

10/20/24 - 2 Tim. 4:1-2 - "Continue Listening"

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[0 : 00] I'd encourage you to look up this short passage today in 2 Timothy 3.16 through the second verse of chapter 4.

All scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness. That the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

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 in kingdom, preach the word.

Be ready in season and out of season. Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching. Amen.

Amen. This is God's word. Thanks be to God. I'm not sure if you're familiar with the name Charles Simeon, but Charles Simeon arrived upon the pulpit of Holy Trinity Church in Cambridge in 1782.

[1 : 17] Now, as anybody arrives to a new ministry work in a pulpit specifically, I mean, there's a lot of built-up anticipation.

There's wonder of all this new adventure. You think the world of what's to come, just as any new pastor might have.

I certainly felt it. However, to Charles's bewilderment, he was met with sour attitudes.

No one wanted him to be the minister. On Sunday morning and Sunday evening, this church had pew holders.

We don't have that here. But you would actually have an entire pew that belonged to somebody, and they would open that pew for others to come and sit.

[2 : 14] Well, the pew holders locked their pews, refusing to participate as a statement against Charles Simeon. From their participation and the participation of others, preventing everyone to stand.

You have to stand around the outside if you wanted to attend this church. How about that? If you're visiting for the first time here, imagine walking into that scene. You're like, I think we hit the wrong church, honey.

Right? For 12 years, this went on. 12 years. Sunday, after Sunday, Simeon stepped into the pulpit, declared God's word with clarity, with simplicity, and with power.

Charles Simeon wrote, Charles Simeon wrote, My endeavor is to bring out of Scripture what is there, and not to thrust in what I think might be there.

I have a great jealousy on this head, never to speak more or less than what I believe to be the mind of the spirit of the passage that I am expounding.

[3 : 36] Now, Simeon eventually won over the congregation after 12 long years. However, he is an example of what it means to keep the word central and to trust the word to do its work.

In fact, my own pastorate began in this pulpit owes a great deal to Charles Simeon's preaching convictions with expositional preaching.

This single story is a snapshot of thousands of churches around this nation. Sadly. Thousands of stories of churches throughout this country who just refuse to not allow the word to do the work.

Sometimes that's to the detriment of a pastor. Yeah. But also, it's sometimes the detriment of those who ought to heed the word of God.

Unfortunately for Simeon, Simeon, How about that word? Simeon. Fortunately for Simeon, I believe he read this passage today in 2 Timothy.

[4 : 58] I believe that he read it thoroughly because his conviction was so profoundly word centered. But unfortunately, I don't think his congregation did.

And for that, my prayer for us today is that we might hear and heed such a powerful text that shapes our lives.

It's a charge today that hits home, not just for a pastor. Trust me, this has dealt with me many, many times in this week specifically. But also those called to be pastored.

You as well. It hits all of us. And so what we see in this passage is going to be a main point that healthy churches proclaim and receive God's word.

And so the sermon title today is Continue Listening. Continue Listening. And through three sections, I'll break up some of the imperatives of this passage.

[6 : 09] I believe by the end of our time, we'll see that main point blossom like a flower and hopefully compel us in our lives as Christians. Let's pray before we get into this work.

Father, thank you for your word. Something so true. So objectively true. Absolutely true. And that if we have a problem with the word, it is not your word that lies the problem.

It's our hearts. Help us to deal with our hearts. Help your word to change our hearts. To captivate our hearts.

And change the trajectory of our lives. Lord, we pray for you to do this by the power of your Holy Spirit that inspired this text today. To change us by the end of our time.

We praise in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. And so the first point today is the word is for mandatory proclamation.

[7 : 21] The word is for mandatory proclamation. Proclamation. Now, being a father of four, it's difficult. And okay, I got to bring context because not every one of you know me.

Maybe not everyone knows me. But got an 11-year-old, 7-year-old, and two 5-year-olds. Twins.

Identical twins. Polar opposites. Always trying to hurt each other. Can't share. The problem of evil exists. And it is alive and well. Alright?

And I love them all dearly. Being a father of four, it's sometimes difficult at times to figure out how to distinguish and discern the appropriate tone that's going to grab their attention on this next one.

You know, is it going to be the calm, cold demeanor of approaching them? The hundredth time. Smiling. Hi, it's me again, right?

