

**2 Timothy 4:1-2:** I 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: <sup>2</sup> preach the word . . .

**Intro:** The last two sermons I preached here at Olney Baptist Church focused on the church: what is the church (the gathering of God's called out ones where (1) the Word of God & the Gospel are rightly preached, (2) the ordinances are rightly given, (3) church discipline is rightly practiced; who are the officers of the church (elders & deacons); what are their qualifications & duties; & the importance of being at church on the Lord's Day – on Sunday. Today we consider the Word of God – this is the Sunday we do once a year where I specifically encourage you to pursue God in His Word. And today I want to keep the church focus going by encouraging you to zealously pursue the Word of God in the preaching of the Word of God in the church each & every Sunday morning.

**Ligon Duncan gave an airline illustration:** “There are several emergency exits on this aircraft (forward, aft, and over each wing.) Please take a few moments now to locate your nearest exit. In some cases, your nearest exit may be behind you. If we need to evacuate the aircraft, floor-level lighting will guide you towards the exit.”

**Context of 2 Tim 4-2 Tim 3:16-17:** All Scripture is breathed out by God & profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, & for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work. - **Ephesians 4:11-13:** he gave . . . the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ . . . .

**Ligon Duncan:** Paul is writing his last letter to Timothy, & it's the last chapter of the last book that the inspired Apostle Paul will ever write, & he opens it by saying “Timothy, one thing-don't you ever forget it-Preach the word”

### **1. The Solemn, Serious, Weightiness Of This Charge**

**2 Timothy 4:1-2:** I 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: <sup>2</sup> preach the word . . . .

**John Piper:** I am not aware of any other biblical command that has such an extended, intensifying introduction (though 1 Timothy 5:21 comes close).

**a. I charge you: Commentator:** [This] has a legal nuance [like testifying under oath in a court of law] so the picture is of the aged apostle calling his young disciple Timothy to the front of God's judicial bench and charging him under oath with the awesome task of proclaiming God's Word to hearers who in a similar way will one day stand in front of that fearsome bench for judgment by Christ Jesus Who will return to reign over all . . . .

**b. In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus:** When you are in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus (Jesus is God!), it is a serious encounter! It's a big deal! This is big time important! (Moses, Isaiah, Peter, Apostles)

**John Piper:** Paul is testifying to the fact that God is behind this command. God is watching over it closely to see that it is delivered. There is no higher authorization and no higher attendant to the proceeding of this testimony.

**c. Who is to judge the living and the dead:** Jesus is the judge of the living and the dead! Paul brings up the final judgment here again highlighting that preaching is serious business! Heaven and hell are at stake! Everlasting joy and everlasting torment are at stake! Your eternal future destiny is at stake!

**John Piper:** The point seems to be that when it comes to preaching, the stakes are raised higher than any rewards or threats in this life. In preaching we are dealing with persons and realities that are vastly greater than this world . . . Christ is active in this world, governing the living. And Christ is – and always will be – active beyond this world, dealing justly with those who have died. This glorious person is unavoidable in life and inescapable in death. Everyone meets him as judge sooner or later. These are the great matters of preaching.

**d. And by his appearing and his kingdom:** Jesus has appeared and He will appear again at His second coming at which His kingdom will be fully realized: every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is LORD and King to the glory of God the Father. He will destroy all of His and our enemies! We will be in His very presence where there's fullness of joy and pleasures forevermore! There will be no more death, no more pain, no more sin, and He will wipe away every tear from our eyes! In light of these glorious realities, preach the Word!

## **2. Preach The Word**

**2 Timothy 4:1-2:** I 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: <sup>2</sup> preach the word . . . .

**a. What is preaching the Word?: Summary-Westminster DPW:** the preacher should become a mouthpiece for his text, opening it up & applying it as a word from God to his hearers...in order that the text may speak...& be heard, making each point from his text in such a manner "that [his audience] may discern [the voice of God]."

- **Stephen Olford:** Expository preaching is the Spirit-empowered explanation and proclamation of the text of God's Word with due regard to the historical, contextual, grammatical, and doctrinal significance of the given passage, with the specific object of invoking a Christ-transforming response.

- **Roger Pascoe:** Biblical preaching is the proclamation of God's Word, in the power of the Holy Spirit . . . that interprets its meaning accurately, explains its truth clearly, declares its message authoritatively, and applies its significance practically (i.e. with relevance to contemporary life) . . . with a view to generating a spiritually transforming response in the listeners.

- **John Piper:** Preaching is the heralding or the announcing of the best news in the world in & from the Word of God by a qualified pastor/elder that makes the meaning of the Word of God clear/plain. Expository exaltation.

**b. What are the purposes of preaching the Word?:** S. M. Lockridge: 1) Instruct; 2) Warm; 3) Move; 4) Tan  
**Westminster Larger Catechism Question 155: How is the Word made effectual to salvation? A:** 1) The spirit of God makes the reading, but especially the preaching of the Word an effectual means of **enlightening:**  
**Nehemiah 8:7-8:** the Levites, helped the people to understand the Law, while the people remained in their places. They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, & they gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading.

**Acts 26:17-18:** I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light & from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins & a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

2) The preaching of the Word is especially a means of convincing, and humbling sinners: **Acts 2:14, 37:** But Peter, standing with the eleven, lifted up his voice and addressed them . . . <sup>37</sup> Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

**Reformation 21 Article commenting on Peter's sermon at Pentecost:** It is Christ-centered; It is full of Scripture; It is expository; It is serious; It is personal; It is Spirit-empowered; It is Gospel-saturated; It exposes sin and calls people to repentance; It is evangelistic; It presses for a response.

