

THE ROCK COMMUNITY CHURCH

2 Timothy 4:1-5

“Commanded to Preach”

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21:59

And I wanna invite you to make your way to 2 Timothy chapter four this morning. 2 Timothy chapter four, we're coming down the barrel. We're in the last chapter of our Pure Church series that we've been working our way through these letters to Timothy and to Titus.

22:13

And this week, as you guys are turning there, this is kind of a strange sermon for me to preach this week and to pass along to you, because it's got kind of a "reading my own mail to the rest of you" feel to it.

22:25

So there is a specific charge in this passage that we're looking at this week that Paul is challenging Timothy as a young pastor, preach the word of God. He's calling this, and this is most clearly, easily, obviously applied to pastors and to preachers who are leading their churches.

22:42

But I think there's some valuable things for all of us to receive and to hear from this message. So I think there's some things that all of us should find value in today's message for a couple of different reasons.

22:54

So I just wanted to kind of lay those out as we get started this morning. The first reason that this is valuable for all of us is that we should grasp what Paul says is an important

role in the life of a church.

23:10

The valuable role of the church and of the preacher to declare God's truth in the life of every believer, this is something that we give weight to every week, right? You take time out of your week to come to church and the most significant part of how we spend our time together is by opening up the word of God and by preaching what God has to say.

23:30

We give large value to this every week. So preaching, if it's done well, if it's done right, is going to accomplish some of the things that Paul mentions here. And this is gonna kind of lay out some of the goals for us that we have as a church.

23:44

Every week when we gather together, when we preach the word of God, this week's passage is going to lay out those goals for us. It's gonna give us a gauge of how we can judge either success or failure, not by standards that we come up with, arbitrary standards of I like this or I don't like that, but rather by God's standards of what God says the preaching of his word is supposed to accomplish.

24:09

And the second thing that I think this is going to do for all of us this week as we read what Paul is instructing Timothy as he preaches the word of God is, Paul throughout this series, throughout these letters of Timothy and Titus has pointed to the elders, pointed to the pastors as a sort of model citizen, for lack of a better term, for the church to turn their attention to the deacons and the elders, the leaders of the church, and they're supposed to be able to follow in their example.

24:38

And so aside from a few specific roles that Paul limits, most of the work that is assigned to the pastor is actually work that's just assigned to all Christians. In the same way that we're gonna see this week, we see Paul charge Timothy to share his faith and do evangelism, to correct his fellow Christian and to encourage them to obedience.

24:58

Those aren't things that are just pastor jobs. Those are things that all Christians are instructed and called to. And so that's work for all of us to do, not just for pastors to do. So I hope that's an encouragement for you as well.

25:10

So if you would, I think you guys are all done turning at this point. So we're gonna read our passage together this morning. So 2 Timothy 4:1-5, you can follow along in your copy or you can follow along on the screens as well.

25:27

Paul says to Timothy starting in verse one, I, Paul, charge you Timothy in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is the judge of the living and the dead by his appearing and his kingdom. Preach the word.

25:40

Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke and exhort with great patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions and will turn away from listening to the truth and will wander off into myths.

26:00

But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist and fulfill your ministry. These are the words of the Lord. Would you pray with me? God, we thank you for your word.

26:13

God, we thank you for the opportunity to gather here together and God, as we humble ourselves before the word of God, as we consider what Paul would say to Timothy this morning and how that applies to us and how you would speak to us this morning.

26:27

And we pray that just like we sang a moment ago, that the word of God would speak to us this morning. God, that you would reveal yourself to us and perhaps a new way. God, that you would convict us of something if there's something that needs to change in our lives.

26:42

God, that you would challenge us to obedience in some way. God, that this wouldn't just be a way that we spend an hour of our week, but God, that it would be a way that we hear from the King of the universe what you would have for us to do and not do.

26:56

So God, we give this time to you. We pray that you would speak and that your servants would listen. It's in Jesus' name we pray, amen. All right, well, as we jump into the

passage this week, we start in verses one and two.

27:08

We simply see a command that Paul issues to Timothy. And in verse one, before we get to the command in verse two, we see in verse one that Paul's kind of laying the foundation for this command by giving it some extra emphasis.

27:22

This command, he's telling Timothy, this isn't something that I, Paul, think you need to do. This is something that God is commanding you to do. And so as God has commanded you to do this, Paul reminds him, you're not just gonna answer to me, a man, Paul, for how you do or don't do this.

