

This morning we will conclude our series on worship as we look at the topic of preaching or teaching as it relates to the worship service. Now in a sense, every single Christian is a preacher or teacher of God words. We preach a sermon everyday by the way we live our lives and show people that Gods love is in us. But, today I want to focus in specifically on preaching or teaching in the worship assembly. We can see that preaching is a part of public worship to God in several places in the Bible.

Acts 20:7 And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight. Here we see Paul preaching the Word of God to these people at Troas and might add he didn't have a time limit because we see him preaching until midnight. Keep in mind that during that time, Sunday was a normal workday and most Jews recognized Saturday and their holy day. So most likely, they didn't meet until late in the day after work. Nonetheless, Paul preached at the gathering on the first day of the week.

WHAT SHOULD BE PREACHED IN PUBLIC WORSHIP? In several places the apostle Paul gives great insight to this question. ***1 Corinthians 15:1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;*** In his second letter to the church in Corinth, Paul tells us what NOT to preach. ***2 Corinthians 4:5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; ...*** We should not preach ourselves trying to make out like we are something special, No we are to preach Jesus and those things associated with his authority. That is why Paul says, ***1 Corinthians 2:2 For I determined not to know anything among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*** Paul wanted to make sure that people understood that Jesus was the message and not Paul. This will include preaching the gospel. It would also include preparing people for his return so that they go to heaven instead of hell.

Paul's letters to Timothy and Titus are rich with what should be taught in the worship service. Paul warns Timothy of those who would stray away from God's word and he stresses the importance that Timothy teach the people the word of God. ***1 Timothy 4:1-2 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; (2) Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;*** There are going to be some that depart from the faith to teach doctrines of the devil. Notice what Paul told Timothy in his second letter. ***2 Timothy 4:1-5 I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; (2) Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. (3) For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; (4) And they shall turn away their ears from the***

truth, and shall be turned unto fables. (5) But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

Paul states clearly that it is the word God is to be preached and not something else. It's important that the word of God be preached because the word is: (1) Power of God to salvation. Rom. 1:16. (2) It is how we have faith in God Rom. 10:17. (3) It gives us all things pertaining to life 2 Pet.1:3. (4) It makes us complete and ready for every good work 2 Tim. 3:16-17

Whatever we need to know to be faithful servants to God or how to treat our fellow man can found in the Word of God. All who teach/preach should use God's Word as the primary source, but unfortunately many preachers today are moving away from the word of God and are just preaching "feel good" messages that are full of fuzzy little stories and very little scripture. Some preachers are staying away from Gods word because they can't draw as big of a crowd if they continue to preach about sin and warn about the reality of hell. This is sad because when the word of God is neglected and is not preached, it will get to the point where people feel comfortable living in sin. One time Paul was talking with the Ephesian elders for the last time and warning them to watch out for false teaches. In that visit he said: ***Acts 20:27 For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God.***

This is what needs to be taught in the worship service; the complete and perfect will of God. There is message for each of us in the Bible. Sometimes there are topics that we don't want to hear because they steps on our toes. But these are necessary to remind us to be better than what we are, or to remind us not to be involved in that sin any longer. How can we ever expect to grow in God's grace and knowledge if all Gods truth is not being taught? When I say all of God's word I mean both the NT and the OT. Even though we are not under the old covenant, we can learn a great deal from it that we can apply to our own lives. Paul states in ***Romans 15:4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.***

We can also see great examples of how Peter and Paul preached the word of God in Acts 2 and 13. They would start out in the OT showing how Christ had fulfilled the prophecy of the OT and then they would preach to them Christ crucified and all things necessary for salvation. Preacher and teachers would do well to copy their example and not be ashamed of God's word but instead proclaim it without fear of men knowing that they are glorifying God in heaven. So, preach the word.

WHO SHOULD PROCLAIM GODS WORD IN WORSHIP? *(James 3:1 ASV) Be not many of you teachers, my brethren, knowing that we shall receive heavier judgment.* This is talking about those who teach publicly and not on an

individual basis because each are commanded to go and teach (Matt 28:20). Last week we discussed that women are not have authority over the man in the worship so it should be a man that proclaims Gods Word in a public assembly. But as James states, it shouldn't be just anybody. Whoever proclaims God's word needs to understand that you will receive a stricter judgment because you are responsible for molding and shaping people lives with the will of God. If you are teaching false concepts that will lead people away from God, then you are going to be judged for this. When you understand this, it makes you take a very serious look at the Word of God and it will cause you study very hard so that you don't misrepresent God's word. Therefore, it's important that you have the ability to rightly divide the word of God.

