

# COURAGE BY THE WORD

Part 5 of Confident Living

2 Timothy 4:1-4. The Cornerstone Church, June 6, 2021

## INTRODUCTION

The night the apostle Peter's faith failed is one of the saddest moments ever. Under pressure, Peter denied that he was a disciple of Jesus.

Ask yourself: "Would my faith stand under pressure?" Hard times, such as grieving a loved one, losing a job, suffering a health crisis or relationship breakup, can knock us down.

For three years, Jesus had prepared Peter and the other disciples for just such a moment, but when push came to shove, they all ran away.

When Jesus was arrested and Peter found himself in the cross hairs, his faith crumbled and his courage failed him. Three times, he denied knowing or following Jesus (Luke 22:55-62).

- *I don't know him.*
- *I am not.*
- *I don't know what you are talking about.*

(Luke 22:61-62) The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." 62 **And he went outside and wept bitterly.**

Why did Peter's courage fail the test?

I believe his faith failed because, internally, Peter wasn't ready for trouble. Yes, he heard what Jesus taught him. But he hadn't transferred that teaching to his own life. He hadn't prepared himself.

## **SERIES: CONFIDENT LIVING**

This is week 5 of our CONFIDENT LIVING\*\* teaching series. **We're focused on ten spiritual practices** that help us prevail under pressure.

Today's spiritual practice is called **COURAGE BY THE WORD**.

### **BOTTOM LINE**

Today's message is this: **We prepare for the troubles of the world tomorrow by investing in the truths of the Word today.** Time spent in Bible study today equips us for the challenges we will face.

The passage we're focused on today is 2 Timothy 4:1-4.

### **THE CONTEXT OF 2 TIMOTHY 4:1-4**

The apostle Paul wrote the letter known as 2 Timothy to his disciple, Timothy, who was working with the church in Ephesus. The church was being ripped apart by false teachers.

Years earlier, Paul met with the Ephesian elders to warn them.

(Acts 20:28-31) Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. 29 I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30 Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. 31 So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

Paul's prediction came true, but the elders failed to protect their flock, so Paul sent Timothy to get things sorted out.

In 2 Timothy 4, Paul explains Timothy's mission.

**(2 Timothy 4:1-5)** 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 around 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.

This passage teaches us that the Word of God has power to bring us to faith and to keep us in faith even when life is hard.

The passage answers four questions about the Word:

1. What is the Word?
2. How important is the Word?
3. What can the Word do?
4. Why should we invest in the Word?

OK! Ready for some answers?

# FOUR INSIGHTS INTO THE WORD

## 1. WHAT IS THE WORD? - verse 2.

(2 Timothy 4:2) Preach the word ...

The **word** is the Word of God. In the first century, before the New Testament was complete, the **word** included the written Old Testament and the verbal teachings of the apostles - the gospel or good news about Jesus.

In verse 3, Paul equates the word with **sound doctrine**.

In chapter 3, Paul describes the word as **God-breathed** and **Holy Scriptures** or sacred writings (2 Timothy 3:15-16).

Today, when I refer to the Word of God, I'm talking about the whole Bible - Old and New Testaments - the source of the Christian faith.

By calling the Bible the word, we're saying that God speaks to us. The Bible is two things: 1) it's a God-breathed record of what God said and did in the past and, 2) as we read it, God speaks to us today.

## 2. HOW IMPORTANT IS THE WORD? - verses 1-2

(2 Timothy 4:1-2) 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;

After God himself, there is nothing more important than the Word of God. That's why Paul invokes God and Christ Jesus, the one who is coming to judge everyone and to reign on the earth. He's telling Timothy, "What I'm about to tell you is momentous. Listen up."

Then he gives Timothy three instructions about the importance of the word of God.

- **The word is so important, it must be preached.** To "*preach*" originally meant to herald the king's message publicly in the town marketplace. Timothy was more comfortable behind the scenes, but Paul told him to boldly proclaim the word of God.
- **The word is so important, it must be preached powerfully.** "*Prepared*" in verse 2 is all about urgency. It means to be really serious; to communicate in a way that convinces people to listen. God speaks through the preacher.
- **The word is so important, it must be preached permanently.** "*In season and out of season*" is an idiom that means it's always the right time for Bible preaching; even when people don't want to hear it.

### 3. WHAT CAN THE WORD DO? - verse 2.

(2 Timothy 2b) ... correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

The word can do three things:

- **The word corrects.** The word confronts false teaching with truth. Error comes from the minds of its teachers, but the truth comes from the mind of God and is communicated in the word of God
- **The word rebukes.** The word convicts false teachers for being unfaithful to God and for hurting the church. False teachers lead people away from God; they are wolves among the sheep.
- **The word encourages.** The word builds up the faith of genuine disciples. The list of the word's powerful effects is long: By the power of God's Spirit, God's word points us to Jesus, creates spiritual life, makes us wise, renews our faith, transforms our thinking, and conforms us to Christ. The word comforts, confronts, convicts, restores, encourages, guides, and sets us free from lies. (See chart below)

Most of all, the word generates spiritual life and faith. It is the seed of faith.

