

Preach The Word 2 Timothy 4:2-8

Introduction

1. This (New Year's Season) is a time for making lists.
 - a. These lists contain goals and resolutions.
 - b. What goals and resolutions do you have for yourself, your family, and this congregation?
 2. Let's begin a series of sermons that examine Bible Lists. The Bible contains numerous lists such as: The Christian Graces (2 Peter 1:5-11), the "Let us" commands of Hebrews 10:22-25, the works of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21), the Christian armor (Ephesians 6:11-17), the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-25), and many, many more. (Feel free to suggest one of your favorite Bible lists for this series.)
- ✓ Preach The Word (v. 2)
- The Word is the power of God unto salvation (Romans 1:16).
 - Saving souls (Luke 19:10) remains the primary mission of the church.
 - How has this mission been polluted? (answer: entertainment craze, gimmicks, overt changes to attract people, etc.)
 - How has this mission been deluded? (answer: subtle changes, a growing self-centeredness by congregations, church politics, etc.)
- ✓ Be Instant In Season, Out Of Season (v. 2)
- "The meaning here is, that he should be constant in this duty. Literally, 'to stand by, or to stand fast by;' that is, he was to be pressing or urgent in the performance of this work. He was always to be at his post, and was to embrace every opportunity of making known the gospel" (Barnes' Notes).
 - Marshall Keeble reportedly examined this verse saying, "Preach it when they likes it, and preach it when they don't likes it."
- ✓ Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort (v. 2)
- This is God's formula for effective preaching. [It's interesting to note that it is two-thirds *negative* (i.e. reprove and rebuke).]
 - One of the nicest compliments I've ever received was actually intended to be a criticism. An elder once told me that about 75% of my sermon content focused on 'knocking the legs out for under' error.
 - Paul tells us what to do, and he also tells us how to do it—"with all longsuffering and doctrine."
 - "Longsuffering" means "be patient" **not** ignore!
 - Too much error is ignored under the false guise of being patient. When will we learn that ignoring error does not make it go away?
- ✓ They Will Not Endure Sound Doctrine (v. 3)
- "Sound" means "to have sound health, that is, be well" (Strong's).
 - Many left the Lord during His ministry (John 6:66). We should not be surprised when such happens today.

- ✓ They Shall Heap To Themselves Teachers (v. 3)
 - The pattern thus far is as follows: 1) The Word is preached; 2) It is preached soundly and steadily; 3) The members get mad; 4) Some of the members get mad and look for another preacher (or church). Does this pattern sound familiar!? This (preacher/church shopping) process causes the truth to be forsaken (v. 4). There is a rampant (and sinful) politicization of spiritual matters.
 - “The [itching ears] image is derived from the desire which we have when there is an itching sensation, to have it rubbed or scratched” (Barnes’ Notes).
- ✓ Watch Thou In All Things (v. 5).
 - This is largely the duty of the eldership (Acts 20:28). It is a responsibility of every Christian (see Genesis 4:9).
 - Paul said, watch in **all things** not just the things directly effecting the congregation.
- ✓ Endure Afflictions (v. 5)
 - Isn’t it interesting that Paul would tell a preacher to get ready for trouble?
 - Every Christian (practicing Christianity properly) will have to be ready to endure hardships (2 Timothy 3:12, 13).
 - Some Christian may not feel persecuted or ostracized. This lack of persecution is a sign of compromise!
 - We cannot be the salt of the earth and the light of the world (Matthew 5:13-16) and go unnoticed.
- ✓ Do The Work Of An Evangelist (v. 5)
 - Many insist that the work of a preacher is so easy. But isn’t it interesting that those who so insist steer clear of its duties?
 - It is interesting to hear (even from some preachers) views about the work of an evangelist.
- ✓ The Time Of My Departure Is At Hand (v. 6)
 - Death is an item on everyone’s list of things “To Do” (Hebrews 9:27).
 - We must make sure that we are as prepared as Paul.
- ✓ I Have Kept The Faith (v. 7)
 - “Probably the expression means that he had kept his plighted faith to the Redeemer, or had spent a life in faithfully endeavoring to serve his Lord” (Barnes’ Notes).
 - Faithfulness is a marathon, not a sprint (see Hebrews 12:1ff).
- ✓ There Is Laid Up A Crown Of Righteousness (v. 8)
 - God intends to reward the faithful.
 - Do we intent to be rewarded with this crown?
 - Hear-Romans 10:17
 - Believe-Mark 16:16
 - Repent-Luke 13:3
 - Confess-1 Timothy 6:12
 - Be Baptized-Acts 2:38
 - Live Faithfully-Revelation 2:10

What Is A Preacher Supposed To Do?

I read a survey done by Joe Riggs of Jackson, Tennessee a few years ago in which church members were asked to stat the percentage of his time they felt the preacher should spend in different works:

▪ Sermon preparation	65%
▪ General church work	25%
▪ Administration	0%
▪ Public relations	45%
▪ Counseling	60%
▪ Visiting non-members	80%
▪ Visiting members	85%

All of this adds up to 360% of his time in church work. That evidently would leave very little time for a family or even for sleep. There are 168 hours in the week, and thus one would need to add 436 more hours to his week in order for a preacher to get done what brethren thinks needs done. Someone else in commenting on this survey said: “It is also interesting to note that the highest percentage involved visiting members. Doe we want pastors or preachers? Have we turned so inward , that we really want our preachers to spend 85% of their time holding the hands of the saved rather than reaching out to the unsaved?”

The main thing that comes across to me from this is that it is no wonder so many good men become discourage and disgusted and get out of local preaching. If one were to pay attention to the desires expressed or to the complaints made, the preacher would never be able to do the work he became a Gospel preacher to do. Brethren we need to put away childish things and grow into maturity!

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