

## We're All About The Word – 2 Tim 4:1-5

If here for the first time – welcome; Glad you've chosen to worship with us today

We're starting a new message series today titled, **What's Up With Harvest?** – who we are, what we do, and why

With all that's going on around here – fr our ministries to our growth to our location . . .

So many people want to know what's causing all this; Why all the growth?

Why all the changed lives? Why all the passion and excitement?

With so many people asking such questions, and so many wild speculations out there . . .

The question, "What's up with Harvest?" begs to be answered

Last week I mentioned some of the more humorous speculations –

Like the person who wondered if we were a print shop for Bibles

Or the guy who heard that we require W-2's from those who join

So I thought I'd have a little fun and ask the staff what else they've heard in this respect

Maybe compile a "Top 10" list or something

But the more responses I read, the more disgusted I became . . .

So I bagged the whole idea and decided to focus on the right answers rather than

perpetuate the wrong ones

And the right answer to the question, "What's up with Harvest?" starts w/ the fact that . . .

**We're all about the Word** – as in the inspired Word of God as found in the Bible

Which is why we open up to a passage every single week, and talk about what it means and how to apply it in our lives

Today is no different, so turn with me to 2 Tim 4:1-5, and let's find out what it means to be all about the Word, and why

What's up with Harvest? What makes us go?

**We preach from the Bible, and the Bible alone (v1-2)**

This is Paul's last letter, penned while in jail waiting to be executed

With all that he was facing, and all that he had done in ministry, and all that he could

have said, he chose the first 3 words of v2 as some of his last – *Preach the word*

*Preach* – Proclaim; Herald; Tell

He could have let it rest with 3:16-17 where he says . . . (read it); That's pretty significant

But he deems this issue so important, that he comes back to it again in v2, and tells us

what to do with such a valuable resource – namely, preach it

Don't just keep it for yourself, but tell others; Spread it by proclaiming it

• And in doing so, he gave this command as much emphasis as he possibly could

This isn't some mamby-pamby request on his part

"Hey if you get the chance, and you can fit it in around . . .

The blessing of your pets, and your healings, and your dramas . . .

And the spontaneous testimonies to buy you time because you didn't prepare . . .

And the 500 other empty formalities you'll add to your worship service . . .

If you get the chance and you can fit it in after all that – could preach the word a little bit?

No, no; That's not what he said

He said – *I charge you*; I command you; I'm telling you – *preach the word*

Just to make sure u know how serious I am, let me remind u that I'm not alone in all this

I have some pretty heavy hitters backing me up on this one

*I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus*

You know – the supreme being of the universe? He's with me on this

And *Christ Jesus* – the one with all the power to *judge the living and the dead?*

The one who's coming again to rule and reign? This is his desire too

Paul pulled out all the stops on this one, and said it as strong as he possibly could

It's kind of like someone saying . . .

"I swear on a stack of Bibles that I'm telling the truth" – adds weight to their word

"With God as my witness, it's true" – adds validity to their thought

"I bet you a million dollars I'm right" – adds emphasis to their argument

So too, Paul adds as much validity, weight, and emphasis as he possibly can, to say . . .

*I charge you . . . preach the word*

• As in, the message of God's redemption as recorded in the pages of the Bible

Not your own thinking; Not your own philosophies

Not the traditions of others; Not the latest cultural hot button

But the *word*

And not the word *plus* whatever else you think; Not the word plus religious traditions

Not the word plus pop psychology; Not the word plus *anything*

Just *the word*; This thing; The Bible

The message in the book that you hold in your hands

Why such emphatic exclusivity on Paul's part?

To preach from the Bible and the Bible alone? Because . . .

1. It's from *God*

Why would you preach from anything else that's not from him?

