

**2 Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18**

**<sup>6</sup> For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> Now there is in store 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 longed for his appearing.**

“Tell them I’ve had a wonderful life,” the last words of Austrian philosopher Ludwig Wittgenstein. Pretty happy. “I have offended God and mankind because my work did not reach the quality it should have,” the last words of Leonardo Da Vinci. He was disappointed. Something about being near death gives a person a new perspective on life.

That’s what we encounter in 2 Timothy, the last words of the Apostle Paul, written to help Timothy rethink his perspective on life. Paul wrote from a nasty prison, a hole in the ground called the Mamertine prison in Rome, and the only way he’d get out would be to face his execution.

What do you expect? Happy? Disappointed? Paul’s last words are transformed by the gospel. Do you remember Paul’s gospel? **“Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead. This is my gospel.”** (2 Timothy 2:8) He wants that good news to transform the way you think of your life, present, past, and future.

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**PRESENT**

He said, **“The time for my departure is near.”** The word “departure” is for when a ship leaves the dock and sailors slip the ropes from the mooring and send her out to sea. Paul is tied down to this life by sins, fears, and worries. But not for long. The time for departure is near. Everything that ties him down will be slipped off and he’ll be free. It’s beautiful.

But how? How could Paul have that attitude about his terrible situation? Was he going crazy in prison? No, Paul told us how. **“Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead. This is my gospel.”** (2 Timothy 2:8) Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, has baptized Paul’s view of the present. If Jesus were dead, Paul would only have a prison cell. But if Jesus is alive... If you know how we greet one another on Easter morning, say it with me. **CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!**

That good news transforms your present. When Jesus walked out of the tomb he left the door open. You will walk out of the tomb too. If you are bored with your life or overwhelmed or if you feel like you’re in a deep dark hole, just like Paul, then remember that Jesus has put a huge asterisk next to your life—“This is not all there is!” Jesus put one outrageous footnote on your suffering: “Temporary!” If you don’t love your present, remember Jesus Christ raised from the dead! This is your gospel!

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### PAST

The gospel didn't just transform Paul's present, but also his past. **"I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith."** If you know Paul's back-story you know he left a few things out, "Umm... Paul? Aren't you forgetting about those years when you hunted Christians to kill them? Or when you supervised the execution of one of Jesus' friends?"

Those things happened! So how can Paul say, "I fought beautifully! I stayed on course! I kept the faith!?" Is he just hoping we forgot his past? No. But Paul says, **"Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead. This is my gospel."** (2 Timothy 2:8) Jesus Christ, raised from the dead has baptized Paul's view of his past. Jesus died on the cross because of your sins. If Jesus was dead, you would still be in your sins and guilt would be the only reasonable emotion! But if Jesus rose from the dead, then God's plan worked, and your sins are gone. What do we say on Easter? CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

That truth transforms your past. There's a peace about the past that is not available to people who pretend they're perfect and hope nobody notices their mistakes. There's a peace about the past that's not available to if you keep beating yourself up about sins God has forgotten. There's a peace that only comes when you remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead. This is your gospel!

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### FUTURE

And Paul looks to the future. **"Now there is in store 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 longed for his appearing."** (2 Timothy 4:8) The truth is his next stop would be his decapitation. Yet he says with joy, "Next stop, my coronation!"

How can he say that? Is he delusional? No, he told us how. **"Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead. This is my gospel."** (2 Timothy 4:8) Jesus Christ raised from the dead has baptized Paul's view of the future. You see, Paul knows someone who's been through death. If Jesus stayed dead, we wouldn't know how our story ends. But what do we say on Easter? CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

That good news transforms your future. Will it be easy or hard; thrilling or lame? Nobody knows, except Jesus. And Jesus has already told us the most important part of our future. When you were baptized or when you came to faith Jesus set aside for you a crown and it's waiting. It's waiting for that day. It's waiting for that day when God will slip the last rope from the dock, and set you free from this world. And he'll judge you, NOT GUILTY, and give you the crown he's been saving for you.

So when you think about your future, remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead. This is your gospel.

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**CONCLUSION**

I don't know what your last words will be and neither do you. But you don't have to wait till then to have a new perspective on life. Just **"remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead."** CHRIST IS RISEN! HE IS RISEN INDEED!

**Alleluia! Amen! Let's sing.**