



## Life Guide applying God's Word to life

### This is My Gospel: Present, Past, and Future October 19, 2019

(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.

<sup>16</sup>At my first defense, no one came to my support, but everyone deserted me. May it not be held against them. <sup>17</sup>But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. <sup>18</sup>The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

1. What are the characteristics of memorable last words?

Answers will vary. Some may say last words should be heartfelt or encouraging to people you'll leave behind, or a confession of faith. Most famous last words also provide a unique perspective on the life of the person passing away, and prompt the listeners to rethink their own lives.

2. 2 Timothy is St. Paul's last words. Based on these passages, what would Paul add to your list of characteristics from #1?

Memorable last words look forward to heaven (v. 8, 18a).

They have positive attitude about his present (v. 6, 16b).

Memorable last words express confidence about the what the LORD has done in the past and what the LORD will do in the future (v. 7, 8).

They express thanks for God's protection and providing (v. 17a).

They focus not just on myself but telling others about Jesus (v. 17b).

Memorable last words express trust in Jesus (v. 18a).

They give all glory to God. (v. 18b).

#### **PRESENT**

3. Paul reference to a drink offering is from Numbers 15:1-12. In what ways is Paul's life like a drink offering?

Drink offerings were the offerings of wine poured out to the Lord.

(Numbers 15:1-12 The Lord said to Moses, 2 "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'After you enter the land I am giving you as a home 3 and you present to the Lord food offerings from the herd or the flock, as an aroma pleasing to the Lord—whether burnt offerings or sacrifices, for special vows or freewill offerings or festival offerings— 4 then the person who brings an offering shall present to the Lord a grain offering of a tenth of an ephah[That is, probably about 3 1/2 pounds] of the finest flour mixed with a quarter of a hin[That is, about 1 quart] of olive oil. 5 With each lamb for the burnt offering or the sacrifice, prepare a quarter of a hin of wine as a drink offering. 6

"'With a ram prepare a grain offering of two-tenths of an ephah[That is, probably about 7 pounds] of the finest flour mixed with a third of a hin[That is, about 1 1/3 quarts] of olive oil, 7 and a third of a hin of wine as a drink offering. Offer it as an aroma pleasing to the Lord. 8

"'When you prepare a young bull as a burnt offering or sacrifice, for a special vow or a fellowship offering to the Lord, 9 bring with the bull a grain offering of three-tenths of an ephah[That is, probably about 11

pounds] of the finest flour mixed with half a hin[That is, about 2 quarts] of olive oil, 10 and also bring half a hin of wine as a drink offering. This will be a food offering, an aroma pleasing to the Lord. 11 Each bull or ram, each lamb or young goat, is to be prepared in this manner. 12 Do this for each one, for as many as you prepare.) (Numbers 28:7 The accompanying drink offering is to be a quarter of a hin of fermented drink with each lamb. Pour out the drink offering to the Lord at the sanctuary.) Paul views his death as a pouring out of his life as an offering to Christ.

Check out this quote from scholar William Hendriksen:

*Since the wine was gradually poured out, was an offering and was the final act of the entire sacrificial ceremony, it pictured most adequately*

- 1. the gradual ebbing away of Paul's life,*
  - 2. the fact that he was presenting this life to God as an offering, and*
  - 3. the idea that while he viewed his entire career of faith as a living sacrifice, he looked upon the present stage of his career as being the final sacrificial act.*
4. The word for "departure" in v. 6 is the word for a untying a ship from the dock and sending it out to sea. How might that image give Paul peace about his approaching death?

Paul knew his departure was in God's hands. In many ways he feels tied down to the cares and fears of this sinful world. He would be free after his death. He knew he would end up safely in God's heavenly harbor.

5. Paul views his present this way because of his gospel, "**Jesus Christ, raised from the dead.**" (2 Tim. 2:8). Describe your present situation, be as specific as you can. How can the good news that Jesus is alive affect your view of the present?

Because Jesus is alive you know he is with you always, no matter what your present situation (just like Paul said in v. 16). Because Jesus is alive you can give him glory for good things in your life (just like Paul in v. 18). Because Jesus is alive, you know that this life is not all there is. We are looking forward to a better life that doesn't even compare with this one (just like Paul in v. 18). Encourage people to be specific!

### PAST

6. In v. 7, how can Paul speak so highly of his past?  
First, list 3 answers *worldly non-christians* might speak highly of their past. Then, consult 2 Tim. 2:8 for why Paul says this.

Someone might think they didn't make many mistakes. Paul said, "*I am the least of the apostles, who am not worthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.*" (1 Cor. 15:9)  
Someone might think their good outweighs their evil. Paul said, "*No one is righteous, not even one.*" (Romans 3:10)  
Someone might think they can live by their own truth. Paul said, "*The wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all the godlessness and wickedness of men who suppress the truth by their wickedness.*" (Romans 1:18)  
Paul spoke highly of his past because Jesus had taken away all of his sins, and Jesus resurrection assured Paul of that truth. "*Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David. This is my Gospel.*" (2 Tim. 2:8)

7. Everyone has things to be ashamed of in our past (Psalm 25:7).

What is the spiritual danger of excusing our past dishonestly?

*"Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good."* (Ps. 25:7) Dishonesty about our past may make us proud like Pharisees or delusional. Neither of those paths leads to repentance and so we cannot hear the forgiveness that Jesus offers.

8. "**Jesus Christ, raised from the dead.**" (2 Tim. 2:8) has convinced you that your sins are forgiven. Knowing that, describe your past. Answers will vary, but this is the opportunity for us to imitate Paul. Guide your friends to describe their pasts positively. Two things to avoid: On the one side, we don't get proud because our righteousness comes from God, not from ourselves. The opposite error, we don't talk about ourselves as perpetual screw-ups, because God has given us Jesus' righteousness.

### FUTURE

9. Paul did not know how imprisonment or trial would end. List the things about his future he *is certain* about.

He will die. (v. 6)

His time is in the Lord's hands. (v. 6)

He will receive the crown of righteousness. (v. 8a)

He will meet all others who love Jesus (v. 8b)

The Lord will keep him safe. (v. 18a)

The Lord will take him to heaven. (v. 18a)

10. Make a list of things you *don't know* about your future, and a list of things you *do know* about your future. For each item on your *do know* list, say why you are so certain.

No human knows:

- What tomorrow will be like
- How financially secure we'll be (cf. Job)
- How healthy we'll be on earth
- How we will die
- How our children will fare

Every Christians can know:

- The Lord will be with you. (2 Tim 4:17)
- The Lord will protect you from evil. (2 Tim 4:18)
- Your death will come at God's time. (2 Tim. 4:6)
- Jesus will judge us and declare you righteous. (2 Tim 4:8)
- Jesus will take you to heaven. (2 Tim. 4:18)
- You will live in paradise with all your Christian loved ones  
(and all people) who trust in Jesus (2 Tim 4:8)

11. What do you hope to say with your last words?

Answers will vary. Encourage your friends to incorporate some of the things you've discussed in this Bible study.