



The unfolding of your words gives light.

Finish the Course

An Exposition of 2 Timothy

^{4:1} I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead^a, and by His appearing and His kingdom^b: ²preach^c the word^d; be ready in season and out of season^e; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction^f. ³For the time will

^a **4:1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead.** The word translated “solemnly charge” means just that. It is frequently used in the context of a warning, like the plea of the rich man in hell who wanted to warn his brothers to repent (Luke 16:28). Notice here that one motivation for shepherds is the coming judgment of both the preacher and the flock.

Just as serious are the words “in the presence of God.” This realization gives strength to the opening words of the traditional marriage ceremony “Dearly beloved, we are gathered here in the presence of God and these witnesses to unite...” David defended his celebration before the Ark of God to Michal by saying he was doing the act for God’s eyes (2 Samuel 6:21). Paul wanted Timothy to know that the work of the ministry is carried out *lifay Adonai*, “before the face of God.”

^b **4:1 by His appearing and His kingdom.** The word translated “appearing,” only used by Paul in the New Testament, normally refers to the return of Jesus (with one notable exception in 2 Timothy 1:10). When Paul talks about the “kingdom” (*basileia* is used fourteen times in his epistles) he speaks of either a future inheritance (1 Corinthians 6:9, 10; 15:50; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:5) or a present reality (Colossians 1:13; 4:11; 1 Thessalonians 2:12). Here he is calling us to look toward the “not yet” kingdom.

^c **4:2 preach.** There are other words used for preaching in the New Testament. One word means simply to speak (*laleo*). Another is all about the gospel message itself (*euangelizo*). Two others are simply an announcement (*katangelo, diangelo*). The one Paul uses here (*kerusso*) means “to herald or proclaim.” It was used of the town crier, the person everyone relied on to get the news.

^d **4:2 the word.** A preacher can preach without preaching the word. This very much narrows down the subject matter of the sermon. He is of course talking about God’s word (*logos*). This is why biblical exposition is the proper way elders should conduct their public ministry.

^e **4:2 be ready in season and out of season.** The only other time the word for “in season” (*eukairos*: “good time”) is used in the New Testament, it is used by Mark (14:11) to describe the opportunity Judas was seeking to betray Jesus. The word translated “out of season” (*akaios*) is only used in this verse.

^f **4:2 reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.** The word “reprove” (*elegcho*) comes from a word meaning *to expose*. When God’s word is preached, publically or privately, hidden things come to light. The word is elsewhere translated by the word “convicted” to describe what happens when an unbeliever enters an assembly where God’s word is being communicated:

But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all. 1 Corinthians 14:24

The word translated “rebuke” is the word that describes what Jesus did when he scolded disciples, demons and a deluge (waves). It is not possible to engage in the ministry of the word in public and in private without getting after sinners.

The word Paul used here for “exhort” is translated “comfort” and “encourage” in other places. The preacher is a coach and a cheerleader, calling the team to the joy of the game. This shows that there is both a negative and a positive call when God’s word is preached. Preachers should

2 Timothy Exposition
Steven Svendsen, Sr.

©Rice Lake Baptist Church, 104 East Barker Street, Rice Lake, Wisconsin, 54868 – <http://www.ricelakebaptist.org> – 715.234.1966

Permissions: You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that you do not alter the wording in any way and that you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction.

Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.



The unfolding of your words gives light.

come when they will not endure sound doctrine^a; but wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires^b, and will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths^c. ⁹But you, be sober in all things^d, endure hardship^e, do the work of an evangelist^f, fulfill your ministry^g.^h

call people to put off sin and to put on Christ with great patience. It takes time to communicate the “instruction” or *doctrine* of the Christian faith.

^a 4:3 **the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine.** The word translated “doctrine” is similar to the word “instruction” in verse two. It simply means “teaching.” “Sound” means *healthy*, like being of “sound” mind. Luke and John use it in the physical sense (Luke 5:31; 7:10; 15:27; 3 John 2), but Paul always uses it to describe spiritually healthy living and teaching (1 Timothy 1:10; 6:3; 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 1:9, 13; 2:1, 2). The word for endure is “tolerate.” People would become tolerant of many things but not the word of God.

So when you put these words together you see that Paul was telling Timothy about a coming day when Bible preaching would be “out of season.” Listen to much of what is coming from the pulpits of Christendom and you will see that the prophesied day is still with us.

^b 4:3 **wanting to have their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers in accordance to their own desires.** People who do not like to hear that there is something wrong with their thinking or behavior tend to go looking for a friend or a pastor who will say things that satisfy their ears. They can usually find them. Notice that they “heap up” (literally) teachers. People with no appetite for truth tend to think you can trump the Bible with majority opinion.

^c 4:4 **will turn away their ears from the truth and will turn aside to myths.** There are two “turn” words here. The first, describing the ears again, is always used of an absolute refusal or 180 degree turnaround. The second is a simple word for “turn” that is often used of the direction of a turn. In this case the 180 degree turn *from* the truth was *toward* myths, or man-made stories.

^d 4:5 **be sober in all things.** The simple definition of the word translated “sober” does refer to freedom from drunkenness, but carries with it the idea of watchfulness, as some translations show. Peter uses this word (1 Peter 5:8) to warn people to take a watchful attitude toward the devil’s predatory advances. The NIV paraphrases this line: “keep your head in all situations.”

^e 4:5 **endure hardship.** Part of being a leader is persevering through hard times—even times when you are outnumbered and unpopular. See the fitting simile in 2 Timothy 2:3: “Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”

^f 4:5 **do the work of an evangelist.** This means the shepherd has a continual responsibility to preach the cross to believers and unbelievers alike.

^g 4:5 **fulfill your ministry.** The word “fulfill” normally carries the idea of making a full disclosure.

^h 4:1-5 This letter is written to an elder and is a challenge to elders, but it communicates to the local church what they should expect in their relationship with church leadership.

1. Expect to hear warnings about Judgment Day. Not every member of the visible church is among the redeemed.
2. Expect teaching saturated with Bible content.
3. Expect personal applications that often expose sin in your life.
4. Expect personal confrontation about your own life.
5. Expect your pastors to demonstrate emotional stability. You do not need leaders who make decisions or preach sermons that are feelings-based.
6. Expect to hear a lot about the cross. Some people reduce Christianity to a list of decent behaviors. Biblical Christianity is all about the violence God poured out on His Son to create new hearts and behaviors in His people.

2 Timothy Exposition
Steven Svendsen, Sr.

©Rice Lake Baptist Church, 104 East Barker Street, Rice Lake, Wisconsin, 54868 – <http://www.ricelakebaptist.org> – 715.234.1966

Permissions: You are permitted and encouraged to reproduce and distribute this material in any format provided that you do not alter the wording in any way and that you do not charge a fee beyond the cost of reproduction.

Scripture quotations taken from the New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. Used by permission.