(Romans 10:17) Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.

(1 Peter 1:23) You have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and enduring word of God.

## Chart from the MacArthur Study Bible

Table 2.1 Symbols for the Bible\*

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Reality</b>	<b>Texts</b>
Jesus Christ	Personification of the Word	John 1:1; Rev. 19:13
Valuable metals	Incalculable worth	Silver: Ps. 12:6 Gold: Pss. 19:10; 119:127
Seed	Source of new life	Matt. 13:10–23; James 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23
Mirror	Self-examination	James 1:22–25
Food	Nourishment for the soul	Milk: 1 Cor. 3:2; 1 Pet. 2:1–3 Bread: Deut. 8:3; Matt. 4:4 Meat: 1 Cor. 3:2; Heb. 5:12–14 Honey: Ps. 19:10
Clothing	A life dressed in truth	Titus 2:10; 1 Pet. 3:1–5
Lamp	Light for direction	Ps. 119:105; Prov. 6:23; 2 Pet. 1:19
Sword	Spiritual weapon	Outwardly: Eph. 6:17 Inwardly: Heb. 4:12
Plumb line	Benchmark of spiritual reality	Amos 7:8
Hammer	Powerful judgment	Jer. 23:29
Fire	Painful judgment	Jer. 5:14; 20:9; 23:29

\* Adapted from MacArthur, *MacArthur Study Bible: English Standard Version*, 873. Used by permission of Thomas Nelson.

#### 4. WHY SHOULD WE INVEST IN THE WORD? - verses 3-4.

(2 Timothy 4:3-4) 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. 4 They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.

We should invest in the word for two reasons:

**Negatively**, if we do NOT invest in the word, we'll likely be misled by unsound doctrine based on sinful human desires, lies and myths. When troubles come, we'll collapse because we do not have the spiritual resources to cope

**Positively**, if we do invest in the word, we'll build our lives on the true Christian faith. Our minds will be formed by God and we'll be prepared for the hard times. The word of God fills us with faith in God, encourages us with promises, guides us with wisdom, defeats our pride, and opens us to God's presence and power.

Jesus said that when we build our lives on his teachings, we are building a strong foundation; when troubles hit us like a flood, we will stand firm

(Matthew 7:24-25) Therefore everyone who hears these words of mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built his house on the rock. 25 The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the rock.

**Remember: We prepare for the troubles of the world tomorrow by investing in the truths of the Word today.**

How can we invest in the word of God?

## HOW TO INVEST IN THE WORD GOD

I can't overstate the importance of getting the Bible into your mind and life. We eat to satisfy our physical needs. We should feed on God's word to satisfy so much more.

Here are two ways to feed on or to invest in the word of God:

- **Pray.** Ask God to help you feel greedy for his word so that you feel like you can't get enough of it. I prayed this myself late last year because I didn't feel like reading and studying the Bible. God answered my prayer. Try it! Then read and study and absorb the word.
- **Practice.** It's not enough to simply read or hear the word. No, Jesus said we must put his words into practice. The way to be strong in the storm is to receive his word and obey it. Faith isn't passive. Faith always acts; it produces obedience, to putting the Word of God into practice.

The Book of James says exactly this:

(James 1:19-25) My dear brothers and sisters, take note of this: Everyone should be **quick to listen**, slow to speak and slow to become angry, 20 because human anger does not produce the righteousness that God desires. 21 Therefore, get rid of all moral filth and the evil that is so prevalent and **humbly accept the word** planted in you, which can save you.

22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. **Do what it says.** 23 Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror 24 and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. 25 But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and **continues in it**—not forgetting what they have heard, but **doing it—they will be blessed** in what they do.

Hear the word, accept the word, obey the word. The result is God's blessing. You will stand firm in the storms of life.

## **LET'S PRAY**

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the truth you have revealed in the Bible. Holy Spirit, help us to apply today's teaching in our lives. Amen.

Access today's teaching notes = [FamousGod.com//teaching-notes](https://FamousGod.com/teaching-notes)

# ORDER OF SERVICE

## Sunday, June 6, 2021

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### Welcome & Prayer

Joey

### *the house of the lord*

joey

### *From The Day*

Ashley

### Pray & Dismiss Kids- Shawn

### Bible Reading Rom 9:18-33 -Tami

### *Holy Holy Holy (Nicaea)*

joey - Ashley acapella KEYS- play C pad \*LYRICS not Automated!

### A.C.T.S. Prayer- Tami

### Teaching -Courage by the Word

### *Here's My Heart*

joey

### Updates -Peter

### Blessing- Peter

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## Updates:

We've updated our website with some ways to **contact us**. FamousGod.com.

- Contact - general, questions, etc
- Prayer
- Decision to follow Jesus
- Sign up to volunteer

Don't worry about confidentiality. When you hit submit, it sends me your message by email. I won't share private prayer requests etc.

**Prayer** - Online prayer opportunities. *Pop-Up* on Tuesdays. *Presence* on Thursdays.