



II Timothy 3:14-4:5 New Revised Standard Version

¹⁴But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it ¹⁵and how from childhood you have known sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All scripture is inspired by God and is ^[u]useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, ¹⁷so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

¹ In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: ²proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage with the utmost patience in teaching. ³For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound teaching, but, having their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires ⁴and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. ⁵As for you, be sober in everything, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully.

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I had a math teacher in middle school who was well-known for her catchphrase, “Push those pencils fast and furious!” Her logic was that we were in school for the sake of learning and that there was no time to be wasted. We

often laughed behind her back and mocked her usage of the saying when outside of the classroom. However, she was right. We did have work to be done and looking at our books or merely holding a pencil was not getting the job done.

While the Apostle Paul may not have been instructing Timothy in middle school math, he did understand the value of hard work and making wise usage of his time. Having encouraged Timothy to treasure his calling and to recenter his focus, he knew it was also important for Timothy to be actively engaged in the work of ministry.

The work of God's Kingdom is by no means a passive matter. It is an undertaking which requires each of us to do something which is forward looking and advantageous for others. This cannot occur by sitting idly by as time drifts into the past. No, it unfolds as we get up and get to work. However, I do not mean to suggest it is a matter of busyness. One can be busy and accomplish “a whole lot of nothing.” The kind of ministry to which we are called is divine in its origin, filled with purpose, and of eternal significance. In this week's Epistle Lesson, Paul challenged Timothy and continues to challenge us to:

1. Do your work as if it matters.
2. Do not let opportunity pass you by.
3. See the work through to its completion.

Prayer Pebble: Lord, you have called me to a life that is more than sitting and watching others do the work for me. You have saved me for a purpose and told me to get moving. Grant me the courage to leave behind the known and comfortable in order that I might minister effectively to the needs and hurts of others. Amen.