

Preach the Word
An Ordination Charge
By Bob Vincent

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Bible Text: 2 Timothy 4:1-2
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This is a very awkward thing because this is a sermon to one man in front of a whole bunch of people and it can feel like you're being dressed down but I don't want it to feel that way because this is about an exhortation and I'm going to direct your attention to 2 Timothy 4, not the verse that Dennis referred to in his excellent exposition of 1 Timothy 4 but he made a reference to another verse in 2 Timothy 4. I want us to look at verse 1, 2 Timothy 4:1 and 2.

1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching.

May we pray.

Lord, as I would charge Nathan with the task of being a preacher, please help me, O God, your inadequate servant, to do this in a way that he will never forget. For Jesus' sake. Amen.

Building on Dennis' excellent sermon, I want to direct your attention there for this is the most solemn kind of charge anybody ever got and it's Paul charging Timothy and he's telling him to do one thing and it is to preach the word. The great temptation is to preach everything else but the word. I want you to never forget this as long as you live, as long as you are a teaching elder: you have nothing to give the people of God but holy Scripture. Be a man of one book. Know this book well. Make it your daily study. Let it become a part of you. Grant the Holy Spirit's presence to take the Scripture and in the experiences of life, to grind it into your soul as with a mortar and pestle, that what you bring forth to the people of God on the Lord's day in public worship has become part of your own soul. May you become pregnant with Scripture. May it so fill you in the power of the Holy Spirit that what you say is utterly, totally, and absolutely biblical.

There are a lot of ways to preach the Bible. You can preach the Bible topically but when you preach the Bible topically, make sure that the people are looking at Bible verses and show them why we believe this particular doctrine. You can do a series, for example, on the great doctrinal statements of Christianity but always ground it in the Bible. Take them

back to the Bible. Have them look at the Bible. I remember Dennis made a reference to Jim Jones. Jim Jones said to the people of his church, he held up the Bible and he said, "Too many of you are looking at this and not at me." May God Almighty close the doors of this church when that becomes the case and may God Almighty close your mouth if you ever say such a blasphemous thing because to take the words of the hymn of Augustus Toplady and to apply it to a preacher, "Nothing in my hands I bring," and of course in your personal life, "Simply to Thy cross I cling," but as you come to address the people of God, "Nothing in my hands I bring, Simply to Thy word I cling." That will build a church because it isn't by Bible studies, it isn't by discussion groups, and it isn't even by private personal devotional study, it is by the proclamation of this word from somebody who has been ordained by God with the laying on of hands, that God builds his church because faith cometh not by reading, faith cometh by hearing the word of God.

May God grant that you be such a preacher in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.