

# 2 Timothy 4:2

by Robert F. Adcock

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*The sermon calls Christians to be ready and proactive in sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ amidst a world in need of hope and truth.*

**Duration:** 40:39

**Scripture:** 2 Timothy 4:1

**Topics:** "Evangelism", "Discipleship"

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## Description

The video is about a church in Florida that was struggling and losing members. The pastor and some concerned individuals came up with a plan to revitalize the church by enlisting the help of every Christian in the church to go out and be a witness for Jesus Christ. They emphasized the difference between being a witness and a soul winner, and encouraged everyone to see themselves as ambassadors for Jesus. The video highlights the importance of sharing the message of God's love and the Gospel of Jesus Christ with others, and urges viewers to not delay in doing so as life is short and the Lord may come at any time.

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## Transcript

I'd like for us to take a look tonight, I think this is certainly in keeping with what we've been thinking about today, and that's the spread of the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Timothy chapter 4, we'll be looking at several passages. As I left the chapel today, I remarked to my wife that Melody Curden was feeding her horse along the fence over here.

I see her there quite often, and actually Melody established a contact with the lady across the street, and she was able to witness to this. This lady lost her daughter not long ago. Melody was searching for those words, like we all do sometimes, what to tell them.

She remembered what Roger said this morning, tell them about the gospel. And she was able to share with this lady the message of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and she was able to invite her to come to our services tonight. She's not here, I don't see any strange faces, but I'm saying that because there are opportunities that abound.

If we're looking for those opportunities, and if we're ready when those opportunities present themselves, I believe God divinely appoints, makes divine appointments for each one of us, and we've heard testimony of that today. And what you and I as believers in Jesus Christ need to do is be involved, be one that God has singled out, one that is alert and ready and willing to respond to those divine appointments. Reading

from verse 1, the Apostle Paul says, I charge thee, therefore, before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word, be instant, in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth and shall be turned unto fables. Now just a couple of verses in 1 Peter 3, verse 14. And if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye, and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled.

But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Shall we have just another word of prayer? Our Father in heaven, we praise thee and thank thee for this day and for the encouragement that you've provided for our hearts. We thank thee for the divine presence of your wonderful Son in our midst, for the inner witness of the Spirit of God that has made us aware today of your voice speaking to our hearts.

And we pray thee that each one of us shall be challenged afresh as never before to indeed be good ambassadors for Jesus Christ our Lord. We thank thee tonight for this assembly and for each one assembled here. Encourage our hearts and souls from the word of God and send us forth from this place as proclaimers of the best news that any man ever heard, that Jesus Christ your Son and our Savior loved them and died for them.

For this we ask in his precious name. Amen. I'd like to think of every Christian as being just as responsive to the divine invitation to go out and be a witness as Paul was in encouraging his son in the faith, Timothy.

You see, Paul wanted Timothy to be combat ready. He wanted Timothy to be ready for action, alertness. He wanted him to be a Christian that, if we look for mottos, he had a good motto.

He was always ready, and that certainly should be descriptive of all Christians when it comes to witnessing for Christ. I think it was just a week or so ago, on a Saturday morning, we previewed a film here in this auditorium. Several of us were present, some have seen this film, but it gives an account of a church down in Florida that was dying.

I say dying in the sense that numerically the numbers were diminishing week after week, and they were searching for some way in which they could revitalize that fellowship. To make a long story short, they came up with what I believe was a divine way, a divinely appointed way whereby any church can grow and indeed be a blessing to not only the community in which it is located, but indeed there can be enrichment for every member of that local church. The pastor of that church and some of those that were deeply concerned discovered that if by some means they might enlist the help of every Christian that fellowships in that church in going out and being a witness for Jesus Christ, now there's a difference between a witness and a soul winner.

Every one of us can be a witness for Jesus Christ. I think soul winning is a unique gift, and each one of us should pray that God will entrust us with that wisdom to be a true soul winner. Recently we completed a course with a number of people that are in this room that wanted to know more about witnessing and winning souls for the Lord Jesus Christ, and they have gone out and they're witnessing and they're endeavoring to win souls for the Savior.

But if you can just imagine what can take place when you have a whole body of Christians, God's people, they may be small in number. In this case, I think it was just a few people, but they went out from that place. And by example, the spiritual leaders in that church began to set the example, witness and lead souls to Christ.