Once you have grown to this level; you will want to teach or preach the word of God. Jeremiah is great example of this. He was a man that proclaimed Gods message over and over again and no one would listen to him. Jeremiah was in derision because everyone mocked him. ***Jeremiah 20:9 Then I said, I will not make mention of him, nor speak any more in his name. But his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forbearing, and I could not stay.***

This is what happens to a Christian today. The more you study Gods word and understand it the more you will desire to proclaim it even if people are mocking you and they don't want to listen to you. A person must have the right attitude and the right motivation to proclaim God's Word.

You see Paul had the right mentality. He was not preaching Gods word for fame or fortune; he was doing it because he loved God and he wanted people to hear God's message. This should be the attitude and motivation behind everyone who proclaims God's Word. If a person is motivated by money or popularity, they are likely to compromise the truth because they want to further their career and want to make more money. A preacher's motivation is his love for the word and people; and not monetary gain.

Another thing for preachers or teachers to understand is that they need to preach a message that can be understood by all. Some people like to use words that most people don't understand. It's like they want to try to impress people on just how smart they are. But when you talk over people heads, you message will not be understood. So the message should be simple so that everyone can understand it. This means that the teacher is going to have to put some thought it what they're going to say and how they are going to say it. We see this principle laid out by the apostle Paul. ***1 Corinthians 2:1 And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.*** While he was highly educated, being brought up at the feet of Gamaliel and having a good share of Grecian literature, was capable of

quoting Greek poets, as he does in Acts 17:28; he thought fit not to adorn his message with flowery rhetoric as did many of the Grecians. What he delivered were plain matters of fact, attested by God himself.

There isn't a more rewarding job than to proclaim the life saving message of God's word, but those who proclaim it must have the right attitude and the right motivation, and they should not compromise God's truth for a personal gain. Now the last question I want to look at this morning is.

WHY SHOULD WE LISTEN TO WHAT IS BEING TAUGHT? Once again Paul gives us some great insight on this question. *Romans 10:14-17* **How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? ... (17) So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.** Paul is telling us that when we hear the word of God it cultivates faith; so when we listen to what's being proclaimed it will cause our faith to grow and make us stronger Christians.

Now I want you to notice what the book of Proverbs says about listening. (*Proverbs 8:10-11*) **Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold. (11) For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.**

You see when someone is proclaiming God's word you should listen very carefully because they can teach you something that will make you a better Christian or they may challenge you to think about God's Word in a different way. No matter how boring a sermon may be to you, if you listen carefully you should be able to get something out of it that you can apply to your own life. So when you come to worship service you should come prepared to listen. The sermon is not the time to be reading the church bulletin or carrying on a conversation with someone. No, we should be listening carefully as the word of God being proclaimed.

If we don't do this, then how are we going to know if the truth is being proclaimed or if false doctrine is being preached. We would do well to follow the Berean's example. *Acts 17:10-11* **And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. (11) These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so.**

Notice the people were open minded, but they did not believe everything they heard. After they listened very carefully, they would then carefully examine the scriptures to see if what was being taught was true, and we need to do this as well. There

is not a perfect teacher or preacher and they can (and will) make mistakes. As a listener you should you pay very close attention and back up what is taught from the bible. If you see the teacher is in error, then you should talk with them and show them what the scripture says so they don't repeat that mistake again. Jesus also taught us about the importance of listening in Mark 4. Jesus tells his disciples the parable of the four soils and after explains this parable notice what he says. ***Mark 4:23-24 If any man have ears to hear, let him hear. (24) And he said unto them, Take heed what ye hear: with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you: and unto you that hear shall more be given.*** So take heed to what you hear.

Once last reason why we should listen carefully is found in Acts 16. ***Acts 16:13-14 And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. (14) And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.***

Here Paul proclaiming God's word and because Lydia was listening carefully to the word of God and it was through the word that God opened her heart to make change in her life. In fact the very next verse tells us that she and whole household were baptized in to Christ because she allowed the word of God to open up her heart. This same thing happens today. When we listen carefully to the word of God as it is being proclaimed it will open up our hearts and it will make a change in our lives and our attitudes. So let us never forget the importance of listening to God word as it is being proclaimed for it is the power of God that leads to salvation. ***Romans 1:16-17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.***

I hope from this lesson you have learned that preaching is part our worship service and those who preach should boldly proclaim the whole council of God. Those who do this should be motivated by pleasing God and not themselves, and finally we need to listen carefully as the word of God is being proclaimed so that our hearts can be opened and so we can grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord.

Have you been obedient to the gospel message? Invitation.