27:41

And he's reminding Timothy that one day you're going to stand before God. You're gonna stand before Christ Jesus, who is the judge of the living and the dead. And you're gonna give an account to Jesus for how you do or don't do this.

27:54

Now, I think there's some good news and some bad news here for us as we look at this and consider how this plays a role in my job as a pastor, as our job as a church. And so the good news for us in that is that this reminder that we are going to stand before God one day, and I specifically, our elders are going to give account for how we did or didn't do this.

28:18

You know, it kind of turbocharges the importance of what we do. It kind of gives extra emphasis to this work of preaching and understanding what the word of God has to say. And we've been talking about this.

28:30

This isn't an unfamiliar theme that we've seen throughout this series, throughout these books of Timothy and Titus, because we saw just last week the passage talked about the fact that the word of God is actually breathed out, is given to us by God.

28:46

This isn't just something that God kind of gave his stamp of approval to. This is the very being of who God is, breathed out and revealed to us in his word. We saw a few weeks ago, if you were with us, back in 2 Timothy chapter two, Paul encourages Timothy to

study, to work hard, to put in the time and the effort to handle the word of God well.

29:09

Study and work hard so that you know what God's word says and that you can handle it the way that you should. You know, it continues on. You know, the reality is that there is nothing that can or should get in the way of faithfully preaching, of faithfully declaring what God has said in His word.

29:27

You know, I said it a few weeks ago, I said it again last week, we must be Bible-people. And that starts with the faithful preaching of His word. So that's the good side of what Paul's reminding us as he makes this statement, hey, Timothy, make sure you do your job because you're gonna stand before God one day and give an account.

29:44

But there's also some, I guess, bad news, you know, bad news in that because that means that what defines successful preaching really isn't up for discussion. It really isn't a popularity contest, isn't something that we're going to sit together and decide what is or isn't good preaching.

30:03

You know, it's a great bonus sometimes. If I'm able to find a way that I can fit in a funny story, I know you guys love those, or perhaps a funny joke, something like that, something that's interesting, that kinda pulls you in a little bit more.

30:16

I know there's others in the room who love it when they get emotionally moved by something, that they hear something, and it just touches their heart when we're preaching and opening up the word of God.

30:27

But obedience to the word of God, obedience to what Paul is telling Timothy here and what God would tell us here together this morning is that obedience to the command is not determined by how funny or how engaging or how emotional a message is.

30:43

Good preaching is not based on how much you laugh or cry or whatever else you may do in a service. Good preaching is determined by how obedient we are to what God has commanded of us here in 2 Timothy chapter four.

30:56

Now this is something that our elders are keenly aware of. I know that because we talk about it with regularity. We talk about how this is a weighty and a heavy responsibility that God has given to us.

31:07

And I just wanna tell you, we love you. And we love having the opportunity to do what we do. We love to hear from you and to have feedback from you. But our job description is not written by what any of us think our job is or isn't.

31:23

In fact, in Hebrews 13:17, as the author of Hebrews is speaking to church members, to the people of the body of Christ. And he talks a little bit about this, the role of church leaders. And in Hebrews 13, he says, obey your leaders and submit to them.

31:40

And then it says this specifically, leaders, they are keeping watch over your souls as those who will have to give an account. So let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

31:52

You know, this job of leading in a church, this job of being a pastor or an elder is not one that we take lightly. But it's also one where the job description and the goals are not set by me and they're not set by you.

32:05

They're set by God. God determines success or failure for the job that he has given, that he has assigned to us. And so it's not on us to determine whether we like or don't like the job assignment. Our job is simply to obey what God has instructed us to do.

32:21

Paul is essentially saying, Timothy, you're gonna stand before God one day to give an account for what you did and how you led your church. Don't be distracted, stay focused. And then he continues in verse two when he says, preach the word.

32:37

Preach the word. Now Timothy, in that simple statement, preach the word. Timothy has reminded, he's not supposed to just be preaching what he thinks. He's not preaching his own ideas about life. He's not preaching the latest and greatest theme that he was able

to go find on the internet somewhere.