[8 : 28] Just, you know, I asked you to do that or do this, right? Or is it time for that vein somewhere in the middle of your forehead to start poking out arteries pumping?

You can actually take your blood pressure from across the room. It's a time for that tone. Right? Well, you know that tone well, okay?

We already had our confession, but if you want us to do more of that, we can do that. But Paul doesn't seem to have that problem in the text today. Paul provides Timothy with a passionate charge.

A charge so strong that we might be able to even sense his vocal tone that seems to increase in intensity with each word that he states.

Look with me. Verse 1 of chapter 4. I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus.

[9 : 36] How about that? This is a communal charge. He's bringing back up with him. Paul's not alone in this idea.

In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus. Which Paul solders up like a three conductor wire with 220 on each line right to Timothy's heart.

I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus. Oh, you don't know who he is? Let me tell you. Who is to judge the living and the dead?

And by his appearing and his kingdom, preach the word. Preach the word.

These conductors that Paul ties to Timothy's heart. Have different views in mind.

[10 : 39] Of who Jesus is. And the authoritative charge that this holds for him. This brings in mind the future view. Of judgment. Of Christ's return.

Christ's kingdom. He says, I charge you in the presence of Jesus Christ who is judge. According to Daniel 7, 14. To him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom.

That all peoples and nations and languages should serve him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion. Which shall not pass away. And his kingdom, one that shall not be destroyed.

I charge you in the presence of Jesus, the returning king. As Titus 2, 13 says, Waiting for our blessed hope.

The appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ. I charge you in the presence of Jesus Christ. The reigning king. Just as Revelation 11, chapter 11, verse 15 says.

[11 : 45] When the seventh angel blew his trumpet. And there were loud voices in heaven saying. The kingdom of the world has become the kingdom of our Lord.

And of his Christ. And he shall reign forever and ever. I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus.

Who is the judge of the living and the dead. And by his appearing and his kingdom. Preach the word. What a charged statement.

This is like holy accountability. Timothy's like. What did I get myself into? Don't take this lightly, Timothy.

Paul's saying. Paul is instilling within Timothy's soul. A healthy fear of God.

[12 : 51] A healthy reverence. Of God. Not of man. Not of those pew holders. But of God.

A fear that recognizes church leaders. Are judged. According to a higher standard of judgment. According to James 3.13.

And pastors are given. Are going to give an account. To every soul. Within their care. According to Hebrews. 13.17. Each and every one of you.

I expect the Lord. To approach me. And say. Sue. It looks like you neglected her.

A couple times. Didn't return her phone calls. Yeah. What do you got to say about that? It's going to be a long process. And I take that very seriously.

[13 : 46] And every pastor in this church. Takes that very seriously. In our care for you. But why would Paul. Provide Timothy. With such a charged statement.

Why would he do that? Why would he load this? With all this voltage. Hook it to his heart. Like. Are you sure you're going to want to do this?

The only reason. That I can logically conclude. In reflection. Is that the road of head. And the road ahead. In his ministry. He's going to be tempted.

To deviate. From such proclamation. The natural tendency. Is going to be. To stray. From proclaiming.

The word. And specifically. Pastor Timothy. Is called to. Proclaim. The word. To preach. The word. Commissioned by the authority.

[14 : 48] Of God. And of Christ. To preach. This doesn't seem optional. Does it church? And that which is not optional.

Is what? Mandatory. Preach the word. Don't preach yourself. Don't preach your own agenda. Tithe is low.

Don't preach on tithe. Preach the word. Right? Don't preach. Don't preach. Preach God's message. Logos. The word.

In that. Preachers are not at the luxury. Of just quoting Bible verses. As a hodgepodge of a message. Oh it's biblical preaching. He quoted all these verses. But what's the message.

Of those verses. It's not tailoring your own message. For the church. Of little. Things that stirred you up.

[15 : 49] At three o'clock in the morning. Because who's the authority. Over that message. You or God. Sermons can't be stories. Endless stories.

Said Timothy. And all pastors. Are to preach the word. Not just verses. But the message. Of his word. God's word.

For us. And if this charge. For preaching the word. Or preaching. The message. Logos. Is mandatory for Timothy.