3) The preaching of the Word is especially a means of driving sinners out of themselves, and drawing them unto Christ: **Matt. 4:17:** From that time Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

- **Acts 5:42:** And every day, in the temple and from house to house, they did not cease teaching and preaching Jesus as the Christ.

- **Titus 1:1-3:** Paul, a servant of God and an apostle of Jesus Christ, for the sake of the faith of God's elect and their knowledge of the truth, which accords with godliness, in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began and **at the proper time manifested in his word through the preaching** with which I have been entrusted by the command of God our Savior **GOSPEL!**

4) The preaching of the Word is especially a means of conforming saved sinners into Christ's image, and subduing them to his will: **Colossians 1:28**: Him we proclaim, warning everyone and teaching everyone with all wisdom, that we may present everyone mature in Christ.

5) The preaching of the Word is especially a means of strengthening saved sinners against temptations and corruptions: **Romans 16:25**: Now to him who is able to **strengthen you** according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ

**1 Corinthians 1:23-24**: we preach Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ **the power of God and the wisdom of God**.

6) The preaching of the Word is especially a means of building saved sinners up in grace, and establishing their hearts in holiness and comfort through faith unto salvation: **Romans 1:15**: So I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

**2 Timothy 4:2-4**: be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. <sup>3</sup> For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, <sup>4</sup> and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths.

**Pastor Oliver Allmand-Smith's Purposes Of Preaching:** 1) The glory of God in the exaltation of Christ: Isaiah 48:9-11: For my name's sake I defer my anger, for the sake of my praise I restrain it for you, that I may not cut you off. Behold, I have refined you, but not as silver; I have tried you in the furnace of affliction. For my own sake, for my own sake, I do it, for how should my name be profaned? My glory I will not give to another.

2) God's will is made known to all His creatures: God's will is in God's Word, & preachers are to preach the Word!

3) God's people are effectually called and all God's elect are saved: 1 Corinthians 1:21: For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.

4) Sinners are exposed as wicked and sin is shown to be wicked: 1 Corinthians 6:9-10: Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.

5) We hasten the day of Christ's return: Matthew 24:14: And this gospel of the kingdom will be proclaimed throughout the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come.

### **How To Listen To A Sermon**

1) Prepare: Pray for the preacher; pray for yourselves; get enough sleep Saturday night; read the Word regularly

2) Be Present: Come to church and hear in person. This gathering is special! **Matthew 18:20**: For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.

**1 Corinthians 5:4-5**: When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, <sup>5</sup> you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

**John Murray**: We come together to meet with Christ. The requirement is surely the counterpart of the promise, "There am I in the midst of them." Jesus never fails to keep the appointment. It is this peculiar manifestation of Jesus' presence that must come within the design and expectation of our gathering together, if we are to come in Jesus' name. If the assembly of the saints is the instituted means, so naught else is the means of expressing the

unity of the body of Christ, there is surely in that assembly a presence of Christ that cannot be duplicated in any other exercise. Under the Old Testament there was the tent of meeting. Why was it called such? There the people met with God (Ex. 29:42ff.). Jesus is now the tabernacle, and he fulfills that of which the tabernacle in Israel was both the symbol and the anticipation. "There am I in the midst of them." How is Christ present in the assemblies of his people? Do not be surprised if the question is somewhat baffling. There is much in this reality that passes knowledge and understanding. The apostle Paul speaks of the love of Christ that passes knowledge, and the peace of God that passes all understanding. It is likewise with this question. Are we not encompassed with mystery when we read the words of Jesus, "If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John 14:23; cf. John 17:21-22)? Christ's presence with his assembled people is a precious reality, but one that surpasses understanding. Yet it is to be apprehended and experienced and enjoyed with a joy that is unspeakable. And because that is so, we can say certain things about it. Christ is present by his Word and Spirit . . . .

3) Be Alert: Be on time; Be awake; Actively listen; You may want to take notes

4) Listen with the expectation to hear from God and be changed (James Durham)

5) Listen prayerfully

6) Listen with humility and submission

7) Listen with the desire to obey

8) Listen without distraction

9) Listen with reverence: 2 Timothy 4:1-2: I 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: <sup>2</sup> preach the word . . . .

10) Discuss the sermon afterward over lunch: Family in a church while in the Navy; Pastor in England; our times

**John Piper:** God did not ordain the cross of Christ or create the lake of fire in order to communicate the insignificance of belittling his glory. The death of the Son of God and the damnation of unrepentant human beings are the loudest shouts under heaven that God is infinitely holy, and sin is infinitely offensive, and wrath is infinitely just, and grace is infinitely precious, and our brief life — and the life of every person in your church and in your community — leads to everlasting joy or everlasting pain. This has got to grip us. There is a weight to this office. If our preaching does not carry the weight of these things to our people, what will? Veggie Tales? Radio? Television? Discussion groups? Emergent conversations? God planned for his Son to be crucified and for hell to be terrible so that we would have the clearest witnesses possible to what is at stake when we preach. What gives preaching its seriousness is that the mantle of preaching is soaked with the blood of Jesus and singed with the fire of hell. That's the mantle that turns mere talkers into preachers. Yet tragically some of the most prominent evangelical voices today diminish the horror of the cross and the horror of hell . . . .

### **Jesus makes all of this possible through the GOSPEL!**

Christ Says To Pastors Preach The Word

Instruct The Mind So Truth Is Heard

Warm The Heart So Joy Is Stirred

Move The Will To Do The Word

Convict Of Sin, Repent And Turn

God's Glory's Our Most Great Concern

God's Will Made Known So We Will Learn

God's People Called And Saved Discern

The Wickedness Of Sinners Burn

We Hasten Jesus' Great Return

For He Has Died And Rose To Spurn

The Death And Darkness We Did Earn

So Now For Him We Long And Yearn

For He's Our All And Great Concern

Him We Preach Repent And Turn!