32:53

Rather, Timothy is instructed to preach the word of God as God has revealed it in his scriptures. Preach the word as God has revealed it in scripture. So as I was studying this week, a commentator, a preacher, his name's Denny Burke, he kinda laid out and kinda focused some of these things that we see in verse two.

33:13

And he talks about how preaching the word of God requires several things. He kinda put these different statements in verse two into a couple of different categories. He says, preaching the word first requires readiness.

33:25

Requires readiness. And verse two, it says that Timothy needs to be ready in season and out of season. Now I heard that statement translated as, you need to be ready to preach at a good time and at the bad times, at not a good time.

33:41

Timothy is supposed to preach the word of God, simply put, whether the listeners like hearing it or not, what's true is true. And whether someone likes hearing it doesn't really impact the truthfulness of that statement, right?

33:55

Our responsibility is to preach the word whether people like it or not. Now, do you remember the childhood game? Someone would be classified as it and they would cover their eyes and we'd play hide and seek, right?

34:08

They would cover their eyes. The person that was it would cover their eyes and they would count to 10 or 100 or if dad wanted to nap maybe a million or whatever. Just count to this number and then when you're done, you're gonna turn around, you're gonna try to find everybody that's hiding, right?

34:21

Now, whenever the person that was it gets to the number, there was something that we would always yell out. What was it? Nine, 10. Ready or not, here we come, right? Ready or not, here I come. I think what Paul is saying here to Timothy is the attitude with which we preach the Bible, we preach in season and out of season, the reality is that our

responsibility is the same.

34:47

Ready or not, here it comes. The same way that, you know, ready or not, whether you're hiding or not, here I come. Whether you like it or not, here comes the word of God. We have to be able to preach with readiness in season and out of season.

35:02

The second thing that preaching the word of God requires is confrontation and we look at verse two again and it tells Timothy to preach the word, be ready in season and out of season and then it continues with these two words, reprove and rebuke.

35:17

Now to reprove means to express disapproval of an action, to correct someone on something that they're doing wrong. And to rebuke means to censure or to warn someone, to say that's not an acceptable practice.

35:32

Now both of these kind of work in cooperation to describe someone who is confronting error in a belief or in an action. Now that's part of a pastor's job as he preaches the word of God. It's not a fun job necessarily to point out, hey, don't do this, don't do that, hey, that's dangerous.

35:52

It's not fun, but we do so because we desire to lead people into the light as 1 John talks about. Preaching the word requires readiness, it requires confrontation, but it also requires command, as Denny Burke would describe it, command.

36:08

The last word that we see there in that little list in verse two is to exhort. Now to exhort is to urge someone strongly. Essentially it's to give a command, to command someone to do something. Now I've heard somebody, I don't remember who it was or I'd give them credit, I've heard people talk about the differences between preaching and teaching, and I heard someone describe it once as preaching is teaching with volume, right?

36:33

The difference is volume, the preachers, they get loud and they bang on stuff and they spit sometimes flies, right? Teachers speak with that nice soft voice. The way that God would want you to do, you sound like some late night DJ or something.

36:51

Simply put, the idea here to exhort someone to do something, to command someone to do something is the difference between preaching and teaching, because teaching is focused on an explanation, it's focused on the data, it's focused on passing along information, but preaching is pointed more specifically towards commanding, do this and prohibiting, don't do that.

37:17

Preaching is teaching with authority. Exhorting people about what they ought to believe and issuing commands to that end, that's part of what it means to preach the word of God. We have to offer warnings and confront people when they're out of bounds and we have to give command saying do this, don't do that, that's necessary, that's explicitly stated here as Paul talks about what it means to preach the word of God.

37:48

But Paul is fairly pointed here with his commands to Timothy, he's telling Timothy what it means, what it looks like to successfully preach the way that he's supposed to and I just think it's valuable for me to just be brutally honest with you for a minute.

38:03

And this is the time where you get to know your pastor a little bit, right? So let me just share a little bit about who I am, a little bit about kind of where I'm coming from in all of this because this is a fairly pointed command that I try to apply regularly, that preaching the word of God, that declaring what God has to say requires pointing out what's wrong and pointing out what's right sometimes.

38:28

But the reality is that naturally, just at the core of who I am, I don't really like that. I think of myself generally as kind of a people -pleasing person, that if I can avoid having that hard conversation and saying, hey, I don't like the way that you did that.

