

**Group discussion** Each number below includes questions that relate to the scripture. I offer a few answers, but your perspective may be better. The point is to discuss, not to get 100% agreement. Rule of thumb: the fewer questions you ask, the better. Save time for “the big question.”

Read II Timothy 4:6-8 aloud.

1. What do you think was going on in Paul’s life?  
*In these three verses, it sounds like he is about to die. If you read the rest of chapter 4, you see that he is in prison, needing supplies, and deserted by many of his friends.*

What was Paul’s attitude toward his impending death?

How does this match the spirit that Jesus showed as he died?

How do Jesus and Paul’s attitudes contrast with the way our society views death?  
*Some are terrified, some live like it will never occur.*

2. What happened to a drink offering in Jewish worship?  
*Wine was either poured on the ground or over the animal being sacrificed.*

How is a drink offering an analogy for death?

3. Verse 7 includes three phrases. How would you re-state them in your own words?

Are these statements looking at past, present, or future?

Why doesn’t Paul use the phrase “won the race”? How is our faith like a distance race, where finishing is an achievement?

What are some similar statements you might hear at a funeral home?  
*“She lived a good life.” “He always loved his family.” “Nobody could cook like grandma.” “He kept the faith.”*

How does death motivate us to live a better life?

4. Verse 6 refers to a departure. Where was Paul headed?

Does a departure sound more like an ending or a beginning?

How does the promise of Heaven help us face death?

5. What are some attitudes that you hope will not be in your heart when you die?  
*Anger, grudge, regrets, shame, terror, etc.*

What is the secret to dying well? What can we learn from Paul and Jesus about how to prepare for death?

How does living well prepare you to face death with words of calm assurance, such as “into your hands I commit my spirit”?

† **The big question** If you ask only one question, let this be it. Allow at least 20 minutes. Go around the circle and give each person an opportunity to answer. It’s okay if they pass, but at least they get a chance to respond.

What would you like to be written on your tombstone?

## Resources

### Bible notes

- Paul also referred to dying for Christ as a drink offering in Philippians 2:17. You can see where shedding your blood for your faith reminds him of wine being poured over a sacrifice. Read the background of drink offerings in Numbers 15:1-10 and 28:4-8.

**Kid-friendly activity.** *An activity designed to help kids and adults grow in faith together. Do this first, then dismiss the kids so the adults can talk.*

#### Junk Art

For a few days before the meeting, save your interesting trash – toilet paper rolls, packing peanuts, bits & pieces, glittery things, etc. Bigger kids might need larger items – bike tire, broken chair, etc.

Give the kids the junk and tell them to make something fabulous. You might put them on teams including mixed ages.

Ask the kids to display their creations

How did you make such fine pieces from such poor material?

Our faith helps us see new possibilities in difficult situations. What did you hear in the sermon about Jesus doing that?

Read II Timothy 4:6-8 aloud.

What kind of situation was Paul facing?

Why doesn't he sound sad if he was approaching death?

How does living a good life help you get ready to face death?



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## LIFE Group Guide

### II Timothy 4 – Ending Well

By John Grant (jgrant@collegehills.org)

The theme for this meeting: **Live each day with the end in mind.**

Kevin is preaching a series on the last words of Jesus. This week focuses on “into your hands I commit my spirit” from Luke 23:46. Jesus could speak these words as he died because he had lived well.

In this guide, we consider some of Paul’s last words, and they sound similar to Jesus. II Timothy 4 was written from Paul to his friend Timothy, and it reads like Paul giving final instructions in case he dies. Like Jesus, his good life made death less menacing.

Leadership tip: It is fine to “punt the lesson,” especially when someone shares a painful struggle. A key goal of a LIFE group is to support one another’s spiritual growth. If you find yourself skipping the lesson nearly every meeting, you might want to develop a plan to accommodate intimate sharing at some point during each meeting.

**I. Relate** *Use a few of these to introduce the theme and “break the ice.” No right or wrong answers – maybe goofy but not wrong! Look for opportunities to affirm and encourage individuals through these questions.*

- ❖ The kid-friendly activity will often work with adults – we all have a bit of kid in us, so we never get too old to play.
- ❖ Baskin-Robbins or Dairy Queen or somewhere else?  
*Invite your group to 31-cent scoop night at Baskin-Robbins on Wednesday April 29, 5-10 p.m. Bring lawn chairs & guests & have a party.*
- ❖ When have you been present for someone’s death? What was that like?
- ❖ If you died tonight, what would you regret leaving undone?