It can only be mandatory. To heed such a message. Don't you think? I don't think it would just be a mandatory charge. For Timothy to. Go hoot and holler. And say. And maybe.

Maybe your friends. In the church. Will receive it. Maybe. But just keep it going. See what happens. I don't think so. I don't think that.

[16 : 46] This is what he intended. In this. Because he's calling for. Expositional preaching. And praise the Lord for it. But the other side of expositional.

Preaching. To expose the message of a text. It's a call for impositional learning. For. Impositional. Listening. Knowing that when a pastor steps in a pulpit.

He's not performing. This is life. Giving. Work. Not a performance. And so if the charge for preaching the word.

Preaching the message. Is mandatory for Timothy. It can only be mandatory. For those who heed the message as well. Are you an impositional listener. Of the word.

Allowing the word to impose. Upon your ideas. For the word to impose upon.

[17 : 44] Your thoughts. To impose. Upon. The standards that. You think are okay. To live your life. But contrary to what God's word says.

Are you an impositional. Listener of the word. You see. For the place where God's message. Is proclaimed. It is our job. To listen closely.

To its imperatives. Test its directives. And apply its prerogatives. In our lives. And this continues to deepen. In our participation as well.

And the second point here. Is that the word is for all seasons. You've heard of all season tires. It's a word. It's a word. It's a word.

Word is for all seasons. It's an all season word. Going back to our household. We sometimes. Have this. Common phrase.

[18 : 43] Do I have to. With our kids. This is dumb. I don't like this.

Amen Micah. You didn't. Amen. But there comes a time. When explaining is over.

Right. And obedience is simply required. This is the thrust of this next imperative. Of the passage. To be. Ready.

Be ready. In season. And out of season. In other words. If it's convenient. Or inconvenience. Whether the pews are locked.

Or whether the pews are unlocked. Preaching the word is not a matter of convenience. It's not a matter of being ready. Or at a time that seems good.

[19 : 43] No. If Timothy is convinced in the life-giving message. Of the Bible. Time is of the essence. Shut up.

And get to it. Right. In season. And out of season. In other words. Let your ministry. Be known for its.

Not for its laziness. But its readiness. Timothy. No excuses. Be ready. Maybe as Paul would say.

A good soldier. In Christ Jesus. But what does it take to be ready? Does that even mean. Be ready. Kind of like the. Shoot from the hip.

Right? How does one become. Ready? Well I believe that it. It's having. Forethought. Awareness. That's needed to prepare.

[20 : 38] Ahead of time. Thinking a little bit. About the future. For a soldier.

Thinking about a good soldier. Of Christ Jesus. It's. Knowing the objective. Of the mission. Knowing what could. Possibly lay ahead. And getting to it.

And the same is true. For a pastor. And here Paul is telling Timothy. To be ready. Know your weaknesses. Know your blind spots. Know all of that. Expect what is to come.

On the road ahead. And drive. Drive. It's not. Your power. Or agenda. It's God's agenda.

Through his word. This in season. And out of season. Can't. I mean. This is baseball season. Right? I mean. Rest in peace. Guardians. Sad day.

[21 : 41] They were doing so well. But right. You ask any of the Guardians players. And they know. What it's like to prepare. In season.

To be ready in season. And out of season. Nobody sees. Preseason. Stuff. Nobody sees them at their home. Exercising.

Nobody sees them. Through the winter time. When there's snow covering. Progressive field. But what they do see. Is the in season. Be ready.

In season. And out of season. And you see church. In that. There is. Nothing more option. Limiting. Than the requirement. Of all season.

Readiness. But it is. Only achieved. Through. Preseason. Preparedness. Knowing what's ahead. And preparing for it.

[22 : 38] And now again. We must think practically. About Paul's charge here. The sense of its. Mandatory imperative. In the life of a pastor. Has a whole other side.

Of a mandatory imperative. In the life. Of those. He pastors. How many of us can say. Without a doubt.

That we are all. Season. Ready. Recipients. Of the word of God. Come what may. We are all.

Season. Recipients. Of the word of God. They could bulldoze. This church. And guess where. Steel Valley Church. Is still meeting. We'll find somewhere.

Over in this. Gravel lot. All. Season. Preparedness. How many of us. Can say that. What excuses.

[23 : 36] Might we come up. That may inhibit. The word. From working. In our lives. You know. It's often said. That Sunday morning. Sunday evening. Sunday.