38:41

If you're going to do this, that's going to be a problem. I don't have any interest in doing that. Just naturally, at just my own preference level, there's few things in life that are something wrong.

38:58

Also about me, also if you knew me, you would know that I'm actually surprisingly enough, I'm fairly introverted and just my natural character. Now, I know that sounds weird, that sounds strange to you, that the guy that stands up front and talks for an hour

every week is an introvert.

39:16

But my natural bent is to withdraw from social settings, not to run into them. My natural bent is I would rather be alone with a book than I would be hanging out with a large crowd of people. So what we see in these two letters that Paul writes to Timothy, we know that Timothy was probably a relatively shy person as well.

39:38

Paul doesn't tell Timothy to passively sit back and let people figure it out for themselves. He tells Timothy, preach the word. Then he goes on to explain how proper preaching requires confrontation.

39:53

It requires giving instruction. It requires giving commands. Being faithful to do what God has commanded and by the way is going to judge me and judge pastors for one day doesn't allow for passivity.

40:06

Doesn't allow that attitude of just, well, I hope they figure it out one day. I'm not going to be the one that tells them that that's dangerous or that they should do this and not do that. This doesn't place the focus on me.

40:20

In fact, it kind of hides me and gets me out of the way. There's no place, generally speaking, there's no place for my opinions or what I want to say in the preaching of the word of God. The point of preaching is to focus people's attention on what God has to say and for me to get out of the way.

40:38

That means that I have to boldly say and boldly communicate with everything that God has to say that's my job. I have to correct attitudes if God would correct attitudes. I have to point things out and command certain things if there's things that God would say to you, say, do this, this is good for you.

40:58

That's my responsibility. But my job is also to get me and to get my opinions out of the way. Let me just tell you what God says. There was a preacher. His name was Clarence McCartney. He was giving just a brief word of advice to his brother was preparing to go

and to preach.

41:19

I loved this as I read it. Clarence McCartney told his brother before he went up to preach, he said, put all the Bible you can into it. That's kind of the idea, right? That's kind of the point of what we're doing as we preach the word of God.

41:33

The goal is to communicate what God would say. Put all the Bible you can into it and get as much of you by extension. Get as much of me out of it as we possibly can. We see this command from Paul to Timothy.

41:47

Preach the word. Now we see in verses three and four the demand behind the command. What was it that caused Paul to have to say that to Timothy? What was the circumstance that precipitated him having to warn Timothy?

42:01

Make sure that you preach the word. Well, we're going to see it in verses three and four. Verses three and four, Paul says, for the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions.

42:17

We'll turn away from listening to the truth and we'll wander off into myths. Now Paul has told Timothy to boldly proclaim the word of God by preaching. But Paul also acknowledges here that there will be many who reject what God has to say.

42:32

And the reason that people will reject the word of God is simple. And he says it here. He says, people will have itching ears that they want to have scratched. You know, the reality is that there's many people who are in sin and they like it that way.

42:46

People are in sin and they like what their life looks like. They like their sinful habit. They like that relationship. They like that thing that they continue to go back to time and time and time again.

42:58

And so rather than listening to someone clearly explain the word of God and allowing the word of God to do its work in them, they prefer to listen to someone tell them how awesome they are. Tell them how they should just follow their heart and do whatever it is that makes them happy.

43:14

Verse 3, Paul describes that. He says, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions. Verse four makes it even worse. Not only will they accumulate for themselves bad teachers, but verse four says they will actively avoid listening to the truth.

43:31

They will actively turn away from the truth. They will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. They will prefer fiction that confirms their sinful desires rather than listening to the truth that calls them out.

43:47

He says that people will follow after myths because they want preachers that confirm them in their sin rather than convict them of their sin. And there was a man in the fourth century, his name was Gregory of Nazianus.

44:03

I don't know where that's at, but this quote's really good. He was talking about this idea of people with itching ears. He says when this syndrome, when itching ears is in place, people who call themselves Christians will find the truth in Jesus Christ intolerable and will seek to stamp it out.

44:23

I'll read that again. When this syndrome, when people have itching ears is in place, people who call themselves Christians will find the truth in Christ Jesus intolerable and will seek to stamp it out.

44:38

Now unfortunately, this statement that Paul wrote in 2 Timothy 4 was written about 2000 years ago. And the reality is that 2000 years later, we still see that present in our culture. We still see people trying to avoid what God has to say because they'd rather just hear what they want to hear instead of what they need to hear.

