



II Timothy 4:6-8, 16-18 New Revised Standard Version

⁶As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. ⁷I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. ⁸From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

¹⁶At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! ¹⁷But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and all the gentiles might hear it. So I was rescued from the lion's mouth. ¹⁸The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and save me for his heavenly kingdom. To him be the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Notes _____



"I am bored with it all."
Sir Winston Churchill

"I want nothing but death."
Jane Austen

"I have offended God and mankind because my work did not reach the quality it should have."
Leonardo da Vinci

Famous last words. These and others like them hardly seem like the things we would expect to hear from some of our world's best-known and most influential people. They seem sad, empty, as if life really wasn't all that it was cracked up to be. Their tone is considerably different from those uttered by the Apostle Paul in this week's Epistle Lesson. While these words are not necessarily Paul's final words, they are the words of a man who knew the temporary nature of this life.

You and I have a limited number of years on this earth. Researchers estimate the average person in the United States lives to be about 80. Of course, none of us knows for certain as to how long we may live, but for many of us the years behind us exceed those before us. Such a reminder can create opportunity for us to reflect upon life, to think about what we have done, and what significance that may have had upon others. This passage from the final chapter of Second Timothy served such a role in the life of Paul.

Paul's reflections encourage us to:

1. Consider your life a gift for others' sake.
2. Live the present with eternity in view.
3. Do the difficult thing that others won't.

Prayer Pebble: Lord, you have blessed me with the precious gift of life. This gift is not unlimited in physical years, so may every breath I take and every move I make be for your glory and honor. Use my life to leave a lasting legacy of faith for the benefit of others and grant me the endurance to see this faith journey through to maturity. Amen.