

WHAT WE NEED FROM THE CHURCH: TRUE PREACHING

2 Timothy 3: 10- 4: 5

July 18, 2021

I. Warning Against False Teachers

A. False teachers can be those teach false doctrines. (for example, those Christian cults which deny the Trinity.)

B. False teachers can also be those who find our particular weaknesses and exploit them.

2 Timothy 3: 6- 7 (NIV) They are the kind who worm their way into homes and gain control over weak-willed women who are loaded down with sins and are swayed by all kinds of evil desires, always learning but never able to acknowledge the truth

1. In Paul's day men held most of the power and women were vulnerable.

2. Today's internet with its sea of voices can be a power that can trample over any who believe themselves to be spiritual strong.

1 Corinthians 10:12 (NIV) So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

C. False teachers can come in other forms too.

1. Many good teens have been pulled away from Jesus by the circle of friends they hung around with or by a boyfriend or a girlfriend.

2. But the same can be true for adults.

3. We should Always be wary when friends try to challenge the Biblical truths and moral standards we've grown up with.

4. For those in business, it can be those who pressure us to compromise on our ethics or moral standards.

5. The devil behind these false teachers knows our weaknesses.

D. False teachers can destroy more than individuals.

1. They can destroy nations.

a. Think of Nazi Germany.

b. That could happen here with all hate-spewing false information that is being spread today.

2. They can destroy churches.

a. There are churches today that promote immorality, racism, and bigotry.

b. There are others who deny that Jesus is only way to God,

c. Some churches say that the Bible is full of myths and legends.

d. Some deny that Jesus is the Son of God or that he ever existed.

e. If their members believe some of the the falsehoods they teach, they cannot be saved.

Questions:

- 1) What false teachers can I see in our world today?
- 2) Which false teachers have been difficult for me to resist and why? Which false teachers am I struggling with right now?
- 3) What false teachers and teachings have influenced our country in past generations? What false teachers and teaching are influencing our country today?
- 4) What false teachers and teachings have destroyed churches in the past? Which ones are destroying churches today? Which ones may even be affecting the church to which I belong?

II. Good Sermons as our Weapons Against False Teachers

2 Timothy 4: 2 NIV Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction

A. Paul calls on Timothy to "preach the Word."

1. The Greek word for preach is *karuso*, which in the first century, referred to the speaking on someone else's behalf.

2. It referred to what auctioneers did when they sold someone else's possessions, or what an official of the court did, or a spokesman for the governor, or even the priest who spoke for one of the idol gods of the Greeks.

3. Preachers are those whom God has called, whom he chosen through his church, and whom has anointed by his Spirit to speak his word to his people.

4. Much like the prophets of the Old Testament, God uses preachers today to proclaim his Word to his people, that they might live in relationship to him, knowing his love, his blessing, and his peace.

5. To hear preacher preach the Word is one big reason we gather for worship each Sunday.

B. One the great weapons we have in our struggle against false teachers are good sermons on the Word of God.

1. In Ephesians 6: 17, Paul refers to the Word of God as the sword of the Spirit.

a. The sword was perhaps the most useful weapon a foot soldier had as he grappled with his enemy.

b. The writer of Hebrews tells how effective that weapon is in Hebrews 4: 12

Hebrews 4: 12 (The Message), "His powerful Word is sharp as surgeon's scalpel; cutting through everything, whether doubt or defense, laying us open to listen and obey. Nothing and no one is impervious (cannot be penetrated) by God's Word. We can't get away from it no matter what."

2. One reason the word preached may not have that effect on us, touching the very core of our being, is that the preacher may not be preaching good sermons.

a. Good jokes that make us laugh and good stories may make a sermon easier to listen to, but they are not crucial to a good sermon.

b. Let's examine our scripture to see what a good sermon is.

Questions:

- 1) Have I ever thought that God gave preachers and sermons to help me to resist false teachers? Have I ever thought that preachers today have a similar role to prophets in the Old Testament? What some Biblical examples of prophets and preachers in the Bible who combatted false teaching? Does my preacher do this?
- 2) Have I ever experienced the Word of God as a sword which pierced my heart as I struggled against false teachings, false teachers, and sins and temptations? When? Did this come as the result of my hearing a sermon or through another way?
- 3) Do I like sermons that have humor and story illustrations? Why or why not? Are such things just fluff or do they serve a purpose. If so, what purpose do they serve?