45:03

Unfortunately, we see this to be true around what people call Christianity today. We saw the command in verses one and two. We saw the demand for the command in verses three and four and to continue the good rhyming cadence that we've got here.

45:22

We've got the command, the demand behind the command and then we've got the man to fulfill the command in verse five. Women you're also invited, it just didn't have the same cadence to it. The man to fulfill the command in verse five.

45:35

Verse five, Paul tells Timothy, as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist and fulfill your ministry. Timothy's been given this noble task, to proclaim the word of God and to do God's work in the world and declaring what God would declare and saying what God would say and challenging what God would challenge.

45:59

And in order to successfully accomplish what God has called him to, he not only has to do the work, he has to reflect the character of a person who is fully committed to the work. Following Jesus isn't something that we just passively get to do.

46:13

Following Jesus isn't for wimps, it's for someone who is fully committed to what they're called and commanded to. Paul's telling Timothy, Timothy, no matter what you face in life, you must remain faithful in these four ways that he lists in verse five.

46:27

The first one is he tells Timothy, be sober-minded. Be sober-minded. Now that's not just talking about sobriety from alcohol or drugs or whatever else that might be. To be sober-minded means to be self-controlled.

46:40

To be self-controlled, that means to take the work seriously, to give weight to what he has been told to do, to be committed to the task at hand. Timothy, you have to be committed and you have to be willing to walk this in good times and in bad.

46:56

In season and out of season, you have to be ready. Tells Timothy, be sober-minded. He also tells Timothy to endure suffering. That's one that we've talked about several times

already throughout this book of 2 Timothy, but there's a willingness to suffer humiliation or hurt.

47:13

If you're going to live out this command that God has given you to preach the word, you gotta be ready, whether it's popular or whether it's not, you have to be willing to endure suffering. Timothy must be willing to suffer whatever consequences may arise from preaching the gospel.

47:30

Now that's especially pertinent, as Paul has just said, there will be many people who will reject what God's word has to say. There will be people who actively avoid the truth and will run off and find teachers who will say what they wanna hear.

47:43

Paul's telling Timothy, there's going to be enemies that come. There's going to be people that don't like what you have to say and you will endure suffering if you are going to walk this path that God's calling you to.

47:57

Just a little side note here for just a second. In my community group a couple of weeks ago, we were talking about one of these other passages in 2 Timothy that talks about enduring suffering, this idea of suffering for Jesus.

48:09

And we kinda got going on this because we thought about it and we kinda digested a little bit as a group. If we're supposed to suffer for Jesus, does that mean that we should go pursue suffering? That we need to go look for ways to put ourselves in a harm's way and just, you know, but strap the big target on your chest and say, come and get me?

48:30

Cause that sounds kind of unhealthy, right? That sounds like there might be something wrong in your head. If you want suffering, that's, might seem off, right? There's never that I'm aware of. There's never a statement in scripture that God says pursue suffering.

48:49

He simply says to endure suffering, to weather the storm, to walk through things. I think what he's trying to communicate to Timothy and what we need to take out of this is the fact that if we will live the lives that God calls us to, those who desire to live godly lives in

Christ Jesus will be persecuted.

49:08

Jesus told his disciples, the world is gonna hate you if you look like me, if you sound like me, if you act like me, and you know why? Because the world hated him first. The world hated Jesus, so if we look like Jesus and we talk like Jesus, you know what?

49:23

They're gonna hate us too. That's actually a good thing. That means you look more like Jesus. The more the world hates you, it means that you're doing something right. But we don't go chasing after suffering.

49:39

What the Bible tells us is that we should endure suffering. It tells us that the path that we walk, the path of following Jesus is one that will have suffering as a part of it. There's going to be times where it's not a popular decision at work to do the right thing.

49:54

There's going to be times in life where it's not the popular decision to live with integrity in your life, to walk the way that God has called you to, to share your faith, that's really uncomfortable and it costs us relationships sometimes.

50:07

But to live the life that God calls us to and commands us to is going to include some suffering. We don't necessarily chase it out, but we acknowledge that following Jesus is worth more than anything else that this world has to offer to us.

50:23

Following Jesus is worth more than the comfort that may come if we just sit back and quietly let the world do what it wants. Following Jesus is better than whatever it is that we might find anywhere else.

