

In 2 Tim. 4:1-2, Paul charges Timothy before God and the Lord Jesus to preach the word. Paul made this solemn, sober charge because of the times when the listener won't be able to endure sounds doctrine and they will want people to tickle their ears and tell them what they want to hear.

The Primary use of the Bible in the Church is Preaching!

- Preaching is the single variable that makes or breaks a church. The letters in Revelation 2-3 are written to the angel (pastors, messengers) of the church.
- Members need to know the importance and definition of preaching.

4 Areas of Importance Regarding Preaching:

1. **The Necessity of Preaching:** preaching is the ordinary means that brings salvation to us all. 1) Preaching is commanded by God. 2) Viewing the sermon as the single most essential element of church worship. 3) Without the preached word, Christ is absent from the church.
2. **Description of Preaching:** From 1 Corinthians: a) It is proclaiming Christ and Him crucified, 1 Cor. 2:2. b) It destroys the wisdom of the wise, 1:19. c) Paul wasn't an inadequate preacher, but he came not as a traveling public speaker, but proclaiming God's truth, 2:1-2. d) God's word is revealed spiritually, 2:10. e) It is God's wisdom, 2:7. f) The rulers couldn't understand God's word, 2:8. g) It must be revealed to us, 2:9. h) Through the Spirit, by God, 2:10, 12, 14. i) Taught by the Spirit of God, 2:13. j) It is spiritually discerned, 2:14. k) Only understood by those who have the mind of Christ, 2:16.

God chooses to reveal Himself, His Will, His Son, and His Wisdom through Preaching

It is divine truth that is proclaimed and declared, leaving no room for neutrality, Tit. 2:15.

3. **Power of Preaching:** God the Holy Spirit and the Son work in the preaching. It is made alive to convict us and change our hearts, Heb. 4:12. Sanctification comes through preaching, John 17:17. The most wicked of hearts will not yield to man but *will* yield to the power of the cross, 1 Cor. 1:18, Rom. 1:16-17. God's word doesn't come back void, Isaiah 55:10.
4. **Goals of Preaching:**
 1. **Sanctification:** holiness in the preacher and God's people who hear it, 1 Tim. 4:16.
 2. **Knowledge:** is the evidence of study and preparation, 1 Tim. 4:15. Holding to the standards taught in Scripture, 2 Tim. 1:13. a) Peter says grace and peace is multiplied in the knowledge of the Lord, 2 Pet. 1:2. b) God's divine power is given through the knowledge of Him, 2 Pet. 1:3. c) We need to add to our faith and virtue, knowledge, 2 Pet. 1:5-6. d) We escape the pollutions of the world through knowledge of Christ, 2 Pet. 2:20. e) Peter commands us again to grow in the knowledge of God, 2 Pet. 3:18.
 3. **Courage:** In Acts 9:29, 13:46, 14:3, 18:26, 19:8, the preaching is proclaimed boldly to the lost. Paul requested prayer to preach the word boldly, Eph. 6:19. Things that inhibit boldness by the preacher: a) Goal of membership, not holiness. b) Eldership has too tight a reign on the preacher. c) Preacher suffers from a general fear of man. d) Weary of fighting spiritual battles.
 4. **Effort:** preaching Bible verse by verse. Hard work, study, and hours of training, 1 Thess. 5:12.
 5. **Love:** preaching to the members in love, with a pure heart. Christ asked Peter to feed His sheep 3x. Loving Christ is loving His people. Genuine love for people is to speak the truth to them. Speaking truth is the primary means of showing love to the sheep.

6. Enthusiasm: to rightly divide the word of God, 2 Tim. 2:15. Paul preaching (and the congregation listening) all night in Troas, Acts 20:7-12.
7. Persuasion: Paul preached the Gospel to King Agrippa, persuading him to become a Christian, Acts 26:27-28. Jesus cried out to the crowd He preached to, John 7:28, 37.
8. Zeal: this is determination and resolve. Acts 20:19, Paul served the Lord with tears and trials to make Christ known. The zeal Jesus demonstrated in the temple with the money changers, Jn. 2:13-22, Matt. 21:12-14 (afterward Christ healed many).
9. Prayer: preaching wrapped in prayer. Prayer for God's Word to be clear, to convict, and be accurate. Prayers for the people receiving the word.
10. Faith: preaching pushes us toward faith, Heb. 11:1. We believe in Christ and proclaim Him boldly, 2 Cor. 4:13. The knowledge of Scripture gives us a look into eternity, Col. 3: 1-4, 1 John 3:1-3, Titus 2:11-15.

Further Discussion and Application

Faithful preachers are a blessing from the Lord. Think back to a time that the preaching you heard wasn't sound doctrine or was weak in theology. What did you realize about the preaching? What was missing? What have you found at our church that was different?

Discuss the 10 Goals of preaching with your group. How have you seen these goals accomplished and how have you experienced the fruit of them in your life? What synergy does the Holy Spirit have with the preaching of the Word of God? What promises in Scripture underpin the effect of preaching in your life? See Romans 8 for ideas.

How many times in your life has the word of God changed you even after your spouse or other loved one confronted you about a particular sin? Why is the preaching of the word of God a wonderful grace given by God? Heb. 4:12 talks about the word of God as a sword. It can change the hardest heart. How has the word of God changed you?

Proverbs 23:23 tells us to buy the truth and sell it not. The verse concludes, "Also wisdom and instruction and understanding." It appears that this type of knowledge is worth paying for. How can we see the encounter with the word of God preached to us each week as the best investment in life? How should we approach each Sunday? How can we prepare each week to receive and hear God's word? What can we do during the week to reinforce what we've heard?