

waiting, longing, hoping & praying
for the Day of the Lord / **Study 2**

LONGING

2 TIMOTHY 4:1-8

1 In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge:

2 preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage – with great patience and careful instruction.

3 For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather round them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

5 But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.

6 For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time for my departure is near.

7 I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.

8 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.

BENEDICTION

by Nathan Nettleton

Go now, strengthened by the testimony of Christ. Keep alert and wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Continue to do right and remember God in your ways.

And may God enrich you in speech and knowledge of every kind; May Christ Jesus strengthen you to the end; And may the Holy Spirit guide you in faithful living until he comes.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,
In the name of Christ.
Amen.

COMMENTARY

primary source: UBS Handbooks for New Testament

v.1 judge: determine innocence or guilt and assign the appropriate reward or punishment; see Acts 10:42, 1 Peter 4:5. **v.1 his appearing:** the second coming of Christ. **v.1 charge:** see 1 Tim 5:21. **v.2 in season and out of season:** whether it is convenient or not, whether people want to hear it or not. **v.3 put up with:** accept, receive, listen willingly, tolerate. **v.3 itching ears:** insatiable curiosity. **v.4 turn aside:** become fascinated by. **v.4 myths:** teachings that are not true and have no historical basis. **v.5 keep your head:** be steady, alert and controlled both in speech and conduct. **v.5 hardship:** see 2 Tim 1:8, 2:3, 9. **v.5 evangelist:** one who proclaims the gospel. **v.5 ministry:** a general terms for any type of Christian service. **v.6 poured out like a drink offering:** see Num 28:7. **v.6 departure:** according to some scholars the Greek word refers to the act of releasing a boat from its moorings. **v.7 good fight:** see 1 Tim 6:12. **v.7 race:** see 1 Cor 9:24-27. **v.8 crown:** in ancient times in athletic competitions victors received a crown of leaves or flowers; see 1 Pet 5:4. **v.8 righteousness:** life lived in a right relationship with God, morally and ethically. **v.8 longed for:** eager and earnest longing, setting one's heart on something, looking forward to something with reverence and love.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What caught your attention? Why?
2. What do we discover about Timothy, Paul and their relationship?
3. What should we expect in the last days? Also see 2 Tim 3:1-5. How do we avoid getting "itchy ears"?
4. What does this passage teach us about what it takes to be a healthy church?
5. How can we better support our church leaders?
6. What is Paul's attitude towards his approaching death?
7. v.7 includes some images for the Christian life - a fight, a race. Can you think of other images? Which image works best for you?
8. In v.8 Paul asserts that the crown of righteousness will be awarded to all who have longed for his appearing. How can we practice this 'longing for Jesus' appearing' in a more active way?
9. **In Summary: What does this passage teach us about how we, as a community, keep the faith (v.7) and prepare for Jesus' return?**
10. What fresh perspective did you gain from this study? What do you want to explore further?