’s highlighting the worthwhile-ness of ‘the good fight, finishing the race, and keeping the faith’ - all perfect tense, showing completed actions with ongoing result. see Jesus in Jn 17:4 “having accomplished the work…”
   2. The “good fight” is life’s wrestling match. If you stand still, you will get pinned, either by the world, the flesh, or the devil. But keep fighting to win
      1. 1 Timothy 6:12 “Fight the good fight of the faith.”
      2. He’s also not worried about loosing the fight, coming in second in the race, or giving up… his assumption is that enduring isn’t just finishing, but winning. How can he be so sure? Faithfulness, NOT success…
      3. Nobody watching the SuperBowl thinks that finishing 4 qtrs = win.
      4. **This is why**: LoLM Discipleship: in every season of life: toddler-PTer
   3. The race I have finished: root form of verb: ’teleo’ meaning ‘to complete, perform, carry out’ the purpose for which one is sent…
   4. God’s purpose for Paul: Acts 9:16 where Paul was told that he would “suffer for the sake of my name” - 2 Cor 11:23-28 where Paul retells his sufferings,
   5. Acts 13:25; 20:24 where Luke’s depictions of Paul’s language reflects the “metaphor for the course of life.” (Yarbrough, 444) and for Paul’s hopeful language to the Ephesian elders in Acts 20, his phrase was, “if only I may finish my course…”
   6. The faith I have kept, ‘guarded’ = “I have kept on taking Christ at his word… I have kept on having confidence in his promises.” (Piper)  
      2 Timothy 1:12 “for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me.”

“Paul is not exalting himself, but… is encouraging Timothy through his own experience of God’s enabling grace.” (Knight)

* 1. Illustr. Like in the Price is Right with the showcase showdown, where you win that and you win everything, when we get Christ’s righteousness, we get everything else which we couldn’t have earned, unable to deserve, and need in order to be in God’s very presence to enjoy Him forever.

1. **The Full and Lasting Award:** v8
   1. Crown of R. is laid up - prepared and waiting, like the trophy in the championship ceremony. ‘Crown’ is like the crowning achievement…

“Paul is envisioning a final declaration and confirmation of the righteousness he has already received.” (Griffiths, 167)

* 1. Paul’s encouragement to Timothy then is what he wrote to Philippians:

Phil. 3:12-16 “Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. Only let us hold true to what we have attained.”

* 1. Crown awarded ‘on that day’ by THE Righteous judge - contrasted to the unrighteous judge, Nero, who is soon to judge him condemned and have him killed.
  2. Granted to all who have loved Christ’s appearing: He is worthy of our love - because of his appearing both already/not yet: inaugurated/consummated
     1. 2Tim4:1 “by his appearing and his kingdom”

“Revelation presents a repeated call that is urgent for every one of us to respond to right now, today. Revelation has everything to do with how we invest the capital of our lives, what is worth getting excited about, or being afraid of. Revelation speaks to our big and little compromises with the world around us, how we view political and governmental systems, and what we expect our money can provide for us.” (Nancy Guthrie)

* 1. Titus 2:13 “waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ,"
  2. Governing love - in 2Tim3 we looked at the false teachers and their self-love rather than God-directed love. The problem Paul is addressing stems from the sin of love directed at anything other than God. Those sins are in the wrong direction (loving a wrong thing), to the wrong degree (loving a small thing too much), but here at the end of his last letter he is exhorting Timothy and believers everywhere to finish well what they first loved: to not miss loving God in any direction, by any degree, or for the duration.
     1. This is Jesus’ own indictment upon this same church, the believers in Ephesus in Rev. 2:3-4 “I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name’s sake, and you have not grown weary. But this I have against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first.”
     2. So if we love Christ we will spend our lives for Christ, if we love the wrong things, we will spend ourselves for those things.
     3. But if Christ’s logic is true, that “Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends. ” (John 15:13) then my love of Christ’s appearing can be shown in no greater way than to lay down my life for him, in service to his beloved, the church for whom He died.

Application:

* What is the ministry to which God has called me? Am I fulfilling it?
* How has God filled me (called, prepared, equipped, trained, redeemed past) full to overflowing so I can spend my time, energy, education, training, etc to pour into others?
* How can I live with the end in mind, the last mile of the race shapes how I run each step? - or - “How can I live and minister now, in order to say those words then?”
* Do I love the promise of Christ’s appearing so much that it shapes my life? The way I fight with courage? The way I run this race? The way I keep the faith?