

2 Timothy 4:1-5

PREACH THE WORD!

The first mark of a healthy church is expositional preaching. It is not only the first mark; it is far and away the most important of them all, because if you get this one right, all of the others should follow... Preaching should always (or

almost always) be expositional because the Word of God should be at its center, directing it. In fact, churches should have the Word at their center, directing them. God has chosen to use his Word to bring life. That's the pattern that we see in Scripture and in history... When someone regularly preaches in a way that is not expositional, the sermons tend to be only on the topics that interest the preacher. The result is that the preacher and the congregation only hear in Scripture what they already thought before they came to the text. There's nothing new being added to their understanding. They're not continuing to be challenged by the Bible. The church will slowly be conformed to the pastor's mind rather than to God's mind... So what makes a really good church? Even more than parking and pews and greetings and programs and nursery and music...even more than the preacher, it is what is preached—the Word of God. Because "man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Matt. 4:4). —Mark Dever, *Nine Marks of a Healthy Church*

In the face of his soon execution at the hands of the Roman Empire, Paul exhorts Timothy not to be dominated by fear but to be a **good soldier** (the spirit of power), a **faithful servant** (the spirit of love), and a **wise student** (the spirit of a sound mind). These three themes come together in Paul's final, urgent commands in 4:1-5.

Though these verses are specifically written to Timothy as a pastor, their truth applies to us all. In the midst of an increasingly deceptive and dangerous world, what should be the overriding priority of the pastor, the local church, and every believer in Jesus Christ?

THE CHARGE (4:1-2)

I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom—Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all patience and teaching.

- We have a great _____.
- We have a great _____.
- We have a great _____.

To proclaim _____ of God's Word,
 at _____ times,
 in _____ ways,
 with _____ patience
 with _____ types of instruction.

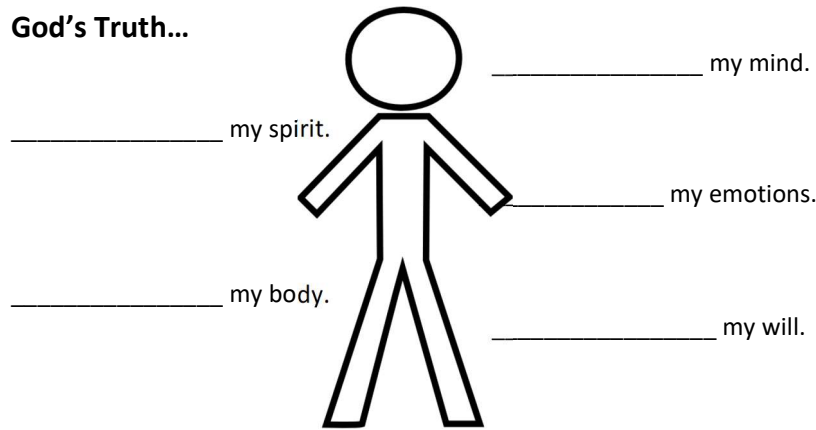
More than 3,800x in the OT words are introduced by such formulae as 'The Lord spoke,' 'Thus says the Lord' and 'The word of the Lord came.' —Peter Cousins

The judgment of the living will take place when the Lord comes to receive His Church to Himself and will be exercised at the Judgment Seat of Christ when every believer will have the counsels of his heart made manifest and every one will have his praise from God (1 Cor. 4:5). The judgment of the dead is not a matter of reward but of condemnation. It will take place after the 1,000 years of the millennial reign of Christ on earth (Rev 20:5). —W. E. Vine

Preach the Word means "exult in the Word." That is, announce it and revel in it. Speak it as amazing news. Speak it from a heart that is moved by it. —John Piper

Expository preaching chooses a specific passage of the Bible and teaches through it verse-by-verse. This type of preaching is exegetical since it looks at each verse in the context of the rest of the book. —Grace Theological Seminary

God's Truth...



THE CHALLENGE (4:3-4)

*For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine,
but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears,
they will heap up for themselves teachers;
and they will turn their ears away from the truth and be turned aside to fables.*

In our basic human nature, impacted by sin...

- We do not have a natural hunger for biblical _____.
- We do have a hunger for our own selfish _____.
- We love to find people who will tell us what we want to hear.
- We turn away from the truth for things that sound _____ and promise _____ but are divorced from reality.

THE CHOICE (4:5)

But as for you, be clear-headed in every situation [stay calm, cool, steady], endure every hardship [without flinching], do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

- Choose _____ over fear.
- Choose _____ over convenience.
- Choose _____ your faith over hiding your faith.
- Choose _____ well over failing to finish.

Only one means and one way of cure has been given us and that is the teaching of the Word. Without it nothing else will avail.

—John Chrysostom (347-407)

As seed is made for soil and soil for seed, so the heart is made for God's truth and God's truth for the heart.

—Richard Glover

It is not their own notions and fancies that they are to preach, but the pure plain Word of God; and they must not corrupt it.

—Matthew Henry (1662-1714)

Reproving has more to do with affecting the mind, helping a person understand that what he believes or is doing is wrong. **Rebuke**, on the other hand, has more to do with the heart, with bringing a person under conviction of guilt... The faithful minister then comes alongside them in love and **encourages** them to spiritual change.

—John MacArthur, Jr.

Sound. Grk, *hygiainō*, "to be well; to be in sound health."

Heap up. Grk, *episoreuō*, "to accumulate one pile upon another."

In periods of unsettled faith, skepticism, and curious speculation in matters of religion, teachers of all kinds swarm like the flies in Egypt. The demand creates the supply.

The hearers invite and shape their own preachers. If the people desire a calf to worship, a ministerial calf-maker is readily found.

—Marvin Vincent (1834-1922)

I am contented to consume my body, to sacrifice to God's service, and to spend all that I have and be spent myself, for the souls of men.

—Richard Baxter (1615-91)