PAUL'S SWAN SONG
Every Pastor's Job Profile
2 Timothy 4:1–5

LET'S BEGIN HERE

At any moment, Paul might have been pulled from his prison pit and marched to the axman's block. He had said everything he needed to say to his "beloved son" (2 Timothy 1:2)—nearly. A few things remained. Paul wrote to Timothy without panic and with purpose. The young pastor had a timid temperament and a tender heart; he would take Paul's departure hard. Nevertheless, the days were depraved and dangerous, and Timothy needed to read Paul's never-to-be-forgotten final charge in order to complete his ministry. Pastors today who carry on the ministry, regardless of age, location, or culture, need to hear and heed that same timely and timeless charge.

LET'S DIG DEEPER

1. A Minister's Call

Whether he's a mild-mannered Clark Kent or a blaze of fire streaking through the sky like Superman, every pastor has the same job profile, beginning with a summons to ministry.

2. A Passionate Charge (2 Timothy 4:1)

Ministry isn't a hiring; it's a calling. And well that it is, because every pastor stands under the shadow of the divine Judge's bench and the conquering King's throne.

3. Five Urgent Commands (2 Timothy 4:2)

The pastor's job isn't to be successful—to convert the world or fill the pews. That's God's job. The pastor's job is to be faithful— to carry out five divine commands.

"Preach the word"

"Be ready in season and out of season"

"Reprove"

"Rebuke"

"Exhort"

4. A Relevant Prediction (2 Timothy 4:3–4)

Faithful preachers proclaim the Word with urgency, relevancy, patience, and intelligence because a day is coming (and has already begun) when people will no longer have ears to hear the truth.

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LET'S LIVE IT

Turning back to Timothy and the traits that should have characterized his life and ministry, Paul issued four final commands (2 Timothy 4:5):

Stay steady and cool.

The word translated "be sober" (*nepho*) in 2 Timothy 4:5 is the same word translated "temperate" in 1 Timothy 3:2, 11 and Titus 2:2. Look up the word *temperate*, and write the definition in your own words.

Why is the command to "be sober" or "temperate" so important for pastors?

Be willing to endure suffering.

Paul said a time was coming when people will not "endure sound doctrine" (4:3), and he warned of difficult days (3:1). Do you think we are living in those days? Explain.

Why might preachers of truth suffer hardship, according to 2 Timothy 3:2–5?

Keep on giving out the good news.

What is the gospel?

Do you know anyone who needs to hear the gospel? Write a prayer asking the Lord to give you the courage and opportunity to share.

Persevere full bore all the way to the end.

What ministry has God given you?
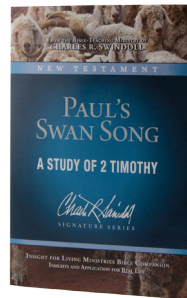
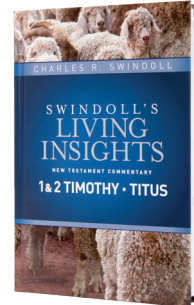**What are you doing to fulfill that obligation?**

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