

“Preach the Word – The Focus”
2 Timothy 4:2
(Preached at Trinity, November 6, 2022)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. **Verses 1-5** of the fourth chapter Paul charges Timothy as one entrusted with the preaching of the Word of God. He has told Timothy the nature of the Bible. That it is inspired by God – it flows forth from God, which makes it infallible and absolute. He has also told him of its necessity both in the salvation of souls and in their sanctification. **Chapter 4:1** opens with, "I solemnly charge you." In other words, because it is the infallible Word of God and because of God’s charge upon his life to preach, it was essential that Timothy faithfully discharge his duty.
2. In **Verse 2** Paul sets forth the primary work of the Pastor. "Preach the Word." In **Verse 1** Paul gives it eschatological significance. This is a work that must go on until the coming of Christ. It is God's purpose for bringing the elect to faith and for their growth to maturity as Christians.
1 Corinthians 1:21 KJV - "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."
3. In these opening verses Paul is directing Timothy's attention to this high divine calling. First, attention is given to the calling, the commission to preach. Then Paul describes the focus of this calling to preach the word. Then Paul describes the scope of the message. "be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."
4. Last week I limited our focus to the commission to preach. As I pointed out, it is an important issue in our generation. The failure to understand this has led to many corrupting influences in the modern church including women serving as pastors.
 - A. The commission is a divine calling. God must set a man apart to preach
It is a Divinely ordained calling.
 1. Paul uses a very particular word – “Preach the word” - κηρύσσω, A similar word is the noun form which carries the same meaning – κήρυξ – a herald, one sent with a particular message.
It is interesting, this is the word used in the Septuagint translation of **Daniel 3:4** as the herald of Nebuchadnezzar issued the charge for all to bow before the golden image.
Daniel 3:4 NAU - "Then the herald (κήρυξ) loudly proclaimed: "To you the command is given, O peoples, nations and *men of every language*,"
 2. The call of a pastor is a call upon a man to give himself to preaching and teaching the Word of God.

3. It is a particular calling.
It's important to understand that **Verse 2** is a charge to Timothy as a pastor, not a charge to Timothy as a believer. In other words, this is not a general charge to all Christians but a particular charge to those called to preach.
- B. Preaching is something thrust upon a man – a Divine charge, a Divine calling.
1. This can be seen in countless biographies – God moved upon them so that they felt compelled to preach
1 Corinthians 9:16 NAU - "For if I preach the gospel, I have nothing to boast of, for I am under compulsion; for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel."
Jeremiah 20:9 NAU - "But if I say, "I will not remember Him Or speak anymore in His name," Then in my heart it becomes like a burning fire Shut up in my bones; And I am weary of holding *it* in, And I cannot endure *it*."
 2. Charles Spurgeon famously said, "If you can do anything else do it. If you can stay out of the ministry, stay out of the ministry."
Martyn Lloyd-Jones – "The man who is called to preach is the man who cannot do anything else, in the sense that he is not satisfied with anything else. This call to preach is so put upon him, and such pressure comes to bear upon him that he says, 'I can do nothing else, I must preach.'"¹
 3. It is a solemn, a fearful calling, and arguments are often made to escape the call.
Exodus 4:10 NAU - "Then Moses said to the LORD, "Please, Lord, I have never been eloquent, neither recently nor in time past, nor since You have spoken to Your servant; for I am slow of speech and slow of tongue."
Jeremiah 1:6-7 NAU - "Then I said, "Alas, Lord GOD! Behold, I do not know how to speak, Because I am a youth." ⁷ But the LORD said to me, "Do not say, 'I am a youth,' Because everywhere I send you, you shall go, And all that I command you, you shall speak."
 4. It seems that Timothy was of a timid disposition – Paul continually reminded him of his calling.
1 Timothy 4:16-5:1 NAU - "Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; persevere in these things, for as you do this you will ensure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you."
 5. Now once again, Paul is directing Timothy's attention to his Divine calling
2 Timothy 4:1-2 NAU - "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: ² preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."
2 Timothy 4:5 NAU - "But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

¹ Martyn Lloyd-Jones, *Preaching and Preachers* (Grand Rapids, Zondervan Publishing House, 1972), Page 491.

