

“The Task of the Pastor”
Titus 2:15
(Preached at Trinity, April 30, 2023)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. As we come to the end of **Chapter 2** Paul ends the same way he began. As we've seen often in this letter, Paul understood the importance of sound doctrine for the health of the church. Godliness will never exist in an environment lacking in sound doctrine. Spiritually mature Christians will never exist in an environment lacking in sound doctrine. Strong churches will never exist in an environment lacking in sound doctrine. This is why Paul continually stressed the importance of strong leadership in every church. Faithful men needed to be trained in the Word of God so that they might teach others.
2 Timothy 2:2 NAU - "The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also."
2. Paul charged Titus to ordain such faithful men to lead the church in every city throughout Crete.
Titus 1:5 NAU - "For this reason I left you in Crete, that you would set in order what remains and appoint elders in every city as I directed you,"
 - A. It was essential for these men to be of high character, above reproach, faithful to their wives, proficient in training their children, sound in doctrine.
 - B. Not only did the church need to be taught and built upon the truth, there would always be the need to refute those who deny the truth of God's Word.
3. Paul did not cease to encourage his young protégé Titus of the importance of sound doctrine in his own life.
Titus 2:1 NAU - "But as for you, speak the things which are fitting for sound doctrine."
Now in **Verse 15** we read:
"These things speak and exhort and reprove with all authority. Let no one disregard you."
4. In this last verse of **Chapter 2** Paul summarizes the work that Titus was charged with. These things summarize the work of the pastor.
He is to proclaim the truth: Speak, Exhort, and Reprove.
He is to always speak in command mode.
Do not allow the resistance of men to hinder your work. "Let no one disregard you."
5. It reminds us of the centrality of God's Word in the life and ministry of the church and in the lives of each one of you.

I. The pastor must speak, exhort, and reprove

- A. He needs to speak – “these things” as we have seen speaks of doctrinal truth.
1. It speaks of proclamation. The pastor stands as God’s herald.
The pastoral ministry is a speaking ministry.
But it is not just speaking for the sake of making noise.
 - a. In fact, he should bear the virtue of speaking seldom. Is this a contradiction? No, it means he should speak when his words are of a benefit.
 - b. He should avoid careless speaking, useless speaking.
Ephesians 4:29 NAU - "Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a *word* as is good for edification according to the need of *the moment*, so that it will give grace to those who hear."
 2. He must always be prepared to speak. The word also can be translated “proclaim.” It includes formal preaching but also teaching, both formal and informal. Paul told the Ephesian elders before his departure:
Acts 20:26-31 NAU - "Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷ "For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God. ²⁸ "Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood. ²⁹ "I know that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ "Therefore be on the alert, remembering that night and day for a period of three years I did not cease to admonish each one with tears."
- B. He must also exhort - παρακαλέω – a very common word.
1. This means to encourage or even comfort
Matthew 5:4 NAU - "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted."
 2. Preaching does not refrain from exposing sin, but it also presents the hope of Christ – forgiveness and reconciliation.
 3. The pastor must preach and teach words that edify and strengthen the church.
- C. He must reprove – literally means to “expose”
1. To reprove and rebuke is to use the Word of God to expose error and sin and to bring to repentance as the Holy Spirit applies it to the heart. All Christian teaching and preaching must speak to the issue of sin.
 2. Preaching must always consist of calling sinners to repentance. We can see it in the N.T. preaching.
 - a. John the Baptist called sinners to repent for the Kingdom is at hand.
 - b. Jesus often preached on the judgement of sinners and the need to repent. He was unwavering in His resolve to preach the truth.
Luke 13:24-28 NAU - "Strive to enter through the narrow door; for many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able.
Luke 13:3 NAU - "unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."