And that place has grown in such a way that it's just astounding. We shouldn't be astounded by this. That's God's way.

It's always been God's way. That every one of us would see ourselves as ambassadors for Jesus Christ, a witness for the Savior, and indeed a soul winner. We hope to view that film here sometime in September and perhaps have some meetings in which each one of us in this assembly, I feel like with reluctance that I even say we wait until September because September may be too late.

The Lord may come tomorrow. I'm thinking about the souls, that they may be there today waiting for someone to speak the message of God's love as revealed in the gospel of Jesus Christ to their needs. And the Apostle Paul is a man that senses that urgency, and he felt like he had to tell all of those that he sensed were interested in serving God in the importance of this.

So tonight as we read these things and as we think about it, I pray that tonight that the Spirit of God will do a work in each of our hearts so that everyone that leaves this place tonight before tomorrow has passed, if God lets us see another day, every one of us will be entrusted by God with a divine encounter, that we'll be able to speak to some soul in this world that is without the Savior. And I don't think that we're talking about things that are in the realm of fantasy. We're talking about the reality of lonely people in this world that do not know Jesus Christ.

And wherever you work in your neighborhood, people that you're in contact with, realize that God has entrusted you as a believer with the responsibility of letting your light shine. You sharing that message that reached your soul and revolutionized your life did something for you that nothing else ever did. I pray that before we come back to this place next week and assemble in this room, if God sees fit to spare us and let us come back here, that we'll have testimonies of people that witnessed to someone else and won someone else for the Lord Jesus Christ.

I'll tell you, the enemy is very active. The enemy is becoming bolder and bolder every day. Just this week we were made aware that in South Square Mall, starting on Wednesday of this week through Saturday, there will be a psychic fair.

There will be people there that will tell you all about the things that are in that realm of spiritual darkness, perhaps trying to make prophylacts out of some of these, telling you about palm reading, astrology, the occult, black magic, all of these things. And it's been carried on in a place where most of us do business almost weekly. I would enlist your help.

It's a very simple matter. Or you have a telephone. You can call South Square Mall, the administrative office, ask to speak to the manager or someone there, and just ask them, what is the purpose for this psychic fair? And give a word of Christian witness that it is absolutely inconsistent with anything, everything that you believe as a Christian.

And there are merchants there, and there's a merchants' association in South Square Mall. And I believe we can have some impact if we call that merchants' association during this week and tell them that we

disapprove of what they're doing. I'll tell you, beloved brother and sister in Christ, if these things, if they don't bother you, we've heard it so often, be ye angry and sin not.

It's time for God's people to speak up and speak out. And if we're not willing to do it, the enemy is not shy. And with all of the malice and with all of the deceit that he possesses, he dares come into this area that we call the Bible Belt in this part of our great country, and he dares to go into a very commonplace, and he influences people somewhere, somehow.

And next week, you'll have a psychic fair over in South Square Mall. Let's speak out against it, and let them know that there at least are some people in Durham, North Carolina, that patronize that place, that do not approve of what they're planning. I have no doubt in my mind that the Apostle Paul, if he'd had a telephone, he'd have been on that telephone, he'd have been calling, and he'd have been letting them know exactly where he stood.

As good believers in Jesus Christ, as those that are strong, those that are aware that the time is short and that we must act in season, out of season, we stay ready at every possible moment in which there is an opportunity to spread the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. It's remarkable to me that a man like Peter, who at the first seemed to be so timid and so shy and so cowardly, would become so bold in his witness for the Savior, would sense that regardless of what we may feel inwardly, that fear of man that's very real, and the fear of man bringeth a snare. Psalm 27.1 says, If we know whose side we're on, and we know God is on our side, we need not fear.

And I think about the words of Hebrews 13.5. Our God said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. Do we believe that? I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee, even in the time of adversity, even when you exercise yourself, and you separate your heart and soul unto me, and you purpose to go forth and to be a witness for me, even in the enemy's stronghold. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

As a result of that, the writer of Hebrews says, So that we may boldly say, with boldness, courageously we say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. I don't believe the Apostle Paul was afraid of any man. And the only way you can be delivered from the fear of man is to know who's on your side.

You've made a decision in this life. You've entrusted the eternal destiny of your soul into the pierced hands of the Lord Jesus Christ. And you said, I'm persuaded that he's able to keep that which I've committed unto him against that day.