III. What Makes Good Sermons

A. Good sermons are Biblical

1. One cannot preach the word of God unless he/she bases his/her sermon on what God actually said.
2. We find what God said in the God-breathed Bible.

2 Timothy 3:16 (NIV) All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness.

- a. The breath of God is picture language that refers to The Holy Spirit.
 - b. The Bible is the written Word of God, which The Holy Spirit guided people over the centuries to write, and his church to recognize.
3. Some sermons are not Biblical.
 - a. The preacher doesn't even try to help us understand the scripture on which or she's preaching,
 - b. He or she uses it as a springboard for his/her own ideas.

B. All good sermons must center on Jesus Christ, the Living Word of God.

1 Corinthians 1:23-24 (NIV) but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

1. "The Word" also refers to the Son of God Jesus Christ.

John 1:1 (NIV) In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

2. And that is what the word "Word" refers to in our text.
 - a. The translators of your Bible wanted us to know that.
 - b. That's the reason they began the word "Word" with a capital letter.

3. Many sermons don't center on Jesus Christ.

- a. They are moralistic messages on love or on how we must live that could have been preached by a Jewish rabbi or a Muslim Imam, or a Navajo Medicine Man..
- b. A good preacher preaches Christ all the time, even when those drawing the crowds might be preaching politics or moralistic condemnations, and even if it may cost him his life.
- c. Be prepared to preach Christ whether it's popular or not.

2 Timothy 4:2 (NIV) Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction.

C. Good sermons, like the scriptures, are also practical.

1. A good sermon corrects— It tells people where they have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God;
2. A good sermon rebukes, or warns— A good sermon warns those who sin of the consequences of their sin.
3. And a good sermon encourages— At its heart a good sermon points us to the forgiveness that is ours in Christ Jesus and to the new life we have in him.

D. Good sermons do these things "with great patience"

1. Good preachers remind those who listen that the struggle to be like Jesus is hard and long
2. It takes great effort and much prayer.

E. Good Sermons are careful instruction

1. That means care has been taken to ensure that the sermons are Biblical, that they center on Christ, and that they correct, rebuke, and encourage.
2. Elders, those are things that you must listen for, and you must inform the pastor if his/her sermons fall short in these areas.

Questions:

- 1) Do I feel my pastor's sermons are Biblical? Why or why not? Why are Biblical sermons so important?
- 2) Do I feel my pastor's sermons are Christ-centered? Why or why not? Why are Christ-centered sermons so important?
- 3) Do I feel my pastor's sermons are practical? Why or why not? Why is it important for him to have practical sermons?
- 4) Do I feel condemned by my pastor or do I feel that although he may identify sins, he does so gently, reminding me of God forgiveness and grace?
- 5) Why is careful sermon preparation so important? Why is it important for my pastor to careful both in what he preaches and in how preaches it?
- 6) Have I ever thought that my pastor's sermons were deficient in any of these areas? Have I ever spoken to him and later to an elder about this?

IV. Why It's Crucial to Listen to Them

A. There is a time coming when people won't and will listen to false teachers instead.

2 Timothy 4:3 (NIV) For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear.

1. False teacher are popular, because they tell people what they want to hear.
2. When people are challenged with what they don't want to hear, many say pastors are just giving their own opinion.
3. Certainly, there are times when pastors are wrong, and its important for the church to challenge them when they are.
4. But when they are right, God's people must listen.

B. The truth matters, and failure to listen to it has consequences.

1. Disregarding the truth can so much pain—it can start wars, encourage prejudice and bigotry, and can lead to the deaths of so many.
2. And it can have eternal consequences
3. That is an important reason why God has given us the gift of his Word and the gift of good sermons that explain it.
4. What are you doing with those gifts?

Questions:

- 1) Are popular preachers necessarily good preachers? Are they necessarily bad preachers? How can I tell whether a preacher is good or bad?
- 2) Who are some preachers who are preaching what people's "itching ears want to hear?" Why do I say that?
- 3) What are some real dangers of false teaching and preaching that I've witnessed in my lifetime?
- 4) Have I ever thought of good sermons as gifts from God? Do I make the most of God's gifts of his word and of the faithful preaching that explains it? How?