

Remnant Life Church  
September 1, 2024  
**Completing the Mission**  
2 Timothy 4:1-8

Last week we looked at the fact that Jesus sent His disciples, and by extension each of us, into the world in the same way that His Father sent Him.

- But it was more than, “You saw what I did, now you do the same.”
- What this verse, in its proper context is saying is, “In the very same way My Father sent Me, that is how I am now sending you.”
- We then asked the question, “How did God send Jesus?”

Jesus had a very uncommon mission in the time of His ministry that covered only about 35 months

- It was uncommon because it went against what the world calls successful, especially when it comes to determining how an effective ministry should look
  - He went from heavenly riches to earthly rags
  - He went from exaltation to humiliation
  - From having all authority to being obedient
  - He went from ultimate significance to ultimate rejection
  - From comfort to hardship
  - From safety to danger
  - From glory to sacrifice
  - And from life to death
- And the fact is, He calls us to go into the world in the exact same way
  - Not focused on the world’s definition of success
  - But on living in a way that we saw Jesus demonstrate
  - That comes down to an issue of not the accomplishments but the way you got to where you did – your actions, your words, and your attitude.

This morning, let’s look together at what it means to finish or complete the mission

**READ – 2 Timothy 4:1-8**

- This is Paul’s last letter as he is imprisoned in Rome for the second time and his death is imminent
  - Emperor Nero has been working very hard to eradicate Christianity from Rome
  - He has no better opportunity to do that than to eliminate the first great missionary, the planter of churches, and the most outspoken proponent for the teachings of Jesus Christ – the Apostle Paul
  - Many of those facing death have an unusually clear perspective on what is truly important in life. A message from the dying can give purpose to the living. Paul’s dying instructions to his beloved son in the faith Timothy should challenge us as well.

Let's focus on the 7<sup>th</sup> verse to understand how we too can complete the mission as a follower of Jesus

The first thing Paul says is that he has fought the good fight (v 7a)

- Paul uses this same metaphor of the fighter in an earlier letter to Timothy
  - In **I Tim 6:12** he writes, *Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called when you made your good confession in the presence of many witnesses.*
    - ...to which you were called... - that is the mission
    - It is a mission unique to you and the gifts God has given you, but we each have one
  - This metaphor is not about a brawler; it is used to describe a military engagement – fought by a soldier
    -
  - But the end of Paul's fight is not just against those who opposed him, the false teachers, pagan rituals, immorality within the young churches and his own self-professed weaknesses
    - He knows that his life is drawing to a close
    - His death would be at the whim of one man
  - Yet even in that, Paul considers that fight the only one worth fighting
    - I wonder how many fights we engage in that are of no true value
    - How many people do we come against over trivial matters that are more about our own ego or selfish desires?

I have finished the race (v 7b)

- Other ways this has been translated 'I have contended the good contention', or 'I have combated the good combat.' I have finished my course of duty
  - But it is misguided to think we can finish the race at some time in our life
    - Paul talks about finishing his mission by using the metaphor of a runner
      - A race is only over when the finish line is crossed
      - For us, it is continually ongoing to the conclusion of our lives
    - Paul uses the same example of running a race in **I Cor 9:24-26**
      - *Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly...*
      - The first way that you complete the mission is to do it with purpose and direction
  - How do you find your direction?
    - Ask God specifically
      - **Js 4:2** – *you do not have because you do not ask God*
      - Rather than praying, 'God help me today' pray, 'God give me direction for your plans and help me to follow them in all I do today.'

- Seek in the Word of God
  - With the availability of information on the computer you can search out very specific topics
  - Prayer along with research can reveal God's plan for you and direction for your life
- Seek godly counsel
  - Not just anyone – those who are mature in the Lord
  - Not just those who will say what you want to hear
  - Not those who will say, 'This is what you should do'
- And do not be a rush to come to a conclusion
  - God does things in His own timing
  - That is why you utilize all three of prayer, the Word, godly counsel

Finally, Paul says that he has kept the faith (v 7c)

- Why does Paul make a point of saying this?
  - Because of what he has had to endure in his life
    - He was beaten, shipwrecked, imprisoned, deserted by his friends and much more
    - It is easy to stay faithful when everything is going well
    - It is a true test of your faith, however, when it is all going bad
  - Consider again Joseph of the OT
    - Sold by his brothers
    - Made a slave
    - Falsely accused
    - Sent to prison
    - Forgotten by those who said they would help him
  - Yet he kept the faith
    - And because of that, God not only reinstated him to his life before prison
    - He promoted him to a position of great prominence
    - Because God could trust him in the very worst and the very best

To move toward completing your mission

- You'll need to fight the good fight
- You'll need to run the race well
- You'll need to hold to and keep your faith

This will never be about what you do as much as how you do it