5. As we continue with the text this morning I want us to look at the focus of God's commission. It is a clear focus.
- I. The pastor must Preach – “Preach the Word”
- A. The men that God calls must give themselves to preaching.
1. Again, the word is κηρύσσω – to publish abroad or proclaim publicly. It literally carries the idea of a town crier sent to announce important news from the king.
There is yet another Greek word that carries the message delivered by the herald - κήρυγμα
1 Corinthians 1:21 KJV - "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."
κήρυγμα - 1) that which is proclaimed by a herald or public crier, a proclamation by herald 2) in the NT the message or proclamation of the heralds of God or Christ
2 Timothy 4:17 NAU - "But the Lord stood with me and strengthened me, so that through me the proclamation might be fully accomplished, and that all the Gentiles might hear; and I was rescued out of the lion's mouth."
Titus 1:2-3 NAU - "in the hope of eternal life, which God, who cannot lie, promised long ages ago, ³ but at the proper time manifested, *even* His word, in the proclamation with which I was entrusted according to the commandment of God our Savior,"
a. As I pointed out last week, there is another word translated preach which means to spread the good news – which applies to every Christian (εὐαγγελίζω)
Acts 8:3-5 NAU - "But Saul *began* ravaging the church, entering house after house, and dragging off men and women, he would put them in prison. ⁴ Therefore, those who had been scattered went about preaching (εὐαγγελίζω) the word. ⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria and *began* proclaiming (κηρύσσω) Christ to them."
b. We should note that while all the Christians went spreading the good news Philip the evangelist went forth as a herald - κηρύξ
 2. Every Christian is called to spread the Gospel (male & female). In fact, pastors are also involved in this informal proclamation of the Gospel.
Ephesians 3:8 NAU - "To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ," εὐαγγελίζω
a. But pastors must give themselves to the public proclamation of the Word. They should be students of preaching—how to become better communicators of God's Word.
b. Nothing should be allowed to supplant this duty.
There are endless distractions. A pastor may play golf, but it must not rob him of his study.

We should remember the purpose of the deacons.

Acts 6:2-4 NAU - "So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. ³

"Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. ⁴ "But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word."

- B. And we must not allow anything to supplant preaching in worship.
It must remain central in our worship.
1. Preaching is unpopular today – the very word is unpopular.
"Don't you preach to me."
Many say, "People are not interested in hearing sermons today."
 2. The church growth experts all tell us that people today have short attention spans. They are conditioned by television with commercials every ten minutes. Worship services must be fast paced. The sermon must be short and entertaining.
 3. God's way is to place a high value upon the exposition of His Word. We need to remember that God attends *preaching* supernaturally
1 Corinthians 1:21 NAU - "For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not *come to* know God, God was well-pleased through the foolishness of the message preached to save those who believe."
 4. We must feel our absolute dependence upon the power of God, and we must pray, pray, pray.
*Brethren we have met to worship And adore the Lord our God;
Will you pray with all your power, While we try to preach the Word?
All is vain unless the Spirit of the Holy One come down;
Brethren, pray, and holy manna Will be showered all around.*
 5. This is what defines preaching. This is what distinguishes it from lecturing or teaching. It is a man commissioned by God to preach with the power of God.
1 Corinthians 2:4 NAU - "and my message and my preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power"
 6. Preaching goes forth in command mode. There is an authority that accompanies the preaching of God's Word.
1 Timothy 4:12 KJV – " These things command and teach. Let no man despise thy youth"

II. He must preach the Word

- A. Today men come to the pulpit and speak on many subjects.
1. Many gifted orators are able to sway an audience with their persuasive skill – without using the Word of God.
 2. Some are great motivational speakers speaking on a everything from finances to personal relationships to social and political issues.
God says, "Preach the Word"
- B. This demands a proper view of God's Word.
1. It is *the* Truth **2 Tim. 3:7-8**
2 Timothy 3:7-8 NAU - "always learning and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. ⁸ Just as Jannes and Jambres opposed Moses, so these *men* also oppose the truth, men of depraved mind, rejected in regard to the faith."
 2. It is the Word that gives the wisdom that leads to salvation – **3:15**
1 Timothy 2:4 NAU - "who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."
It is the Word that is profitable – **Verse 3:16**
"profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness"
 3. The man of God must preach the whole council of the Word of God – This is God's command.
 - a. This demonstrates the great value of expository preaching.
 - b. Preaching the Word is to let God speak rather than men.
 - c. Preaching the Word promotes Biblical literacy in the congregation.
 - d. Preaching the Word carries the ultimate authority.

Conclusion:

1. Do you believe in the supernatural nature of preaching?
 - a. Will you invite others to hear?
 - b. Will you pray for yourself and for the preacher?
2. In the history of the church preaching has always been vital to its health.
 - a. During decadent periods preaching has declined.
 - b. During every great revival there has been a renewed emphasis on preaching.
 - c. Pray that God might restore powerful preaching in our day.