
INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPPING MINISTRIES
ITEM Conference on Ministry and Preaching
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THE PASSION OF BIBLICAL PREACHING (1 TIM 4:13-16)

Preaching Lecture #6

Introduction: One famous pastor wrote, “The work of preaching is the highest and the greatest and the most glorious calling to which anyone can ever be called.” This is true but not because of the one who is called to preach but because the Bible is the inspired, inerrant, and infallible Word of the living God. The call to proclaim God’s revelation is the highest calling known to man.

This high and holy call to preach God’s written revelation requires complete, total devotion and commitment from all who answer the call. But many men step up to preach each Sunday without understanding or feeling the eternal weight that rests upon their shoulders.

I. A DIVINE GUIDE FOR PREACHING: 1 TIMOTHY

- A. Timothy was assigned by Paul to the church in Ephesus.
 - B. There were false teachers who were spreading false teaching in the church (1:3-7; 4:1-3; 6:3-5).
 - C. There were also aggressive women trying to take on more authority than God intended (2:9-15).
 - D. There were also unqualified men in leadership (3:1-7).
 - E. There were other problems that Timothy had to correct.
 - F. Paul wrote to Timothy with instructions on how to organize and set up the church (3:14-15).
 - G. Paul even gave Timothy instructions about preaching (1:3, 5; 2:11-12; 3:2; 4:1, 6-7, 11, 13, 16; 5:7, 17; 6:2-3, 17-18, 20).
- 1 Tim 4:13-16 is the most strategic passage on the topic of preaching in all of 1 Timothy. Paul called Timothy to be involved in Bible-centered preaching.
 - The pastor is mainly to be a preacher.

II. THE FOCUS ON BIBLICAL PREACHING (1 TIM 4:13)

- Timothy was told to give himself totally to biblical preaching.
 - A. Timothy's full attention was to be given to biblical preaching.
 - 1. Timothy was to devote himself totally and give his undivided attention to biblical preaching.
 - 2. Timothy was to devote himself to confronting those devoted to myths (1 Tim 1:4) and those paying attention to doctrines of demons (not doctrines about demons but false doctrines given to preachers by demons)(4:1).
 - 3. The same is true today. Those called to preach should be devoted and give their full attention to biblical preaching.
 - B. Timothy was to be continually devoted to biblical preaching.
 - 1. In the original language it says Timothy was to be constantly, continually devoted to this ministry of biblical preaching.
 - 2. In 2 Tim 4:2 Paul told Timothy to preach "in season and out of season." That means to preach the Word always and continually.
 - 3. Preaching the Word was not something Timothy was to do when he was finished with everything else. Preaching the Word was the most important thing Timothy did.
 - 4. This is the same for preachers today!
 - C. Paul's instruction to Timothy was actually a command not a suggestion.
 - 1. Timothy did not have an option.
 - 2. Many today see the pastor as a business manager, or a planner, or an organizer, or a counselor, or the one who creates the church's strategy. This is wrong.
 - 3. Paul makes it clear in his letters to Timothy and Titus (both pastors) that preaching is their highest priority.
- NOTE: Since this is true, the pastor needs to start planning his sermon early in the week not on Friday or Saturday, and he should give time to preparing his sermon all week.

II. JOHN CALVIN: A HISTORICAL EXAMPLE FROM 450 YEARS AGO

- A. He preached from the New Testament twice on each Sunday.
- B. He preached from the Old Testament every night of the week, every other week.

- NOTE: During his time at his church he took four years to preach through the book of Acts. He preached 46 sermons from 1 & 2 Thessalonians. He preached 186 sermons from 1 & 2 Corinthians. He preached 43 sermons from Galatians. He preached 48 sermons from Ephesians.

