

MY GENERATION (part-two of a six-part study)

In 2 Timothy 4:1-5, the apostle Paul issues a prophetic warning to his disciple Timothy and all of us, confirming its seriousness in vv1-2 –

“I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.”

There is both a present and future tense emphasis given in these two verses. The **charge** to preach the word is an immediate imperative. It is given in the presence of an omniscient God and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. At the same time, Paul wants Timothy and us to heed this warning with a future tense realization in mind. Jesus Christ is coming again! His arrival and appearing will occur in two phases. Phase One will consist of the rapture of the Church. Seven years later, Phase Two will involve His return to earth for the express purpose of establishing His kingdom on earth. Both phases will include a time of judgment for the living and the dead. As far as the Church is concerned, every Christian will undergo a time of evaluation regarding reward at an event known as the Judgment Seat of Christ, during that seven-year interval. The practical import? Paul, in issuing this charge, seeks to create in each of us, a sense of accountability before God here and now (Hebrews 4:13), as well as an awareness our time of evaluation, hereafter (Romans 14:12; 1 Corinthians 3:10-15; 4:1-5; 2 Corinthians 5:10).

Paul’s specific concern focusses upon the ministry of the Word of God. Whether it involves preaching from a pulpit, teaching in a class, or interacting with God’s truth in a family setting, every Christian has the responsibility of sharing the Word of God with others. The charge is mandatory, not optional, and is given in the military language of an order which must be obeyed. It is to be our constant concern, and not adversely affected by worldly distractions, as indicated by the expression, “be ready in season and out of season.” It is reminiscent of Paul’s general admonition found in Ephesians 5:15-17 –

“Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”