God wrote a book by moving men to record his message

There's nothing else in existence that can legitimately claim that

Nothing else in existence for which the evidence backs it up

Which means that everything else is the musings of man

So we preach from the Bible, and the Bible alone – because it's from God

2. It's all *we need*

It contains everything we need for life and godliness

Everything we need to know him, love him, and live for him

Mystical experiences aren't needed; TV talk shows aren't needed; Eckart Tole isn't needed (Oprah's latest poster boy) . . .

Nothing more is needed to glorify God w/ our lives, other than the truth of his Word

3. It's *powerful*

Heb 4:12 says that's it's able to pierce soul and spirit, and discern the thoughts and

intentions of your heart; That's powerful

God promises in Is 55:11 that his word will never be spoken without accomplishing all that he has in mind

We preach from the Bible, and the Bible alone because . . .

It's God's word; It's all we need; It's powerful; And it says so – *preach the word*

## **We proclaim its truth, popular or not (v2)**

*Be ready in season and out of season* (v2)

There are times in every culture, when the truth of God's word is popular and well-received, and times when it's not  
Like following times of disaster – people are usually more open to what God says  
While in times of peace and prosperity, they're not

The same is true on a personal level

There will always be people who are desperate for the truth because their own lives have been shaken to the core . . .  
While others could care less about the truth, and even have an aversion to it

Should any of that matter when it comes to proclaiming the truth of God's word? No

It's not our job to be social weathermen and speak up only when times are good  
Paul says – *Be ready in season and out of season* (v2)

IOW be ready to proclaim the truth when it's popular, and when it's not  
Be ready to speak up when times are good, and when times are bad  
Be ready, whenever God gives you the opp, to proclaim his truth

That could mean every week like it is for me; Or every day in your home

It could mean once in a blue moon at your workplace, or once a month over breakfast with a friend

Doesn't matter what the opp entails

What matters is that you are ready, and that you *fulfill your ministry* (read v5)  
What matters is that you do what you're supposed to do, when you're supposed to do it, popular or not

When it comes to doing so a church . . .

- I'll never forget the conversation we had with a particular bank, when we trying to secure financing to buy this place – preliminary interview of sorts  
They were asking us all kinds of questions about our church, and so on  
It was all going very smoothly until they said something to the effect of – “Now you won't be preaching about controversial things will you? (Like what?) Well, social issues like abortion or homosexuality for instance”  
And I simply said, “Yes; I will preach on those things from time to time; And talk about what God says in the Bible”

Needless to say, they weren't very comfortable with that, and we didn't end up doing the loan with them . . .

Which was okay, even if we could not have found another loan, and could never have bought this building

Why? Because we're all about the word, and we're never going to compromise the proclamation of its truth, popular or not

## **We proclaim its authority without apology (v2)**

Paul just got through saying that – *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for various things* (2 Tim 3:16) . . .

Now he says, use it – *Reprove, rebuke, and exhort with complete patience and teaching*  
IOW, proclaim the authority of God's word in people's lives, without apology

Bring it to bear as the sole standard by which they should live, and don't apologize for it  
Say what needs to be said, say it like it is, and let God do what he's going to do

That's the gist of these 3 words here in v2, starting with . . .

*Reprove* (elencho) – expose someone's sin

Preach the word in such a way as to expose the wrong in people's lives  
“You know that thing you're all about? That attitude you love to harbor? The Bible says it's wrong, and God seriously frowns on it”  
That's a reproof in a biblical sense – speaking to someone in a way that exposes their sin and shows God's displeasure for it

*Rebuke* (epitimaō) – if reproving someone is *exposing* their sin, rebuking them is telling them to *stop*

It's a sharp reprimand

“The Bible says right here that what you're doing is wrong, so knock it off”

That's a rebuke in the biblical sense – a strong, verbal confrontation for the purpose of getting someone to stop sinning

*Exhort* (parakaleō) – urge toward righteousness; plead for holiness

As in, “Stop trying to live on both sides of the fence, and start living right”

Use the word of God to reprove, rebuke, and exhort

Proclaim it's authority, and don't try to soften the blow just because the truth hurts