50:36

And so we endure suffering. Not because we like suffering, but because it's valuable and it's worth it to walk through the suffering because following Jesus is worth it. Paul tells Timothy to endure suffering.

50:51

He continues in this verse in verse five, he says, "Do the work of an evangelist." Now

I've heard many people referred to evangelists like they're this some sort of super-Christian, superhuman, that they're a special breed that can do what nobody else can do.

51:06

Hey, we should get a big group together. We can go down to Angel Stadium or we can go to SoFi. We can listen to one of those evangelist guys tell everybody about what Jesus did. Okay, it's not a bad thing.

51:19

Also, Paul tells Timothy, simply do what all Christians are commanded to do when he says do the work of an evangelist. And in Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus is preparing to return to heaven at the end of his earthly ministry.

51:33

And he says these famous words, the great commission, he tells the disciples and by extension all Christians, he says, go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all that I've commanded you.

51:50

And behold, I am with you always to the end of the age. Peter actually kind of talks about this same idea in first Peter chapter three as well. Peter says to the Christians there that he's writing to, he says, in your heart, honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect.

52:15

The job of an evangelist is simply to be a proclamer and a defender of the gospel. And so Paul is telling Timothy, he's not inviting Timothy to some special super-Christian, superhuman work, and he's simply telling Timothy, do what all Christians are expected to do, sharing the work of taking what God has given you, take it and give it to somebody else.

52:39

Take it and give it to somebody else. Do the work of an evangelist. And finally he tells Timothy, fulfill your ministry. Fulfill your ministry. That kind of summarizes all that Paul has commanded Timothy to do in his work in Ephesus.

52:54

So he's been there serving for years at this point. The NIV translates that statement as discharge all the duties of your ministry. As I was reading that, as I was thinking about this idea of fulfilling your ministry, a person came to mind, a quote came to mind for me.

53:10

And so I wanna preemptively apologize. I'm not gonna get into this discussion of whether he's good or bad, anything. But there's a football coach named Bill Belichick. Some would argue he's the greatest football coach of all time.

53:23

I'm not one of those people. But Bill Belichick has coached the New England Patriots for a lot of years. They've won a lot of football games. And his famous advice that he always gives to his players is simply do your job.

53:36

Do your job. A football team at any given time has 11 players on the field. 11 playing defense or 11 playing offense. The team can't succeed if one person is trying to do their job and do somebody else's job.

53:50

You cannot be a quarterback that throws the ball and the person running down the field to catch the ball at the same time, right? You can't do their job. You can simply do your job. It's his way of saying, focus on what you're supposed to be doing and trust that they're gonna do their job, that they're gonna take care of their responsibility when it's their turn.

54:10

Today there's preachers that will fill sports arenas by telling people what they wanna hear. Telling people what they wanna hear about money, about politics, by putting on an entertaining show. People can fill arenas with 100,000 people that wanna come and listen to what this preacher has to say.

54:29

In fact, we actually had a former member here of the church that told me one time that The Rock wasn't a church because we weren't doing those things. They said that as they were leaving the church actually.

54:42

But you know what? Those things aren't our job. Those things aren't our job. To tell

people what they wanna hear about money or politics or putting on a great show, that's not our job. That's not what Paul lays out here to Timothy and says, Timothy, do your job.

54:58

Our job is to clearly and to boldly declare what God has said and then let God figure out where things land. The same way that a football coach is gonna tell his players, just do your job. Paul is telling Timothy here, Timothy, you don't get to decide how it lands with people.

55:15

You don't get to decide how people receive what you have to say. All you can control is do your job. You know, the parable of the sower has been on my mind this week. You remember the parable of the man who went to sow some seed and so he's out walking.

55:32

Jesus is talking about this man and he's out just throwing seed, right? And some of it lands on the hard soil and some of it lands in rocky soil, all these different places. It's been on my mind this week because I've been in the middle of a project where I've been digging up my front yard and yanking all the weeds out and trying to throw some grass seed down so I can actually grow some grass in the front yard, right?

55:51

And so as I've been working on this, there's a lot of things that were my job, were my responsibility, that I had to rip out all the nasty weeds, I had to soften up the soil and I threw the seed down yesterday and I've started watering it and you know what?