I know he's on my side. He said he would never leave me, nor forsake me. With that thought in mind, the Spirit of God gives us that holy boldness that we need to really go out and to speak out for the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul says in his charge to Timothy, I want you to ever be ready. And Peter seems to, in a sense, just fortify the one that would read these passages and compliment what Paul has already said. He says, I'll tell you what, if you really want to be ready, sanctify your heart, set your heart, your total being apart for God's service.

Is God first in our lives? Does Jesus Christ have the preeminent place in my life as a Christian? Well, that's what the Word of God tells us, that Christ should be first. He's first in each of our lives. Peter says, sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and then be ready.

When that opportunity comes to share with someone the gospel of Jesus Christ, be ready, because the heart is right with God. And that matter of fear of man has been taken care of. My God will not leave me, nor forsake me.

My God is the one that has put me into this service. I am an ambassador for the Lord Jesus Christ. I'm not just some lackey that doesn't know what he's doing.

I'm in God's service. I'm a witness for the Lord Jesus. And I'm living in a world that is dying, it's perishing, and people are lonely and they're despairing of even life itself.

You heard our brother's testimony of what it's like to live without Christ. You know something about that in your own experience, that life without Christ, how lonely it was, how unhappy you were, and all of the satisfaction and joy that's come to your life from knowing Jesus Christ. It's incumbent upon us to take that message and share it with the world, the world that he loved, the world that he died for.

Jesus says, be ready always, always. You see, this is in accord with what Paul has already said, in season, out of season. Every opportunity that comes my way, I'm ready, I'm alert.

And we tell people about that wonderful hope that's within our souls, that hope of eternal life which the gospel of Jesus Christ brings to us. You see, we do not have to flounder about and wonder what we're going to say. We have the gospel.

That's what Paul had, that's what Peter had, what Timothy had, that's what Paul was urging Timothy to be aware of, that he had a message, and he could share that message with the world of that day. And that's what Peter's telling us, and we always do it under the control of the Spirit of God. I'm not left to myself.

I don't have to draw from just my own resources, my own strength, which is puny and insignificant in the face of the power of the enemy that we face in this world. It's the power of God against the power of evil, and we're indwelt and filled with the Spirit of God for God's service. If you're going to be effective for God and you're witness for Christ, you'll have to do it in the power of the Spirit of God.

There's no room for the flesh in witnessing for the Savior. It's not just a matter of just going out and speaking a lot of empty words. I'd like for us to think about a passage that's found in Acts chapter 8. It deals with Philip, the evangelist.

And you can turn, if you like, because I want us to think for just a few moments about a pattern that we see in witnessing for the Lord Jesus Christ. Because first and foremost, Philip was a man that was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, the Holy Spirit. And this man, in his witness for the Savior, did a very effective job.

There was a realization that here was a divine encounter, a man involved in a very fruitful ministry. He was preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Samaritans. Souls were being saved, and God miraculously and wonderfully picks him up and takes him and puts him in a place where there's a man that has a need, a man that has a need that he is searching for divine truth.

I think the description of Philip that we find in Acts 6, which reminds us that he was a man full of faith and filled with the Holy Ghost. Indeed, these are things that must be characteristic of us. Our faith can't be weak and wavering.

We have to be strong in our faith. Do you remember that faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God? We're fortified by the Word of God. The Spirit of God uses God's Word, and he increases our faith, and we act upon what he has told us to do.

I think perhaps Peter's words could have well had something to do with Philip and the way he reacted to his opportunity. But if Philip sees a man journeying along his way, an Ethiopian eunuch that has been up to Jerusalem to worship, he has in his hand a Greek translation of the Old Testament, and he's reading in Isaiah 53, and he is pondering ever so carefully what does all of this mean? And God has divinely and wonderfully taken Philip and he's brought him to right where this man was. This man needed some help.

God took the right man and he put him in the right place so that he could speak and address himself to the need that this man had. Philip starts out with a question, and we've already learned in soul winning that you do have to make some sort of contact when you're seeking encounters with individuals that need the Savior and you're looking for that divine encounter, you have to learn to ask a question. Sometimes we've learned that one approach that we have may not work with another, but you size up the situation and one that is used most often, do you know what the Scriptures have to say about this matter? But I find that Philip's message, it started with the Word of God.

