

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Reprove, Rebuke, and Exhort

By Micky Galloway

“I charge (thee) in the sight of God, and of Christ Jesus, who shall judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be urgent in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lusts; and will turn away their ears from the truth, and turn aside unto fables” (2 Tim. 4:1-4).

Sometimes we lament that the gospel does not seem to be as effective as it was in the first century, but I am sure the gospel has the same power it always had and man is the same as he has always been. The problem is not the gospel. The problem lies with us. Perhaps our image of what a preacher is and what he is to do has changed. We look to the preacher to be the “social spark plug.” One “preacher” said that he felt it was his job to make people feel good about their religion. Others view the preacher as a “salesman” as if he is to sell people on attending at that congregation. We are told, through this philosophy we can persuade the unsuspecting to join us unawares (we’ll teach him later).

“Preach” The word for “**preach**” in 2 Timothy 4:2 is *kerusso*, which conveys a very special concept of preaching. W.E. Vine tells us that the word means “to be a herald, or, in general, to proclaim.” Wuest says that it at once called to the mind of Timothy “*the imperial Herald, spokesman of the Emperor, proclaiming in a formal, grave, and authoritative manner which must be listened to, the message which the Emperor gave him to announce...This should be the pattern for the preacher today. His preaching should be characterized by that dignity which comes from the consciousness of the fact that he is an official herald of the King of kings. It should be accompanied by that note of authority which will command the respect, careful attention, and proper reaction of the listeners. There is no place for clowning in the pulpit of Jesus Christ*” (***Wuest’s Word Studies***).

“Preach the word” The gospel is the power of God to save (Rom. 1:16). The word “**power**” is *dunamis*, from which we get the word dynamite. People are not saved without the preaching of the gospel! It is the message from the King of kings! It is “**mighty before God to the casting down of strongholds**” (2 Cor. 10:4). It is effective to turn men “**from darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified**” (Acts 26:18). Let us examine Paul’s instructions to Timothy about preaching.

“Reprove” *elégxæ*. “To shame, disgrace...In the NT, to convict, to prove one in the wrong and thus to shame him” (***The Complete Word Study Dictionary***). Herod the tetrarch was “**reproved**” by John because he had unlawfully taken Herodias to be his wife (Lk. 3:19). John did more than hold a personal opinion that Herod had done wrong! All Scripture is inspired by God and is profitable for reproof (2 Tim. 3:16).

“Rebuke” *epitimáæ*. “To command, with the implication of a threat. Jesus rebuked the wind and the stormy water, and they quieted down (Luke 8:24)” (***Greek-English Lexicon Based on Semantic Domain***). “To tax with fault, rate, chide, rebuke, reprove, censure severely, 2 Timothy 4:2; to charge one with wrong, Luke 9:55; 17:3; 23:40” (***Thayer***).

“Exhort” *parakalææ*. “To aid, help, comfort, encourage” (***The Complete Word Study Dictionary***). “To call to a person...to call on, entreat...to admonish, to urge” “to console, to encourage, to strengthen, to instruct, to teach; to urge one to pursue some course of conduct” (***W.E. Vine***). Paul having instructed the church in Corinth to “**have no company**” with their brother who had taken his father’s wife, now instructs them to encour-

age their brother who has repented. ***“So that contrariwise ye should rather forgive him and comfort him, lest by any means such a one should be swallowed up with his overmuch sorrow. Wherefore I beseech you to confirm (your) love toward him”*** (2 Cor. 2:7-8). We need encouragement.

Jesus commanded the apostles, ***“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned”*** (Mk. 16:15-16). The apostle Paul later wrote, ***“... if so be that ye continue in the faith, grounded and stedfast, and not moved away from the hope of the gospel which ye heard, which was preached in all creation under heaven; whereof I Paul was made a minister”*** (Col. 1:23). Obviously, they were doing something right using the gospel to ***“reprove, rebuke, and exhort.”*** Now with the above definitions in mind, let us see what they did.

They engaged in controversy. (1) In their own places of worship. In Acts 15 and Galatians 2 they debated the subject of circumcising Gentiles in order to save them. Paul even rebuked Peter ***“to the face, because he stood condemned.”*** (2) Publicly in the marketplace they engaged the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers and commanded them ***“that they should all everywhere repent”*** (Acts 17:17, 30). (3) Often in the other fellow’s places of worship they ***“persuaded and turned away much people”*** from that which was false to the truth. Their enemies accused them saying, ***“These that have turned the world upside down are come hither also”*** (Acts 17:6). Read Acts 6:9; 7:60; 9:20; 13:5, 14, 41-51; 14:1; 17:1, 10, 17; 18:4, 18; 19:9. They were reproving, rebuking, and exhorting; focusing interest. As a result of controversy in the synagogue in Ephesus, Paul separated the disciples and engaged in a discussion lasting for two years and three months. The results were, ***“all they that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks”*** (Acts 19:10).

Consider these admonitions:

- Ephesians 5:11, ***“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them.”***
- Titus 1:10-13, ***“For there are many unruly men, vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped; men who overthrow whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake...For which cause reprove them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith.”***
- Titus 2:13-15, ***“... Our Saviour Jesus Christ; who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a people for his own possession, zealous of good works. These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority.”***

Timothy was to preach the word ***“in season and out of season.”*** He was to stand by this duty whether the opportunity seemed ripe or not. Those in error he was to correct; those who were sinning he was to rebuke; those who were doing well he was to encourage. Let all Christians learn how to lead their neighbors out of darkness into light, and not confine this matter of teaching to a part of the church sometimes called “preachers.” – ***Fifth Street East church of Christ Bulletin***, March 10, 2019. ■



Consequences

By Bill Crews

Thoughts entertained, words uttered, and deeds done have consequences. Like seed that is sown, they bear fruit — pleasant or bitter, good or evil. Decisions made, choices selected, steps taken, courses begun bring us, in time, to the goals, the destinies to which they inevitably lead. Many are traveling toward goals and destinies of which they seem absolutely unaware or foolishly unconcerned — goals and destinies that will prove tragic and painful. Only God can see the end from the beginning; in His revealed word He tries to tell us. – ***Collegevue church of Christ Bulletin***, August 14, 2016. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

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