56:05

Now I just sit and wait. I did my job, but I don't know how it's gonna turn out at this point. Hopefully I've got seeds that start to germinate and start to grow in the coming weeks. But that's not my job, right?

56:20

I do my job and then I trust that what's gonna happen with it, like that's between God and the seeds at this point. All I can do is continue to put the things in place, you know, make sure the water runs and all those things, but I did my job and then I don't get to control the results.

56:37

What Paul's telling Timothy here is, do your job, but you don't get to control the results.

You know, we live in a world where it seems like the majority of people are accumulating for themselves teachers to suit their passions.

56:56

Like Paul's talking about here in these verses. People are leaving the church in search of their own truth at an alarming rate. even those who call themselves Christians will gather around beliefs that suit them, that they go find a church or a preacher that will tell them what they want to hear.

57:17

And so I just want to pause for just a half a second here and encourage you and let me just challenge you for just a minute because I look around this room, I know there are people in this room that are going to be at a different church in one day in the future.

57:31

Maybe you move out of the area, maybe something happens, your season of life changes, you go find another church somewhere. And this idea, this statement, this passage that Paul is challenging Timothy, this is the foundation of what makes a church successful or unsuccessful.

57:48

It's the dividing line of whether a church, I would argue is a church or is just a group of people that get together on Sunday morning to be entertained. Because there's a clear statement here that Paul is telling Timothy, make sure that you say what God has to say.

58:05

Don't just go look for someone that's going to tell you what you want to hear because unfortunately there's a lot of places out there that you could go on a Sunday morning that are just going to tell you what you want to hear.

58:15

They're going to double down on your political beliefs. They're going to double down on your desire, well I want to be happy and I want to be healthy and I want to be rich. And yeah, well I'm going to go to this church because they tell me that that's all going to happen if I come here and I, you know, plant some seed money or whatever.

58:34

That's not the job of the church. The job of the church isn't to scratch your itching ears, it's to tell you what's true. Even those who call themselves Christians will gather around

people who state things that just agree with what they want to hear.

58:55

If you go to a church and you hear a pastor saying, I, I think, let me tell you what I want you to do. You hear I, I, I a whole lot, that's a dangerous place to be. If you go to a church and you hear them say, God says and God's word says and over here in the book of, if you hear that a lot, that's a church you need to keep going to.

59:21

And I want to encourage you, find that church. Don't go to the one that you just, you go in and go, man, that made me feel really good this morning. I really, I really like what that preacher had to say.

59:31

I would have said those things, right? Because there's times where we hear something and it sounds really good to us and that's great but there's times where we're out of bounds. Any perfect people in the room that have just got it all figured out, right?

59:45

Nobody stuck their hand up for that one. That would have been a brave person to stick their hand up for that one, right? We've all got some rough edges. We've all got some things that aren't quite right in our lives.

59:57

We're all sinners. And the way that that gets better, the way that we grow in our faith, the way that we become more and more into the person that God wants us to be is by humbling ourselves before the word of God, is by reading what it has to say.

01:00:12

And when we find somewhere where I think or live one way and the Bible tells me that the right way is something different, when the Bible and I disagree, I've asked you guys this before, which one of the two is wrong?

01:00:26

Me, right? The Bible and I disagree on something, which one of us needs to change? Me. We do. God's solution to this tendency that people have to accumulate teachers who say what they want to hear. What Paul tells Timothy, what Paul's telling us, what our church stands for, and if there's ever anything different, run me out of here, because I don't belong here.

01:00:53

Paul's telling Timothy, proclaim the whole word of God. Preach the word. It says, reprove, rebuke, exhort, correct people, tell people how they should live. Don't be afraid to correct or to challenge at times, because at times that's what we need.

01:01:11

And we said it last week, we said it a few weeks ago. Simply put, we have to be Bible people. And that means that not only do we know what the Bible says, we do what the Bible says. And when the Bible tells us something that rubs up against something in our life, and maybe our life doesn't line up with what the Bible says, the Bible doesn't change.

01:01:35

We do. Even when it rubs up against us and makes us uncomfortable. If we run from it, we're no different than those people that are just looking for someone to scratch an itch, to tickle their ears. We don't run from the word when it rubs on us.

01:01:54

We lean into it and we thank God for that correction. By doing so, we become more and more regularly transformed into the people that God wants us to be. As God's Word does its work in our lives, as it corrects those imperfections in us.

