

INTRODUCTION

Two weeks ago, I spoke to you from verse 16, about what we need most: to be saved from the wrath of God to come on the great day of judgment; and about how the life and the doctrine of the church's pastors is often the means God uses to save sinners, granting to them repentance and faith, giving forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Yet, not only pastors are used of the Lord as instruments for saving the lost; every Christian's life and doctrine may be used by Jesus Christ to save the lost.

That was the concluding verse of this section, but I used it first instead of last. Now we go back to the verses before that one to flesh it out or fill it in.

Here's how I mean for us to use today's passage:

-this letter was written to Timothy, when he was presiding over the large church in the big city of Ephesus

-so the most direct application is for pastors to understand the work of their office, and for the churches to understand what they should expect from their pastors

-remember from last time that the life and doctrine of the churches' pastors is the normal means that God uses to save the lost

-but the matter of your life and the doctrine of Jesus Christ is not just for pastors; as God's grace goes out to sinners all over the world, the conduct and the speech of every Christian is used by the Lord to save poor sinners from His wrath

To save the lost by my words, by my doctrine, by my teaching, is a weighty responsibility! It gives rise to doubts and questions in my mind:

What if I speak to people, and they won't listen?

What if I feel like I can't do it?

In today's verses, we'll see our duty put to us in two ways, and these two questions raised, and answers given that encourage us.

TEXT - 1 Timothy 4:11-16

BODY

I. These Things Command and Teach

- A. The apostle instructs us to speak of "these things." The truths of the Bible are inspired by the Holy Spirit, and are good for us, telling us all we need to know about godliness
 1. gospel doctrines about repentance and forgiveness of sins, about eternal life through faith in Jesus Christ, about the resurrection of the dead when the Lord Jesus comes back
 2. moral instruction for daily living
 - a) husbands, love your wives
 - b) wives, submit to your husbands
 - c) children, obey your parents

3. procedures and principles for operating the local church
 - a) ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper
 - b) choosing of officers
 - c) behavior in worship
 4. warnings not to give heed to deceitful doctrines, such as commands to abstain from foods
 5. admonitions not to be afraid or to be anxious, based on precious promises that He always will be with us, and that He is coming back again
 6. and all the other precious truths of the Bible
- B. This is the duty of the church's pastors by virtue of their office
1. command
 2. teach
- C. More generally, this is the duty of every one of you, according to your station or situation
1. parents: Deuteronomy 6:7 You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up.
 2. wife: Proverbs 31:26 She opens her mouth with wisdom, And on her tongue is the law of kindness.
 3. all of us: Colossians 4:6 Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.
- D. What if they won't listen to me?
1. because I'm young
 2. because I'm old
 3. because I'm a woman
 4. because I'm a man
 5. because I'm new
- E. Set a good example:
1. in word
 2. in conduct
 3. in love
 4. in spirit
 5. in faith
 6. in purity
- F. So, as you command and teach the word of God in your particular situation, be encouraged to know that even if people do not seem to listen to you, if they seem to despise you, your life of obedience to Jesus Christ may be used by Him to prove the truth of what you are saying
- G. So, as a church member
1. expect the church's pastors to teach you what the Bible says, and to command you what the Bible commands
 2. expect also that the pastor will be trying to set a good example in everything

- II. Give Attendance to Reading, to Exhortation, to Doctrine
 - A. This is the duty of the church's pastors
 - 1. reading
 - a) privately
 - b) aloud to others
 - 2. exhortation - with the goal of doing what is right
 - 3. doctrine - with the goal of knowing and believing what is true
 - B. What if I don't feel like I can do it?
 - 1. I've never done this before
 - 2. I have done this before, but I failed at it
 - 3. I lack the discipline
 - C. Trust in God's gifts
 - 1. when Timothy was ordained into the ministry, Paul prophesied that he would have the necessary gift to do the work
 - 2. when any man is properly ordained into the ministry, he can trust that the Lord Jesus will give him what he needs to do the work
 - 3. when, by God's providence any Christian is placed in a certain position in life, he can trust that God will give him sufficient gifts for doing the good work he needs to do
 - 4. do not think God's gifts insufficient
 - 5. do not be ungrateful, as someone who does not appreciate a good gift
 - D. Devote yourself
 - 1. meditate on these things; practice them
 - 2. give yourself entirely to them; immerse yourself in them
 - E. Then you will profit, you will make progress, and all will see it

CONCLUSION

It is a matter of greatest joy to us that God saves sinners!

Also it is a matter of joy to us that He is pleased to use us, the disciples of Jesus Christ, as instruments in His hand to save sinners by our speaking the truth and by our living in loving obedience to His commands.

Thad - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Psalm 119:97-105

Andrew Jeff - Scripture Reading - Daniel 1:8-21

Roel - Congregational Prayer

Jeff - Benediction - 2 Peter 3:18

Rita - Prelude

Rita - Trinity 149 "Joy to the World"

Audrey - Trinity 286 "We Gather Together"

Haven - Trinity 403 "Not What My Hands Have Done"