***Final Words***

**2 Tim. 4 - 7/7/19**

*What would God want me to have as a "take away" from Paul's final words?*

2 Timothy was the Apostle Paul's final letter - a man who was a giant in the Christian faith. So, what can we take away from what would likely be his final words to the Church?

**2 Timothy 4:1-5**

1) To Have A Conviction Concerning Proper Preaching & Teaching, & For Fulfilling Our Ministry

We should wonder whether or not if, "*the time (that) will come*", has come!

A conviction that all believers should have is, attaining pastors who preach the true gospel and the full-counsel of God's Word.

*"The faith will totter if the authority of the Holy Scriptures loses its hold on men. We must surrender ourselves to the authority of Holy Scripture, for it can neither mislead, nor be misled."* ­- St. Augustine

*"While other books inform and very few reform*, *this one book transforms."* - Pastor A.T. Pierson

Has this become your conviction?... To desire the preaching of the Word?... To want sound doctrine and not have your ears tickled?

Do you also have a conviction to fulfill your ministry?

In Christ, God has given you His Spirit and He's given you a spiritual gift(s)... And so, are you using that gift(s) to fulfill your ministry? **\*Vs.5**

Maybe God hasn't "called" you to be a pastor or an **\***overseas (full- time) missionary; but He has called you to use the gift(s) He has given you.

It is your God-ordained duty to fulfill your ministry ASAP... Jesus is coming!

**2 Timothy 4:6-8**

2) To Keep The Faith, & To Love His Appearing

Notice what the Christian life ideally looks like at the end. **\*Vs6*a***

Paul finished the course set before Him. **\*Vs.'s 7*a+b***

His course was loaded with hurdles (a few of which took him down momentarily), with many competitors/rivals (who vehemently opposed him), and with great distance (which he looked to God in order to press-on!).

*"I have kept the faith"*... This is the focal point. He didn't keep the numbers, it wasn't about keeping the ministries or maintaining/ keeping the building's/property/stuff - but keeping the faith!

**\*Vs.8**

There's something about loving Jesus' appearing that brings with it, great reward.

It shows our focus in life. When our minds, hearts and lives are centered on Jesus' imminent return, it impacts how we live.

Saving faith is proved through how believers live by faith.

There are countless things that can sidetrack our faith if we let them. Instead, we should see them as a means by which to enhance our faith.

*"Trials, obstacles, difficulties and sometimes, defeats, are the very food of faith… We should take them out of His hands as evidences of His love and care for us in developing more and more of that faith which He is seeking to strengthen in us.”* - George Mueller

In the end, we want to say with Paul: "*I have finished the course, I have kept the faith*".

**2 Timothy 4:9-22**

3) To Have Conviction Concerning Relational Intent

God desires His people to be intentional about building relationships with fellow believers - especially in the local Body.

Sometimes we may think we're doing ourselves a favor when we skip-out on God's will but in the end, it leads to further frustration. Even though there may be temporary satisfaction it will often go no further, then you.

God designed His Church to function properly through local bodies of believers that come together (not just on Sundays, corporately), but in small groups, & one-on-one relationships, to be the Body of Christ.

We receive greater satisfaction as we give ourselves to God and His people.

If we consistently skip-out on this to do other stuff or to go have fun or even sleep, it eventually leads to further frustration, disappointment and incompleteness/brokenness.

Choose to be with God's people - to make the time and the necessary sacrifices because in the end you won't regret it as relational intent is God's design/will.

When our relationships aren't as we would like (as even Paul understood), it's the proclamation of the gospel being fully accomplished, that is to be our focus (vs.17).

**\****Local, regional and stateside missional work, as well as (at the very least) short-term overseas missional work, isn't optional*.