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Yesterday was our penultimate week in 2 Timothy as we heard Paul give his final charge to Timothy.

We began by thinking about the difficulty of doing gospel ministry in a context where people are being taught what their itching ears want to hear. We noted that this is primarily a passage for people who have the privilege of leading churches and preaching, but that the principles are there for each of us too...

Paul instead urges Timothy to preach the word about Jesus. We said that this ministry was

v1. It's very urgent

He calls on the presence of God the Father and God the Son (Jesus) who will be both judge of the living and the dead, as well as king of his kingdom to preach the word. The way through judgment and the way into the kingdom is to trust the word about Jesus.

v2. It's all the time.

He is to do it 'in and out of season'. Which, bottom line means, all the time. People differ as to quite the picture that Paul is using though... it could be when you're prepared and ready and feel you have something to say, as well as when opportunities just arises. it could be when your ministry is bearing fruit, or when the ground is just very hard and rocky.

v5. It's hard work

There are always temptations in ministry, Paul deals with a number of these...

1. when he's tempted to lose it, he is to keep his head in every situation. To win the person not the argument.
2. when he's tempted to shirk hardships and go for the path of least resistance, he is to endure hardship.
3. when he's tempted to keep his mouth shut, Timothy is to do the work of an evangelist.
4. when he's tempted to simply listen to Paul and not actually do it, he's to discharge all the duties of his ministry (not just the ones he likes)

v6-8. But it's worth it.

Paul gives Timothy his own example both to follow, but also to note that he will be absent soon. He is being sacrificially poured out like drink offering where nothing will be left behind. He, like an athlete, has competed and finished according to the rules and so for him will be the crown of righteousness from Jesus the judge.

At the end of it all we will see that it was worth pouring yourself out for Jesus.

Here are a few questions to start discussion off - as always, feel free to adapt for your group

Brainstorm all that you remember from 2 Timothy so far.
Has anyone started 1 in 21?!

What is the context of Timothy's challenge (v3-4)? Where are the parallels in our day?
What do our itching ears like to hear?

Why does Paul begin as he does in v1? Why is that a motivation for Timothy?
Why do we not open our mouths with our friends?

When is Timothy to do this? Why is it hard to do it out of season?

What temptations in v5 does Paul deal with?
How does he challenge Timothy?

How does Paul motivate Timothy that it's worth it?
Do you believe him?

What 1 thing can you take away from these verses?