III. A FORM FOR BIBLICAL PREACHING

- Besides telling Timothy to give his total attention to biblical attention, Paul gave Timothy a pattern or a form to follow when he was preaching his sermon.
- There are three parts or pieces in a biblical sermon.
 - A. Read the Word to the church.
 1. This referred to the public reading of Scripture like Ezra did in Nehemiah 8:1-8.
 2. Reading the Word publically became a part of the worship in a Jewish synagogue (Luke 4:16-17; 2 Cor 3:14).
 3. The early church carried on the tradition (Col 4:16).
 4. Another example: 1 Thes 5:27
 5. By reading the Scripture publically we demonstrate the central importance of the Scripture in the life of the church.
 - B. Apply the Word for the church.
 1. “Exhortation” means to do what the Scripture says.
 2. In Acts 13:15, the reading of the Scripture was followed by exhortation.
 3. “Exhortation” challenges people to apply the truths they have been taught.
 4. “Exhortation” may include rebuke, warning, counsel, or comfort.
 5. Biblical preaching should touch the mind, the emotions, and the will of the person hearing the sermon.
- Biblical preaching challenges the listener to make a decision to obey God or not. And the challenge always follows a careful study of a complete passage of Scripture not just the pastor shouting into a microphone.
- C. Teach the Word to the church.
 1. Preaching must include “teaching (an explanation of a biblical text).”
 2. The early church followed the practice of reading the Scriptures with instruction that included the God intended meaning and doctrinal truths.

- Ephesians 4:13 calls for a “unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God.” This requires “doctrinal preaching.” Doctrinal preaching happens when the preacher explains what a passage of Scripture is teaching about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, the Christian life, or anything else that is related to the Christian faith.
- True biblical preaching includes doctrinal preaching. It must because the Scriptures are constantly teaching truths about God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, the church, the Christian faith, etc.
 3. “Teaching” emphasizes doctrine. “Exhortation” emphasizes application.
 4. “Teaching” Scripture transforms the mind, which is called for in Romans 12.
- D. The sermon needs to be biblical and balanced.
 1. A good, biblical sermon will include all three: Reading, exhorting (applying), and teaching (explaining the meaning in context).
 2. A balanced sermon makes contact with daily lives of people, exalts Jesus, and confronts listeners with a call to act on what they have heard.

IV. THE URGENCY OF BIBLICAL PREACHING (4:14)

- The preacher is to be a teacher and should not neglect that gift (1 Tim 3:2; 4:14).
 - A. Paul was telling Timothy to keep preaching no matter what happened to him and no matter what opposition he faced.
- Preachers today must be willing to keep preaching the Word as it is written no matter what or who may oppose him.
 - B. Timothy’s spiritual gift was teaching and Paul told him to keep using it.
- According to 1 Tim 3:2 the pastor is supposed to be able to teach and so he should remember that and not stop doing what God has called him to do.
 - C. Timothy had been prayed for in the past by elders as he was dedicated to God for his teaching ministry.

V. BE DEVOTED TO BIBLICAL PREACHING (4:15)

- A. Paul challenged Timothy to be totally devoted to his call to teach the Scriptures.
- B. When the preacher steps up to the pulpit to preach his one objective should be to faithfully proclaim the Word of God (in context), explaining the meaning and giving the application.

- C. Timothy was to work hard at preaching and teaching (compare 1 Tim 5:17).
 - 1. The preacher should work hard when he is preparing his sermon (2 Tim 2:15).
 - 2. Preparing a sermon is like studying for an exam in school each week. The exam has three questions: What do the verses say, what do they mean, and how do we apply them to our lives?
- D. Timothy was to be constantly improving as a preacher and teacher. We should be improving all of the time also.

VI. PAY ATTENTION TO YOURSELF AND YOUR TEACHING (4:16)

- Timothy was to examine his own life and be sure he was living a godly life.
 - A. Every preacher must live according to his own sermons.
 - B. Every preacher must also be sure that his doctrine is correct.
 - C. Paul was telling Timothy that his life and his teaching needed to be right and that he needed to continue without wavering in both his life and his teaching.
 - 1. This will ensure the preachers spiritual growth.
 - 2. This will ensure the salvation and spiritual growth of the hearers.

Conclusion: When a preacher deeply believes his message, his strong convictions can have a powerful effect on those who hear him. There is no substitute for the preacher being completely focused on proclaiming biblical truth (in context).