

The Faithful Preacher

2 Timothy 4:1-5

Introduction

- A. What are some of the responsibilities of a pastor?
- B. In these verses Paul is telling Timothy what his priority needs to be as he serves in ministry
 - 1. Since he is living in the “last days” according to chapter 3
 - 2. Paul, knowing that he is about to die (4:6), he wants to be sure Timothy knows exactly what needs to guide his life in the future

I. The charge (4:1-2)

- A. The action: “preach”

When we hear this word we think of a pastor talking from a pulpit, but it would have brought an entirely different picture to Timothy’s mind. He would have thought of an Imperial Roman Herald announcing in a formal and serious tone a message from the Emperor. Essentially, Paul is reminding Timothy that he is speaking on behalf of the King of kings.
- B. The content: “the word”
 - 1. This is the Scripture described in 3:16
 - a. The “good deposit” of 1:14
 - b. The “sound teaching” of 4:3
 - c. The “truth” of 4:4
 - d. The “whole counsel of God” in Acts 20:27
 - 2. A pastor does not present his own ideas on politics, or life or even spirituality. The pastor cannot choose his message, but announce the message given to him by the sovereign Lord—the gospel.

Romans 10:14—“How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?” (ESV)
- C. The timing: “in season and out of season”
 - 1. Paul implies a sense of urgency here
 - 2. The phrase “be ready” implies hard work
 - 3. The result of this diligent study is that when opportunities present themselves that are out of the ordinary, he should know enough from his study to be able to speak the truth at a moment’s notice.
- D. The method: “with complete patience and teaching”

II. The reason for this charge (4:3-4)

- A. People do not want to hear the truth
 - Negatively—“they will not endure sound teaching”
 - Positively—“will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions”

- B. They have a disease called “itching ears”
 - 1. They desire something novel and new
 - 2. They first decide what they want to hear and then find teachers who will say those things
Jeremiah 5:31—“the prophets prophesy falsely, and the priests rule at their direction; my people love to have it so, but what will you do when the end comes?” (ESV)
- C. They turn away from the truth to myths
- D. As people pursue spiritual novelties, Timothy is to keep his head, stay calm and do his work of preaching truth (4:5)

Conclusion/Application

- A. You might ask “what does this mean for me since I’m not a pastor?”

It means we should be thankful for pastors who recognize that their calling is to know God’s Word and preach/teach it clearly every week. We need to pray for our pastors that with all the demands of pastoral ministry they will always remember what their priority is to be. We also need to pray that the Holy Spirit will work in their minds so they understand what they study and how to apply it to their lives so they can help us apply it to ours.
- B. How do you do when it comes to listening to sermons?

Do you prepare before coming to church by praying that the Lord would open your mind and heart to hear His voice through the pastor? Do you get to bed at a decent time on Saturday night so you are fresh and ready to listen on Sunday? Do you jot down some notes and then review them later in the week to remind yourself of what the Word said to you?
- C. In verse 1 Paul says that Jesus will “judge the living and the dead.”

When Jesus comes back we all have to give an account of our lives (Romans 14:12). This is not intended to frighten us, but to encourage us that we don’t have to give an account to anyone else. But we do have to give an account. Just as a pastor must give an account of how faithful he was to follow the direction to preach the Word, so the listeners must give an account of how they listened and put that Word into practice.