

# Four Imperatives in Preaching

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## Introduction

1. An IMPERATIVE is a command; it *is not* to be *avoided* or *evaded*.
2. Paul gave Timothy FOUR IMPERATIVES in preaching the gospel in 2 Tim. 4:2:
  - a. *“Preach the Word”*
  - b. *“Be instant (or be urgent) in Season, out of Season”*
  - c. *“Reprove, Rebuke, Exhort”*
  - d. *“With all Longsuffering and Doctrine”*
3. We will study these four imperatives in our lesson.
4. You can see from 2 Tim. 4:2 that Paul was vitally interested that the Word be preached.
5. Paul knew only through preaching the Word that men and women could be saved from their sins – I Cor. 1:21; Mk. 16:15 – 16.
6. The church was established on Pentecost by the preaching of the Word – Acts 2: 14 – 47.
7. The church continues to grow by the preaching of the Word – Acts 4:4; 6:7; 8:12.
8. The decline of Spiritual life and growth in the church is always accompanied by lifeless, formal, unfruitful preaching.
9. It is extremely important that we preach the WORD.

- I. **The First Imperative is “PREACH THE WORD” – 2 Tim. 4:2**
  - a. This solemn charge is from heaven’s throne – 2 Tim. 4:1.
  - b. Paul was inspired of God to give this charge – 2 Tim. 3: 16 – 17.
  - c. No man can IGNORE this charge and the responsibilities which it brings and be true to God, Christ, and His Kingdom – James 3:1.
  - d. Upon the *faithful discharge* of this responsibility *depend* the *favor of God* – Gal. 1: 6 – 9.
  - e. The preaching of the Word is *God’s appointed means* of reaching the hearts of men and *redeeming* them – Mk. 16: 15 – 16; I Cor. 1: 21; 1: 17 – 18; Matt. 28: 19 – 20; Rom. 10: 13 – 15; Acts 11:14.
  - f. The Word of God (the gospel) is the *Power of God* to save men – Rom. 1:16; John 8:32; Heb. 4:12.
  - g. The Word is to be preached in its *completeness* – *not altered* in any way – Acts 20:20; 20:26 – 27; Rev. 22:18 – 19.
  - h. Paul always preached the gospel, the Word, *to please God* – I Thess. 2:4; Gal. 1: 10 – *NOT MEN*.
  - i. The Word is to be preached because it is *LIVING* – I Pet. 1: 23 – 25.
    - i. This living word can meet the *living issues* of today.
  - j. The Word of God is NEVER out of season – 2 Tim. 4:2.
  - k. The Word is to be preached with ALL AUTHORITY – Tit. 2:15.

- I. We are to preach the Word because *we will be damned if we preach anything else*—Gal. 1: 6 – 9; 2 John 9 – 11.
- II. **The Second Imperative is to “*BE INSTANT IN SEASON, OUT OF SEASON*”**
  - a. Preaching is NOT to be limited to *CONVENIENT TIMES*.
  - b. The Preacher must be *urgent* in the preaching of the Word.
  - c. He must use *every opportunity* to preach the Word.
    - i. He must never lose an opportunity to preach the gospel.
  - d. He will preach the Word *when the time does not seem to be favorable* (out of season):
    - i. The time was not favorable for Stephen in Acts 7.
    - ii. The time was not favorable with the Jewish hearer in Antioch in Pisidia – Acts 13: 44 – 52.
  - e. Today, many times, it is not favorable with many when the gospel is preached, but it must be preached!
    - i. Worldliness in the church – those involved do not want the Word preached.
    - ii. Marriage, divorce and remarriage – the time is not favorable in many congregations, but *it must be preached*.
    - iii. Weak preaching – many do not want to hear what God says about preaching the Word, but *it must be preached*.
- III. **The Third Imperative for Preaching is: “*REPROVE, REBUKE, AND EXHORT*”**
  - a. Preaching MUST be *HELPFUL* in the lives of the hearer.
  - b. Preaching must *meet the needs of the people*.
  - c. “REPROVE”
    - i. To expose the real nature of sin.
    - ii. To expose the false teacher and his teaching.
    - iii. He must deal with the people’s sins to bring them to repentance.
  - d. “REBUKE”
    - i. This is a stronger word that means: “to reprove sharply; to reprimand with authority”.
    - ii. The sin is to be brought home to the offender.
  - e. “EXHORT”
    - i. The preacher is to insist that the people do what they learned to do in the Word; *they must do their duty* . . .
    - ii. Peter exhorted – Acts 2: 40.
    - iii. Titus – Tit. 3:8.
    - iv. Paul – I Cor. 15:58.
- IV. **The Fourth Imperative: The Preacher Must Do this Work “*WITH ALL LONGSUFFERING AND DOCTRINE*”**
  - a. The preacher must do this with a *patient* and *persevering spirit*.
  - b. There must be *repeated instruction* out of the *WORD*.
  - c. The preacher is *not to give up* quickly.

V. **Some Dangerous Trends with Respect to These Four Imperatives:**

- a. INDIFFERENCE toward the preaching that *GOD BIDS us to do*.
  - i. God said to Jonah, “*Arise, go unto Ninevah, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee*” – Jonah 3:2.
    - 1. God is only *pleased* with the *preaching He bids*.
    - 2. God bids that preachers preach His WORD – that excludes preaching anything else.
  - ii. Denominational sermonizing has taken the place of preaching the Word:
    - 1. *Human wisdom* and *Philosophy* are substituted for the Word.
    - 2. The *Social Gospel* has taken the place of the gospel of Christ.
  - iii. There is the spirit of *COMPROMISE*:
    - 1. The distinctive plea of the gospel is TABOO today with many.
    - 2. Preaching of the Word is not in “good taste” as the World views it.
    - 3. When we *dilute* the Gospel, we *make it VOID* – Gal. 1: 6 – 9; Matt. 15: 6.

VI. **CONCLUSION**

- a. I think you can see from this lesson that the right kind of preaching is important.
- b. When the word is not preached, God is not pleased and men are not saved.
- c. May we all have the proper attitude toward the Preached Word.
- d. Are you here and out of Christ?