- You say – oh, that sounds so unloving  
Not at all; In fact, just the opposite is true  
To proclaim the authority of God's Word without apology is the most *loving* thing you can do  
Anything else gives people a false sense of security as they frolic in their sin or continue in their apathy  
If we love people at all, we *must* proclaim it; We *must* teach it

- And do so , *with complete patience* (2b)

Don't get frustrated with those who reject it, and will hear nothing of it  
Don't be aggravated by those who are slow to accept it  
Don't get discouraged by those who listen w/ the intent to critique, as opposed to learn/grow

God knows I struggle with this from time to time – frustrated; aggravated; discouraged  
And when I do, I have to remind myself that I too am constrained by the authority of God's word in my life, to teach/preach with *complete patience*

What's up with Harvest?

We preach from the Bible, and the Bible alone

We proclaim its truth, popular or not

We proclaim its authority, without apology; And . . .

## **We proclaim its message with a sense of urgency (v3-4)**

(Read v3) *For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching* . . .

I don't think anyone would disagree that we are living in a time where this is true

Where people don't want to hear truth that convicts, so they take their ball and their bat,  
and go home

*They won't endure sound teaching so they turn away from the truth*

If they *do* go to church, they go where they'll never be challenged to live under the  
*authority* of God's word

*Having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own  
passions*

They'll go where they hear only what they want to hear; And listen only to people who  
make them feel good

They end up sitting in pews week after week, buying into half truths, and practicing a  
form of religion that has no power for living . . .

All the while deceiving themselves to feel good about it

That's why we proclaim the message of God's word every single week with a sense of  
urgency – because this may be the only time you'll hear it

You may never come back – either because you won't, or because you can't

- The core of this message that we proclaim, is that . . .

God made you and loves you

There is none righteous, not even one – including you

Your unrighteousness/sin separates u from God, and will forever unless you're forgiven

Because God demands a price be paid for your sin, the price of death

In his grace – his Son, Jesus, paid that price of death for your sins . . .

So you can be free of God's wrath, and saved from the condemnation of your sin

Enjoying life forever and life to the full as one of his children

If . . . you believe, repent, and receive

That's the core of the message that we proclaim with a sense of urgency

But you must *believe* it

You must *repent* of your sin – admitting it; asking God's forgiveness; turning from it

You must *receive* Jesus as Lord of your life – committing to live for him because you  
love him, and he loves you

If you do that, the urgent message of the Bible, is that – you will be saved

Saved from eternal condemnation in hell

Saved to eternal life in heaven

Saved to glorify him until you get there

What's up with Harvest? Why is God doing such a work among us?

Because we're all about the word, and people like you are receiving its message with a  
sense of urgency

- Pray

If you have yet to believe the message of God's Word . . .

And repent of your sin; And receive Jesus as Lord of your life . . .

I urge you to do so today – make today the day of your salvation

If you're ready to do that – if you believe, and you're ready to repent and surrender your  
life to the Lordship of Jesus Christ . . . You can do so right now

If you just raise your hand and look at me, and wait for me to acknowledge you . . .

I'll lead you in a simple prayer right where you sit – a simple prayer of belief,  
repentance, and commitment

Is there anyone who wants to do that?

- Prayer of salvation

I so need you; I so want to be right with you

I believe the message of the Bible – that Jesus died in my place, for my sin

I see it now, I see my sin, and I'm sorry – please forgive me

I love you, and now surrender to Jesus as Lord of my life

I believe, I repent, I receive (finish)

- I praise God for those of you who just prayed with me

Want you to do two things –

1. Pick up a *New Believers Packet* from one of the ushers as you exit

Work through it and begin growing in your walk with Christ right away

2. *Tell someone* what you just did – let them rejoice with you, pray with you, and  
encourage you

If you'd like, some of our staff and elders will be up front after the service for that very  
purpose

Song (Everyday) – take note of the 2<sup>nd</sup> verse which talks about standing on God's word

[Close](#)

In lobby