Lord's day. Begins on Saturday. Right. Preparedness. Be ready. It's looking ahead.

At maybe. Maybe the upcoming passage. That's coming up. In the. In the sermon series. It might look like. Preparing. By cooking. A little bit of extra food. On Saturday.

So you have some leftovers. That make. Make it not so daunting. To prepare meals. On Sunday. Might look like. Sitting down. With your family. Or alone. And just lifting. Rick up. In prayer.

Lifting me. Please. In prayer. Lifting pastors. Deacons. And church members. In prayer. Looking at that church directory. And lifting everyone up.

[24 : 29] In prayer. It's not binging. On a late night show. And then being surprised. That your alarm's going off. In the morning. To get ready. Church.

I want you to see. That when an all season. Ready. Pastor. Is paired with an. All season. Ready. Church. The darkness. Cannot stand.

Against. Such. A unified. Church. Church. Nothing. How might God. Be calling you. To be an all season.

Ready. Church. As a recipient. To receive the word. What steps might you need. To take. To prepare well. As a family. Or an individual.

To become all season. Ready. And the last point. As we get to. Is the word. Is for all situations.

[25 : 29] Here we end. At the conclusion. Of something that Paul. Began. Many verses ago. In chapter 3. Verse 14. He exhorted. Timothy. To continue. And he's been.

Expounding upon. That contrast. Ever since. And Paul provides. A threefold expectation. Of how the word. Shapes. Our lives. And two important.

Demeanors. To uphold. In that process. It's a 3-2. We'll go back to. Baseball. Lingo. The 3-2 pitch. Says.

Reprove. Rebuke. And exhort. With complete. Patience. And. Teaching. Now. To be reprov'd.

It's a fancy word. For being corrected. At various times. The war of our. Flesh. Experiences. Sort of that. Natural. Friction.

[26 : 22] That God's word. Seems to. Inevitably. Contain. That some things. In the Bible. Are challenging. Testing.

Makes you change. Nobody likes that. C word. Change. It's hated. In churches. Don't move. That piano. No change. Right.

And trust me. It's a weekly struggle. In the life of a pastor. The roughness. That the word. Has. Upon. My own life. But it's for your benefit.

In God's glory. That it does. So what's that mean at times? As the word is proclaimed. It corrects our humanity. As we sit here. Gathered on Sunday morning.

Sunday evening. Throughout the week. At house churches. And through our small groups. It's literally like corporate church discipline. Every time we open the word. We're guided.

[27 : 18] We're corrected. We're approved. And this correction is good. It is good. Had I resolved to just. Proclaim the truth of God.

That we all agree with. It's not God's word. That's being proclaimed. It's my word. And the passage next week.

We'll get into that. With itching ears. I'm not here to itch ears. Timothy wasn't. Charles Simeon wasn't. Correction is good. And God desires his word.

To achieve that end. That's how he does it. Through his word. He also mentions rebuking. He. This is another characteristic. Of the word. At times.

This transpires. Sort of like. As a stop sign. You know. The. The old stop sign. When you're running late for work. You go past the school zone. And there goes the kids. And the pesky stop sign. Perfect timing.

[28 : 14] Providence of God. Going to be late for work. Lose my job. But praise the Lord. They're stopping for the kids. That stop sign goes up.

Now. Why does that stop sign go up? Right? It's for protection. Right? And so at times.

This transpires. This transpires. And translates. As a stop sign. Often due to the. Dangerous reality. Of continuing. Down a path. Of whether.

It's wrong doctrine. Or maybe even. Ungodly lifestyle. As it were. For the Galatian church. Read Galatians. You'll get a stop sign. Pretty good there. Read.

First Corinthians. You'll get a stop sign. There pretty good too. In other words. The word. That stops. Is a word that guides. Says.

[29 : 08] Stop. And wait. Provides. Those directions. The word stops. Those. As Christians. That are. Headed for.

Danger. Disobedience. To God's word. That is robbing God. Of his glory. Stops. Unbelievers. Of a road. That's. Led to hell. Calling out.

To them. On the exit. Saying. This way. Danger. Down there. Pull. Off. Regardless.