01:02:11

For Bible people, we preach the Word of God. We challenge people to do what the Word of God says. We challenge people to forsake things that the Bible says is wrong. And by doing so, we faithfully fulfill the work that the church is supposed to do.

01:02:29

So that, as verse one so clearly and pointedly reminded Timothy, reminds us, one day we're going to stand before God. Are you going to be able to stand there with your head high saying, I did everything that I could and I tried to point people to you?

01:02:43

Or are you going to say, I did what I wanted? Hope you're cool with that. Our prayer team is going to be down here after the service is over. They would love to pray with you about whatever it is that you've got going on in life.

01:02:58

Our prayer wall, if you go out the back doors and turn to the right, we've got a prayer wall out there as well. You can write your prayer request down, either drop them in the box or

roll them up and stick them in the little wall that we've got back there.

01:03:09

We'd love to pray for you about whatever it is that you've got going on in life. But in just a second, we're also going to take communion before we finish and leave this morning. This important ordinance of communion, something that's significant for us as Christians, because in taking communion together, we remember, we acknowledge the fact that Jesus gave his life as the perfect sacrifice so that sinners like us could be justly forgiven by the Holy Judge of the universe.

01:03:37

As we come to this table, I would just encourage you, remind you that this is a sacred time. This is a significant time. So this is a time for Christians who have placed their faith in Jesus for their salvation to come and to remember that sacrifice that Jesus made.

01:03:53

But if you haven't placed your faith in Jesus, if that's not you, if you don't belong to King Jesus, we love you and we're thankful that you're here. But I encourage you to abstain from coming and partaking this morning.

01:04:08

This isn't just snacktime at church. This is something that's meaningful. This is a sacred time at the Lord's table for believers who have rested all their hope in the death and the resurrection of Jesus.

01:04:21

So if you're not a believer, sit back, watch, observe, see what we're doing, see why this is by placing your faith in Jesus for your salvation and then by joining us in partaking of the Lord's supper.

01:04:40

For those of you who are believers, I would encourage you as well to examine your life. Bible says that anyone who comes and partakes of this table in an unworthy manner with known sin in their life eats and drinks condemnation upon themselves.

01:04:53

So I'd encourage you to take a moment maybe in your seat or maybe as you come and take these elements and return to your seat before you take them. Confess that known sin. If you've got a relationship that's out of whack, confess that to that person.

01:05:07

Make it right before you come and take these elements. We won't clean them up right after service. You need to go out and make a phone call. Go do that and then come in and take communion. That's okay.

01:05:16

Right. But make sure that when we come to the table, we do so in the right way. If your heart's not right, I'd invite you to refrain as well until you can come freely partake. We've got elements up here at the front.

01:05:29

We've also got a table back at the back of your closer back there. But before we do that, I want to read from 1 Corinthians 11 as we prepare to take communion together. And after I read and pray, I'd invite you to come.

01:05:41

1 Corinthians 11:23-25 says, For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread. When he had given thanks, he broke it and said, This is my body, which is for you.

01:05:58

Do this in remembrance of me. And the same way he took the cup after supper, saying this cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this as often as you drink it in remembrance of me. Would you pray with me?

01:06:12

God, we thank you for your word. God, we thank you for the opportunity to come to gather together with brothers and sisters, with church family. And humble ourselves before your word to hear you proclaim what you would have us to believe and to receive and to adopt in our lives this morning.

01:06:36

God, help us to value the preaching of your word, to value what your word says above what we believe. And God, as we come to take communion here in just a moment, we just want to pause and thank you for God for the incredible gift, the blessing of being able to receive these elements as a reminder of the sacrifice of Jesus.

01:07:05

God that you would remind us of what an incredible sacrifice was paid when Jesus went and willingly laid down his life as an innocent man so that guilty convicts like me and

God as we come to this table as we take of this this bread and this juice we pray that you would use these physical reminders to renew the joy of our salvation.

01:07:33

God that you would use these things to to renew in us. I've got a joy that shouldn't ever leave but often does. God we thank you for Jesus. We thank you for his broken body, for his blood that was spilled out, for his sacrifice at Calvary.

01:08:02

We pray that you would use this time to renew us, to refill us, prepare us to live obediently to you and to your word. Thank you for Jesus. It's in his name we pray. Amen.