

## INTRODUCTION.

- A. Scripture text: **2Timothy 4:1-8.**
- B. From *The Bumps are What you Climb On* by W. Wiersbe (Ch. 3,29).
- C. Do you have any idea what you will say on your deathbed? The apostle Paul had that opportunity and has left us with some great advice for living.
- D. Paul did not have any easy life, but he didn't let it bother him!

## I. PAUL "LOOKED AROUND."

- A. First, Paul looks around and bears witness that he is ready (2Tim. 4:6).  
*For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure has come.*
- B. What an amazing view of death! He does not look upon his future as a prisoner to be executed, but as a sacrifice being offered to the glory of God. His life is not being taken from him, but rather he is offering it to the Lord.
- C. Instead of death, Paul speaks of his dying as a departure. This means that Paul saw death as a release. By dying he can be loosed from the troubles and problems of this life to go to that heavenly shore and meet the Lord.
- D. When a faithful Xian "looks around" they should see the following in their life:
  - 1. A God who will never forsake them (Heb. 13:5-6).  
*Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He Himself has said, "I WILL NEVER DESERT YOU, NOR WILL I EVER FORSAKE YOU," 6 so that we confidently say, "THE LORD IS MY HELPER, I WILL NOT BE AFRAID. WHAT SHALL MAN DO TO ME?"*
  - 2. A God who unconditionally loves them (Jn. 3:16).  
*"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life. 17 "For God did not send the Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world should be saved through Him.*
  - 3. A God who has promised to meet every physical need (Mt. 6:33-34).  
*"But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you. 34 "Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*
  - 4. A God who has given every spiritual blessing (Eph. 1:3).  
*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,*
  - 5. A God, who through X, has given the church that shall never be destroyed (Mt. 16:18).  
*"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.*
  - 6. A God, who is ready and willing to answer prayer (1Jn. 5:14-15).  
*And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.*

## II. PAUL "LOOKED BACK."

- A. When Paul came to the end of his lie; he also looked back (2Tim. 4:7).  
*I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith;...*
- B. Because he trusted Jesus Christ, Paul could look around without fear, and he could look back without regrets.
- C. We all have these 3 things in our life:
  - 1. A good fight (a fight worth winning!) to win.
    - a. We fight, as to not beat the air (1Cor. 9:26-27).

Therefore I run in such a way, as not without aim; I box in such a way, as not beating the air; **27** but I buffet my body and make it my slave, lest possibly, after I have preached to others, I myself should be disqualified.

- b. Fighting the good fight means staying away from sin (1Tim. 6:11-12).  
But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness. **12** Fight the good fight of faith; take hold of the eternal life to which you were called, and you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.
2. A course to finish.
  - a. You must compete according to the rules (2Tim. 2:5).  
And also if anyone competes as an athlete, he does not win the prize unless he competes according to the rules.
  - b. God will help us complete the journey (Phil. 1:6).  
*For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*
  - c. The course ends in death (Rev. 2:10).  
*‘Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.*
3. A faith to keep.
  - a. Some have shipwrecked and departed the faith (Demas, Alexander, Hymenaeus).
  - b. The righteous will live by faith (Rom. 1:16-17).  
*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. **17** For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “**BUT THE RIGHTEOUS *man* SHALL LIVE BY FAITH.**”*
  - c. Our life in the flesh is a life of faith (Gal. 2:20).  
*“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me, and delivered Himself up for me.*

### III. PAUL “LOOKED AHEAD.”

- A. Paul looked around and looked back, but he also looked ahead (2Tim. 4:8).  
*...in the future there is laid up 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 loved His appearing.*
- B. There is no peace like the peace we feel when we know that the future is secure. God wants His people to feel that peace:
  1. Gladly chosen to give you the kingdom (Lk. 12:32).  
*“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has chosen gladly to give you the kingdom.”*
  2. The abundant entrance into the kingdom (2Pet. 1:10-11)  
*Therefore, brethren, be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you; for as long as you practice these things, you will never stumble; **11** for in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you.*
  3. To leave the tribulation of earth and enter eternal bliss (Rev. 7:13-17).  
*And one of the elders answered, saying to me, “These who are clothed in the white robes, who are they, and from where have they come?” **14** And I said to him, “My lord, you know.” And he said to me, “These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and they have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. **15** “For this reason, they are before the throne of God; and they serve Him day and night in His temple; and He who sits on the throne shall spread His tabernacle over them. **16** “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun beat down on them, nor any heat; **17** for the Lamb in the center of the throne shall be their shepherd, and shall guide them to springs of the water of life; and God shall wipe every tear from their eyes.”*
- C. With these kinds of promises, it doesn't really matter what happens on the journey, because the destination is worth it!

### CONCLUSION AND INVITATION.

- A. The next time life becomes a series of bumps and bruises:

1. Look around--and see all the wonderful blessings you have in being a Xian.
  2. Look back--and remember to keep fighting (it's a battle worth winning), stay the course, and keep the faith.
  3. Look ahead--because the prize makes the journey worth it.
- B. Remember back a few years ago there was a popular fad with 3-D pictures. You would look at a picture a certain way and if you looked at correctly a 3-D image would seem to appear out of nowhere! Life is like that; it depends on how you look at it and know where to look!
- C. Look to Jesus the author and pioneer of our faith (Heb. 12:2).  
*fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*
- D. Plan of salvation for non-Xians, erring Xians.