**THE TESTIMONY OF A DYING MAN**

2 Timothy 4:6-8

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**INTRODUCTION**

The words of a dying person are often remembered far longer than anything else the person may have spoken. Those words are often spoken sincerely and reveal vital truth reflected upon in the dying hour. Those last words often speak about the past and the future. For example, the last words of Jesus are hallowed words often preached in the weeks leading up to Easter, or Resurrection Sunday. Similarly, Paul spoke some memorable words in light of his approaching death at the hands of Caesar’s executioner. Let us look at his dying words and the dying words of some others in history.

1. **THE DYING WORDS OF A BELIEVER: PAUL**

*Nero has sentenced Paul to death. Demas has forsaken him; others have been sent out for ministry. It is approximately A.D. 64. He is at peace, and he is dying in hope!*

1. Paul realizes that his life will soon be **sacrificed**: “I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure.”
2. Paul has **no** **regrets** about his life for Jesus Christ: “I have fought a good fight.”
3. Paul feels that he has **completed** his work: “I have finished my race.”
4. Paul remains **confident** of His relationship with Christ: “I have kept the faith.”
5. Paul thinks about receiving his heavenly **reward**: “Now there is in store for me a crown of righteousness…and to all who have longed for his appearance.”

*Paul was not fearful or worried about his approaching death. He had accomplished much in life and left nothing undone. He was ready to enter Heaven and receive his eternal reward. What glorious words! What a treasure he left us! Let us compare...*

1. **THE DYING WORDS OF SOME NON-BELIEVERS**

*The dying words of those without Christ reflect a different mood. Their words are remorseful. Haunted by their past, they express no hope, only fear and dread.*

1. The rich farmer in Luke 12 expressed **joy** because of his great harvest: “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.” However, God got the last word, “You fool!”
2. The writer Thomas Hobbes, in 1679, spoke **fearfully** at his approaching death: “I am about to take a leap into the dark.”
3. The atheist Voltaire, in 1778, **cried** **out** at his approaching death: “I am abandoned by God and man.” Upon his offer of half of all he possessed for 6 more months of life, his doctor said there was no hope. Voltaire cried out, “Then I shall go to hell and you go with me. O Jesus Christ.”
4. The historian Edward Gibbon, in 1794, spoke **sadly** at his approaching death: “All is now lost, finally, irrecoverably lost. All is dark and doubtful.”
5. The atheist Thomas Paine, in 1809, moaned **desperately** at his approaching death: “Oh Lord, help me, for I cannot bear to be left alone. Send even a child to play with me.”

*What tragedy! What sadness! What heartache! The final words of these unbelievers are too horrible to bear! O that they might have come to their senses sooner!*

**CONCLUSION**

What will be your dying words? Will they be words of hope for a bright future—words that bring comfort to your loved ones? OR will your dying words be like those without Christ—words without hope! The difference is Jesus! What will you do with Jesus?

**Illustration**: The father of George Beverly Shea, soloist for Billy Graham for many years, wrote these words while sitting in his rocking chair moments before dying: “Life has been wonderful, the promises of God precious, the eternal hope glorious.” What about you?