It was centered in the Word of God. It wound up with the Word of God. Philip was not just a windjammer doing a lot of talking.

He started with the Scriptures and he ended with the Scriptures. That's what we've learned in this business of winning souls for Christ. Use the Word of God.

Not your opinion. Not little catchy stories. Use the Word of God.

God honors His Word. And so Philip's first question is, do you know what you're reading? That simple. Do you know what you're reading? Do you understand anything about what you're reading? He has a sincere seeking soul.

He's unhappy, but he's filled with a desire to know what he's reading about. And behold, God's messenger, the first question he asks is, do you know what you're reading? And Philip, of course, had no doubt as to whether the prophet that he was reading about or the one of whom he spoke. And this was the big question in this man.

Is the prophet speaking of himself or another? He needed enlightenment. He needed help. And, of course, Philip responds.

He declared unto him that it was the Lord Jesus that the prophet was speaking of. Judaistic teachers would have told him, perhaps, that he's probably speaking about Jeremiah, the suffering prophet, something along that line. Not taking into any account that there was a messianic hope for Israel.

And though they claimed that there was a promise from God that they would have a Messiah, they seemed to be able to so easily circumvent any encounter in the Word of God with this idea that Jesus Christ, Jesus of Nazareth, had fulfilled that role and he was Messiah. But Philip reminds him right away that it was Jesus, that Jesus of Nazareth, the one that you've heard about. He is the one that the prophet is speaking of.

He is that Lamb of God, the one that was so misjudged, mistreated, misunderstood. He is the one that the prophet spoke of. He preached unto him the Lord Jesus Christ.

I think just as much went into that message of preaching to that one man as one would attempt to prepare for if he spoke to thousands. Because when you recognize that this is God's divine appointment, you put everything you've got into it. You don't hold back anything.

You don't say it's just one soul. Listen, brother. People get saved as individuals.

You may look out over the masses and you say, I want to reach them for Christ. And you can preach to them. And praise God, the Spirit of God may take a gospel and seal it home to some heart.

But most often, seeking souls are looking for help. They need individual help. That's why God enlists our help.

And haven't we been reminded just recently, just think of us, the believer, the poor sinner, saved by the grace of God. And God dares to say, I want you to be a co-laborer with me. I want you to help me.

I want you to serve me in making known this good news to the world. I think we mentioned one night that perhaps angels could do a lot better job in proclaiming the glory of God. And they worship the Lord Jesus Christ.

They look upon Him as indeed God's wonderful, blessed Son. There's one thing they do not know, though. They do not know what it means to be saved by the grace of God.

They do not know the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ in saving a soul. Because they've never been in that place. So God takes those that have been redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus, and He says, go out and you tell others about that wonderful person of my Son, the Lord Jesus.

And that's what Philip did. He told the eunuchs. He told them about the Lord Jesus Christ.

He instructed Him well. And I think he retraced for them as he read Isaiah 53. This is the one that was rejected and despised.

He was disapproved of by his own people. And he could press home upon his own heart. Listen.

He may have come unto his own and they rejected him. But as many as will receive him, they receive the gift of eternal life. And he could remind them of all of the injustice that was heaped upon the Son of God.

I believe he pressed it home upon his heart. And the Spirit of God was there in deep conviction and reminded him that as a poor sinner, he needed God's Lamb. He needed the Lamb of God that could take away his sin because he was reminded the iniquity of us all was laid upon him.

And there upon the cross of Calvary, each one of us must picture my sin, the burden of my sin, the load of my sin. I reminded you the other morning, two people died upon that cross, the blessed Son of God and me, the poor, filthy, vile sinner. And the Lord Jesus Christ, identified with me to the extent that he paid the penalty for my sin.

And praise God, the eunuch responded and he received Jesus Christ as his Savior. He believed the message because when Peter, when Philip instructs him in the matter of baptism, which I believe he did,

and this man sees some water, he wants to know if there's any reason why I can't be baptized. And Philip would say, if you believe with all your heart, then you may be baptized.

And he responds and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. The one that I've just trusted is my Savior. I believe that's God's Son.

I think about Romans 10 and 9, a great salvation verse, that thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus is Lord. Believe in thine heart that God has raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. His need for that public confession, and he made it to one person, doesn't mean walking the aisle before a congregation.

