

May 18/19, 2024
"The Sacred Trust"
Pastor Jeff Manion



SPEND DAILY TIME WITH GOD AS YOU READ, THINK, PRAY + ACT.

2024 Challenge: Finding Jesus in the Old Testament

May: Read the story of David to see how situations and events point to Jesus

Day 1 2 Timothy 4:1-8 | The Sacred Trust

But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. 2 Timothy 4:5

Paul sits in prison. He knows his days are few and that this letter is his last opportunity to teach Timothy. So, Paul writes with urgency and passion. He pleads with Timothy to stay faithful to Jesus and the gospel message. Christianity is only thirty-five years old and easily distorted by people who want to turn it into something else. Yet Christianity has grown enough for the Emperor to blame it for Rome's disastrous fire. Paul's greatest concern is Christianity's future. Will the spread of the message pass with Paul? He charges Timothy with a sacred trust: keep sharing the gospel message no matter what happens or how hard it may be.

Last words carry enormous weight. They offer a glimpse into what matters most to someone. We should pay attention to Paul's words to Timothy about the priority of the gospel and the importance of this message. It's still urgent and necessary for us to spread the gospel to the next generation of believers. This week, we will see that our world faces many of the same challenges Timothy and his generation faced. We, too, will find the same charge for our lives and hope for the future. When we fulfill our calling to share the message of Jesus, we find God grants us perseverance, courage and hope for anything we encounter.

TODAY: What would you say if you knew you had a short time left to share your faith with people coming after you? Spend time journaling about your faith in Jesus and why it matters. Consider the essential things about faith you want to pass along to someone else.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 5-6](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Consider David's victory over Jerusalem and the defeat of his enemies.

Day 2 2 Timothy 4:1-2 | Gospel Message

Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. 2 Timothy 4:2

Paul spends thirty years sharing the gospel message. Now, he charges Timothy to preach the same message. In another letter, Paul shares with the church at Corinth, "For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures" ([1 Corinthians 15:3-4](#)). The truth that Jesus took people's place and came to rescue humanity from their sins requires a response. All who believe God raised Jesus from the dead and receive his gift of salvation by faith will be saved. It's not about people reaching up to God but God coming down to reach people.

When we believe in and receive Jesus, we receive the call to be a gospel sharer. A faith that is alive is a faith shared with others. Timothy had a unique opportunity to preach the gospel as a pastor. We each have a unique sphere of influence to share this life-changing message, too. Wherever we are, we are called to share the gospel by how we live our lives and in our conversations with family, friends and acquaintances.

TODAY: Think through your circles of influence, including your immediate family, extended family, co-workers, neighbors, acquaintances and people you encounter in the community. Write down two or three names of people in those circles who don't know Jesus. Pray for them to come to know Jesus and for God to give you opportunities to share the gospel with them.

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 7-8](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Note David's desire to build God's house and God's reply.

Day 3 2 Timothy 4:3-5 | Heavy Resistance

For the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. 2 Timothy 4:3

Paul warns Timothy to expect resistance to the gospel and its effects. Paul knows the most significant resistance won't come from culture. Instead, the greatest resistance comes from the hearts of people within the church. Paul says plenty of teachers are willing to avoid the truth and share what people's "itching ears" want to hear ([2 Timothy 4:3](#)). Paul challenges Timothy to take a different path and teach the truth of the gospel, even when it isn't popular.

Part of the human condition is desiring to be told what we want to hear. We want to hear that the cancer will just go away, not that God will grant us the grace to endure. We want to hear that God will bless us and we will be financially secure rather than hearing that God is sufficient to meet our needs. We want to hear it's okay to hold a grudge and remain bitter rather than forgive as Christ forgave us. But God calls us, through his power, to surrender our desires to him. In doing so, we find he has a full, abundant life for us ([John 10:10](#)).

TODAY: Ask God to reveal when you don't want to hear him. Confess anything he reveals. "God, I admit that I sometimes resist you when _____. Please forgive me. Open my ears to hear what you say, and help me live your way, not mine."

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 9-10](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Note how David cared for Jonathon's son like one of his own.

Day 4 2 Timothy 4:6-7 | Finish Line

I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. 2 Timothy 4:7

Paul overflows with hope as he nears the end of his life. His confidence rests in Jesus's future return. Paul knows his life matters and that he has fought the good fight—the right fight. He has been faithful to Jesus and leveraged every situation—including multiple imprisonments, beatings and countless hardships—to advance the gospel. Now, he challenges Timothy to do the same. Paul urges Timothy to finish his race and stay faithful to the gospel.

God has given each of us a race to run. He calls us to serve him and share the gospel throughout our lives. Many things pull at our attention. We can easily get distracted and spend our lives on fights or activities that don't really matter. Our day-to-day lives can get caught up in running from activity to activity, paying the bills and

trying to survive. However, God calls us to stay faithful to Jesus in it all. We can remain connected to Jesus through prayer, pausing to remember him throughout the day and asking for the power of the Holy Spirit to fill us during every activity. Every situation can become an opportunity to advance the message of Jesus by how we live and speak, even in our hardships.

TODAY: Prayerfully consider what it looks like to be faithful to Jesus and the gospel in your everyday situations and challenges. As you pray, join the Ada Bible Worship Team as they sing, "[Build my Life](#)." Make these lyrics your prayer, "I will build my life upon your love...I will put my trust in you alone."

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 11-12](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Note David's sin and his response when confronted. Consider Jesus, who never sinned.

Day 5 2 Timothy 4:8 | The Lord's Return

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. 2 Timothy 4:8

Paul longs for Christ's return. He looks forward to being with Jesus in heaven and the day Jesus returns to earth to fully establish God's kingdom. Paul knows one day, Jesus will restore and heal all that is broken. Paul spends his life sharing the good news of Jesus and, by doing so, participates in building God's kingdom here and now through one changed life at a time. Paul also knows that Jesus has promised recognition and reward for those who remain faithful to him.

Throughout the New Testament, the authors anticipate the day Jesus returns and puts to right all that sin has undone. In the book of Revelation, God gives the Apostle John a vision of what the restored world will look like under Jesus's reign. Jesus ends John's vision with a promise to return soon. John cries, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" ([Revelation 22:20](#)). We, too, are called to long for Jesus's return and live in light of his coming. It's not about earning salvation but living out of gratitude for what Jesus has done. When our hearts are transformed by Jesus, we long for his return and desire to run our race in a manner that brings his kingdom here and now.

TODAY: Spend time reflecting on what a restored earth will look like. Linger on these thoughts. Then, spend time praying for Jesus's return. Ask him to help you live with longing for his return. Bring your challenges and heartaches to Jesus, and echo John's prayer, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus" ([Revelation 22:20](#)).

JESUS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT: Read [2 Samuel 13-14](#). Highlight anything that points to Jesus. Note the division in David's house and who becomes his enemy.