

Introduction:

There is a public and demonic attack on the authority of the Bible; those attacks come from outside and inside the church. Why is that? Statistics say that less than half of the members of any church are true believers... That is why it is alarming what some believe the purpose of preaching and the church really is. The command in 2 Timothy 4 is to preach the Word when it is popular and when it is not popular. Because many people are not interested in the Word of God being preached many churches puts on an entertainment spectacular. They exist to appease their people...whatever the culture dictates they will do. Many adopt new and what they think is improve methodology to get people into their churches violating the design God has given for the church.

One Sunday morning James Cooper a pastor greeted members in some highly unorthodox garments; a red-and-white checker clown suit, red fright wig, rubber nose and large floppy shoes. Then, in what was almost surely the most unusual church service most parishioners ever experienced, he presided as a "Clown Eucharist" that included circus music during the opening procession, a mimed sermon, jugglers and outlandishly dressed ushers blowing soap bubbles. That was eccentric but churches have resorted to anything the people want including worldly music, drive-in 3 minute services and messages that encourage the health wealth and prosperity gospel. It is a sad state of affairs.

It started in the early part of the twentieth century, the spreading of false doctrine, worldliness, theological liberalism and modernism that devastated denominational Christianity. Liberalism tells us, Evangelism, should be viewed as a marketing challenge and the church should market the gospel in the same way that all modern businesses sell their products. George Barna stated and I quote, “The goal in all marketing is Marketing the Church – “To make both the producer and the consumer satisfied.” So anything that tends to leave the consumer unsatisfied must be rejected and jettisoned.”

Preaching, therefore mostly preaching about sin and judgment is too confronting and not at all satisfying to the consumer.

Timothy was encountering severe challenges too when he was assigned to the Ephesian church to correct and straighten the church ministry. Paul wanted to give Timothy all the information he needed to strengthen his hand and to maximize his opportunity for his ministry. So in this section we find a very important principle that the man of God must...

I Preach the Word (4:1-2a)

1. Paul emphasizes the importance and seriousness of these words by writing: I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul invokes the presence of God and of Christ Jesus who is to judge the living and the dead. He wants Timothy to understand that the one who will judge him is the one in whose presence he ministers.

The solemn charge here parallels a common format used in court cases. Let me tell you what I mean. When it says, “I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus,” it takes a format that was used in the typical subpoenas, legal documents of ancient times. Archaeologists have found ancient documents that read like this.

2. Paul says, “We shall all stand before the judgment seat of God and each one of us shall give an account of himself to God,” he says in Romans 14. That’s the point he wants to make to Timothy. Remember your calling is in the context of the presence of God and your accountability is to please Him, not men...He also reminds Timothy of Christ’s appearing or Second Coming which will lead to the establishment of his kingdom.

3. In the presence of God and Jesus Christ, Paul exhorts Timothy: Preach the word (4:2a). The word -“preach” (kay-rus-so) means “to proclaim or publish what has been divinely spoken.”

II Procedure for Communicating the Word 4:2-5 p

1. Paul exhorts Timothy to be instant or prepared, to preach in season and out of season (4:2b). This means preach the Word when it is popular and when it is not. We must preach the truth and live the truth by our lifestyle in the secular workplace. God’s Word needs proclaiming as Paul reminded us. Redeeming the time because the days are evil. Eph. 5:16.

2. This includes inviting people to church and taking advantage of special events to tell our unchurched friends about the things that go on at our church. We must make the most of every opportunity to share God’s word for three basic purposes: to reprove, rebuke, and exhort (2 Timothy 4:2c). The word translated reproves means teaching people where they are wrong. Rebuke means, “to convict of guilt.” **This involves leading people to repent of their sins.** The word “exhort means” “to comfort or encourage.” Repent occurs 24 times in 22 verses in 'The New Testament' in the KJV. These three things are to be done with all longsuffering (4:2d), which means we are not to become angry and harsh. When we lack patience with people, we lack love. —**Acts 2:38**

3. Reproving, rebuking, and exhorting must also be done with all ...doctrine (2 Timothy 4:2e), which means we do it biblically. Itching ears refers to people who want to hear bizarre doctrines and long for the spectacular as I mentioned in the introduction... Because of this, they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables (4:4). Paul prophesied that this day would come.

The time has come and has been with us for some time when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears (4:3).

It is upon us ladies and gentlemen. I believe we are living in a time when Christianity is on the brink of spiritual bankruptcies. We see evidence of this in the emerging church today.

For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. We must put into practice the whole council of God.

I Corinthians 1:18, 21

4. Listen there was clearly no room in Paul's philosophy of ministry to "give the people what they want" this of course is prevalent today... He did not urge Timothy to conduct a survey to find out what people wanted and then preach what they see as their felt needs. By the way, a local church did that in Southern California and they asked people to list on a card what subject was most important to them and the most commonly listed subject was "tell us how to potty train our children." The greatest need unsaved people have is to be delivered from their sin and for believers to be edified in the preaching. Preaching that fails to confront and correct sin through the Word of God does not meet people's need.

The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate. Proverbs 8:13 and 2 Co. 5:21 we should hate sin...

5. People today want to know how to be healthy and wealthy mixed with a few biblical sound bites, but not about sacrifice and service to Christ... When presented with the truth of God's Word, some people may become angry and hostile, so Paul writes, watch thou in all things (4:5a). This means stay cool, calm, and collected. We are to endure afflictions by responding in love and do the work of an evangelist (4:5b).

Conclusion:

The preaching of the Word of God must be the very heart of our ministry philosophy- any other philosophy replaces the voice of God with human words and human philosophy. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. Col.2:8