

November 26, 2017

“Be Ready to Preach the Word”**Focal Passage: 2 Timothy 4:1-5 (NASB)**

Cross References: 2 Timothy 3:16-17; Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 1:13; 2:9-10; 3:15

Lesson Idea: We need to hold firmly to the Word of God and its sound doctrine as we fulfill our ministry.

BIBLE IN A YEAR READING PLAN

Nov 19 Acts 16-17	Nov 20 Acts 18-20
Nov 21 Acts 21-23	Nov 22 Acts 24-26
Nov 23 Acts 27-28	Nov 24 Romans 1-3
Nov 25 Romans 4-7	Nov 26 Romans 8-10

Background:

As Paul begins to bring this letter to an end, he strongly charges Timothy to stay true to the Word of God. Chapter 3 ended with a strong statement about the inspiration of God’s Word. Now Paul tells Timothy to be prepared to preach it at every situation. He warned that people may not desire to hear the truths of God’s Word, but that they need to hear it. He tells Timothy to fulfill the ministry God has given him.

In our day, it is crucial that we hold true to God’s Word. There are so many avenues for people to hear falsehood today, it makes even more important that we hear Paul’s message about holding to the Truth.

David Guzik shares how strong Paul’s urging was:

I charge you therefore: Charge translates a strong word from Biblical Greek (*diamarturomai*), also often translated *testified* (such as in Acts 8:25). The idea is that Paul gave a solemn testimony to Timothy, testimony that Timothy must heed if he would be a godly pastor. “The verb *diamartyromai* has legal connections and can mean ‘testify under oath’ in a court of law, or to ‘adjure’ a witness to do so.” (Stott)

2 Timothy 4:1-5

1 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. 3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires, 4 and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.

5 But you, be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

DISCUSSION:

- v 1. Why did Paul “solemnly charge” Timothy? How was it done “*in the presence Of God and of Christ Jesus?*” What does Paul say that Jesus will do?
- V 2. What does it mean to “*preach the Word?*” What does it mean to be ready “*in season and out of season?*” (see 1 Peter 3:15) Explain how the Word of God does the following: (see also 2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - *Reprove:*
 - *Rebuke:*
 - *Exhort:*
- Why do we need to share the Word of God “*with great patience and instruction?*”
- V 3. The phrase “*for the time will come*” is similar to the phrase in 2 Timothy 3:1 “*in the last days difficult times will come.*” What time is he talking about? Why will people not endure “sound doctrine?” What tickles people’s ears today? What kind of teachers do people want? Why is that wrong?
- V 4. What kinds of myths turn people from the truth today?
- V 5. We usually think of being “sober” in terms of not being intoxicated; but what does it mean in this context? (see 1 Peter 1:13) Why does Paul tell Timothy to “endure hardship?”
- What did Paul mean when he told Timothy to “do the work of an evangelist” and “fulfill your ministry?” How should these commands apply to all believers? (see Acts 1:8; 1 Peter 2:9-10)

APPLICATION:

- ✓ How open are you to the truth of God’s Word; or do you try to make it say what you want it to say?
- ✓ How are you getting ready to “preach the Word in season and out of season?”
- ✓ How are you fulfilling your ministry?

EXTRA NOTES: from David Guzik, *2 Timothy 4*:

V 2. Preach the word! Paul's emphasis on the word of God has been constant. There are some 36 references to the true gospel in this letter and some 17 references to false teachings.

This constant emphasis makes Paul's point clear to Timothy:

- *Do not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord (2 Timothy 1:8)*
- *Hold fast the pattern of sound words (2 Timothy 1:13)*
- *The things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men (2 Timothy 2:2)*
- *Rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15)*
- *A servant of the Lord must be . . . able to teach (2 Timothy 2:24)*
- *All Scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Timothy 3:16)*

Preach the word! As a pastor, Timothy was not required to merely know the word or like the word or approve of the word; he was required to preach the word. The word of God must be preached by Timothy; it was to be the content of his message.

Be ready in season and out of season: This tells us when the pastor should be ready to preach the word. He should be ready always. He should preach it when it is easy and preach it when it is hard. He should preach it when the fruit is evident and preach it when the fruit seems invisible. He should just preach it. . .

Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching: In his preaching Timothy was to bring the Word of God to bear on the lives of his people. He was not to treat the word as if it were filled with interesting ideas or fascinating theories. He was to hold up the Word of God against the lives of his people and let God do His work.

V 3-4. They will not endure sound doctrine: Timothy needed to keep focused on the Word of God because man, by his natural instinct, does not want God's revelation. He would rather hear what he wants to hear – something to scratch his itching ears.

Clarke on itching ears: "Endless curiosity, an insatiable desire of variety; and they get their ears tickled with the language and accent of the person, abandoning the good and faithful preacher for the fine speaker."

This also shows that if we do want to hear God's word, God is doing something wonderful in us. Left to ourselves, we would rather do it our way, but God

changes our heart in wonderful ways, giving us a desire for His word.

They will heap up for themselves teachers: This reminds us that the most popular teachers are not necessarily the most faithful teachers. We shouldn't assume a teacher is scratching itching ears just because he is popular, but neither should we assume that he is faithful to God's Word just because he is popular.

And be turned aside to fables: Once people leave the Word of God they often then embrace fantastic fantasies. When a man rejects God's truth, it isn't that he believes in *nothing*; he will believe in *anything*.

V 5. Be watchful in all things: Timothy could not fulfill his ministry unless he kept careful attention, being watchful in all things. Every good shepherd has his eyes open.

Endure afflictions: Ministry is just like life – there are afflictions to be borne with. For some this is a disturbing thought because they thought that the ministry would be one beautiful spiritual experience after another. There are plenty of wonderful blessings in serving God but there are also afflictions to be endured.

Do the work of an evangelist: This implies that Timothy was not particularly gifted as an evangelist but he still had to faithfully do that work as a preacher of God's Word.

Fulfill your ministry: Paul gave a similar command to Archippus (Colossians 4:17), and he knew what it was to fulfill his own ministry in some sense (Acts 12:25).