Confession of Christ can be made to one person. And that's what he did. And part of the reason he reminded him of that was because we read in John 12 that if confession of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior was made, that all of the Pharisaical leaders of that day would do all that they could to have that person cast out of the synagogue, separated from the place of fellowship.

But Philip pressed at home from his heart the need of confession, and he did. And I feel that a part of witnessing for Jesus Christ it's very important that we remind those people that we deal with you need to confess the Lord Jesus. We hear so often he died openly upon a cross, and there were many people around that cross.

It wasn't done in a quorum. It was done out in an open place. How can any one of us identify ourselves with him and trust him as our Savior and then be quiet, call ourselves silent disciples of the Lord Jesus? It's often referred to Joseph of Arimathea as a silent disciple.

We refer to Nicodemus as the one that came by night. This sort of approach. We're empowered to be witnesses for the Lord Jesus Christ.

And it means, brother and sister, that you do it overtly. You do it openly. You do it solely.

And the Apostle Paul and the Apostle Peter are stressing for us and for our learning that we need to be ready. We need to be alert. We need to sense the urgency of what we're doing.

We're doing business for God. And I'm reminded that today is short. I'm reminded that Jesus Christ may come at any moment.

And just recently we were talking about the coming of the Lord. And I remember in that group, after we had talked about it for a moment, and we were reminded if we had the choice at this moment to leave this life and go be with Christ, what would be your choice? You'd be willing to leave right now for heaven to be with Christ. And you've already detected in your own soul this unreluctance.

But he's coming. And he's coming very soon. And I'll remind you, when he comes and the last member has been added to the body of Jesus Christ and the church has been raptured out of this world, the day of opportunity for you and me to serve him in witnessing and telling forth the gospel to this world, it will be forever over.

Now, I believe in heaven we will serve him in many ways. But today he has entrusted us with a message for this world in which we live. And the big question is, are we going to respond and are we in obedience going to carry that message to the world? His own mother says, whatsoever he asks you to do, do it.

The word of God says, happy are you if you do these things. And the hacker Christian is the Christian that's winning souls for the Lord Jesus Christ. The hacker Christian is the one that is boldly proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to this world in which we live.

You may feel like, I can't do it. I'm too shy. No, you can't do it.

I can't do it. But by the grace of God and with the power that he provides, we can all be fruitful witnesses for the Lord Jesus. And I do pray that we're going to see the power of Satan broken over our lives.

And we've been so unfruitful so long, many of us, so barren, unproductive. We're barren to reproduce, said Dawson Trotman. I believe that.

And I want us to go forth from this place tonight, purposing in our hearts, we're going to serve God faithfully and that we proclaim the gospel. We come back to this place if our Lord be not come by next Sunday, we'll bring some soul with us that we want for the faith. You say, you sound like you're shooting pretty high.

The sky's the limit as far as I'm concerned. The sky's the limit. We've been discouraged and defeated too long by the words of the deceiver of men's souls.

You can't do that. You don't have those opportunities. You do have those opportunities.

And you listen to the inner witness of the Spirit of God. And you take that gospel, the wonderful glad tidings of Jesus Christ, and you go tell someone about it. You may see a face light up.

You may hear someone say, tell me more. You may have the joy, just as Roger did just last evening. A dear boy that was in, dead and trespasses in sin, now he's alive.

He possesses eternal life and he's going to heaven to be with the Lord Jesus. That can be your experience if you've got a purpose in your heart that you're going to do God's bidding and do it for the glory of God. Let us pray.

Our Father in heaven, we solemnly bow before thee tonight and we are aware that we need to confess that we've been derelict in our responsibility to be a witness for the Savior. So often, so many of the trivial things of this life have occupied our time. But we know, Lord, we know it just as sure as we're here tonight, that this life is so short that it rises up like a vapor and then it disappears and it's all gone.

That you've asked us today to be a living witness for the Lord Jesus and to carry the wonderful gospel of our Lord Jesus to this world in which we live to inspire every one of us. And tonight we pray to you that the Spirit of God will fill the souls of everyone in this room that we'll go forth empowered and encouraged to tell someone else about the Savior that means so much to us. Lord, we've been reminded today, if you love me, keep my command.

Help us, we pray thee, as we say those words, I love you, Lord Jesus, to in the same breath say, Lord, I'll go out and serve you and I'll tell someone else about your love and about your death upon Calvary's cross for their sins. This we ask tonight in your son's wonderful name. Amen.

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