Of the appeal. Of sin. Or the fellowship. Of friends. Down this road. God's word. Says. Says. That apart. From Jesus Christ. The road. Ahead. Is dark. And it's.

Christian's job. To evangelize. The world. To tell them. To get off. On the next stop. Or else. Danger. Lies ahead. And that's. Eternal. Damnation.

[30 : 04] In hell. For those. Apart from Jesus. You see. God's word. Alone. Tells us. That holiness. God's holiness. And men's. Rebelliousness.

Cannot. Be reconciled. Reconciled. By our work. By a little. Sorry note. To God. Right? It calls for us.

To see a stop sign. Through the gospel. That we don't need. To die in our sin. And that. Jesus Christ. Came. Not by our efforts.

But by. His labor. His work. In this life. He met. All the demands. Of the law. Laid his life down. And as a substitute.

For the penalty. That we deserve. He bore it. In his sacrifice. On the cross. And this is not only. A theological reality.

[31 : 01] Church. And friends. But this is. A theological. Surety. And maybe you're here. Today. And you sense.

That stop sign. Through God's word. Maybe you've been. Jumping church. From church. To church. And they keep. Rubbing you the wrong way. That pesky word.

Just keeps. Traveling with. Every church. That you go to. Well. I hope that you see. The stop sign. Here today. Through the word. You know that God.

Is doing something. In your heart. Respond to it. By. Turning from your sin. Having faith. In Jesus Christ. For your salvation. Enter in. This is the.

Correction. This is the. Rebuking. Stopping. But Paul also. Gives one final characteristic. That the word accomplishes. Exhortation.

[31 : 58] Encouragement. And when we have the blessing. Of being rebuked. And corrected. Nothing can compare. To the encouragement. To follow. Sometimes sermons have.

All correction. Or all rebuke. Or all encouragement. Right. I'm not saying that. A sermon can't be encouraging. I'm not beating you guys. With the Bible. Every Sunday. I don't think. If I am.

Just let me know. I'll see. What I can do. But. Sometimes this is all. Encompassing. That. Through correction.

Through rebuking. That. There's great encouragement. That follows. To keep going. To keep believing. Nothing else on earth.

Can come close. To a pastor. Who patiently. And instructively. Sits with you. Rebukes you. Corrects you. And exhorts you.

[32 : 53] According to the imperatives. Of scripture. That's a pastor. That loves you. This is pastoring. This is. Why the local church.

Exists. This is why church. Membership. Exists. This is why church. Discipline. Exists. God's. Love for you.

Is being carried out. Through the work. Of his word. By the hands. Of a pastor. Isn't this amazing. Church. Church. And just as we have observed today.

Of what the mandatory charge means. Not only for a pastor. But those he pastors. We know that nothing else. Can be as encouraging. Than a church. Who receives. The words.

Work. Patiently. And instruct. Instructively. Are you. Patiently. And instructively. Listening. To his word.

[33 : 50] As a. Good soldier. As an athlete. As a farmer. Right. Jesus Christ. Being the supreme. Of each example. The supreme.

Example. For us. I want you to think about it. A little bit. The divinely. Inspired.

Mandatory. Charge. Remains for pastors. Divinely. Inspired. Mandatory. Charge. Remains for pastors. To preach it.

To prepare for it. And to patiently instruct it. But what might also. This dual charge. Have for his church.

Well. Very similar. The divinely. Inspired. Mandatory. Charge. Remains for the church. Receive it.

[34 : 48] Prepare for it. And patiently. Be instructed. We don't know all the emotions. That. Charles Simeon felt.

Throughout the 12 years. Of locked pews. And enduring radical. Opposition. And persecution. And harassment. But church. What we do know. Is that according to history.

The word had its way. With this church. In Holy Trinity. Cambridge. Sometime over the course. Of 54 years. Of staying.

In the pulpit. The church changed. Things changed. It had nothing to do with Simeon. And everything to do. With the word. The joy.

The joy. That it probably was. To hear the clicks. Of those pews. Unlocking. Of those first pews. Unlocking. In that sanctuary. As God's word.

[35 : 43] Began to unlock. Hearts. Charles Simeon's motto. Was biblical. Exposition. Of the word.
And may the Bible. Continue. To unlock.

Hearts. By way of its exposition. In our lives. See healthy churches. Proclaim. And
receive. God's word. Let's pray.