- c. The Apostles preached stirring messages on the need to forsake sin
Acts 2:37 NAU - "Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?"
- 3. The problem of humanity is sin – preaching must expose sin.
William Barclay – “The eyes of sinners must be opened to their sin; the misguided must be led to realize their mistakes; the hearts of the inconsiderate must be pricked into awareness. The Christian message is no drug to send us to sleep; it is rather the blinding light which shows us our true selves as we really are and God as he is.”¹

II. “With all authority”

- A. When the pastor teaches he carries Divine authority.
 - 1. The word for authority is from the word ἐπιταγή. It refers to something ordered or commanded.
The same word is used in the first chapter of 1 Timothy to refer to that which is commanded.
1 Timothy 1:1 NAU - "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus according to the commandment of God our Savior, and of Christ Jesus, *who is our hope*,"
 - 2. There are two elements to the pastor’s authority:
 - a. First, there is the authority that accompanies the preaching of God’s Word. The Word of God carries the authority of God – “Thus saith the LORD.”
It is God speaking. The pastor must “preach the Word.”
John MacArthur – The pastor “has the divine charge to present biblical truth with strong authority, commanding God’s people to hear, believe, and obey God’s Word.”²
 - b. Second, the pastor gains his authority from the nature of His office.
We have seen that the word translated “bishop” is ἐπίσκοπος
The office is one of oversight, of shepherding, of leading the church. The pastoral office has the duty of governing the church.
 - c. We must guard against hyper-authoritarianism, of treating God’s people in an abusive manner, but that does not deny the authority attached to the pastoral office.

¹ William Barclay, *The Letters to Timothy, Titus, and Philemon*, 3rd ed. fully rev. and updated., The New Daily Study Bible (Louisville, KY; London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 290.

² John F. MacArthur Jr., *Titus*, MacArthur New Testament Commentary (Chicago: Moody Press, 1996), 127.

3. The pastor's authority is limited.
Steve Martin – “With delegated authority from Christ, the risen and ascended Lord of the church, elders have a great stewardship to perform and have the authority to compel obedience in the areas ordained by God. With clearly delegated authority from their King, they are not free to expand their sphere of authority or to take away from the authority of the One who called them. They have no authority where Christ has not spoken, that is, where the Scriptures are silent.”³
- B. “Let no one disregard you.
1. This has to be interpreted very carefully. It does not refer to a hyper-authoritarian rule or dictatorial control where obedience is commanded. Rather, it describes the pastor's steadfast commitment to his calling and his absolute confidence in the authority of God's Word.
 2. Every pastor faces times in which he faces opposition. There will be those who reject his teaching and counsel. He should not be discouraged and cease to fulfill his calling.
 3. The pastor must stand firm upon his convictions. He must be a man of principle – he must hold high God's standard. He must not fear the displeasure of men. He must not allow the rejection of men to turn him away from the truth.
The pastor should be friendly, but making friends is not his chief goal. God's heralds are often hated.
 4. When the preacher relinquishes his confidence and authority in God's Word people will find his ministry easy to dismiss. But when he speaks with Divine authority he must be heard. Richard Phillips writes: “Here we encounter one of the grave weaknesses of the church today, in which preachers are largely viewed as entertainers who dare not offend church members, who may and often do vote with their feet. It is in large part due to the lack of authority in preaching that our church culture today increasingly succumbs to secular norms and pressures.”⁴
 5. No Christian should be allowed to disregard the clear teaching of God's Word. It isn't the pastor who is being disregarded. It is the Word of God.

³ Martin, Steven, editor, *Biblical Shepherding of God's Sheep*, (Ryelands Road, Leominster: Day One Publications, 2010) page 144.

⁴ Daniel M. Doriani and Richard D. Phillips, *2 Timothy & Titus*, ed. Richard D. Phillips, Philip Graham Ryken, and Daniel M. Doriani, Reformed Expository Commentary (Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2020), 238.

Conclusion:

1. This is a fitting way to end **Chapter 2**.
2. The pastor must proclaim sound doctrine. He must do it in command mode because he is speaking the Word of God.
3. But he must always be driven by love.
Ephesians 4:14-15 NAU - "As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; ¹⁵ but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *even Christ*"
4. No pastor will abuse his congregation if he loves them
 A pastor must lead the sheep, warn of dangers, and continually feed them the good food of God's Word.
5. The pastor must be a servant to all – the pastor's life is a life of service. One of the pastor's gifts is the gift of service.
 - a. A dictator's life is a life of being served.
 - b. A pastor's life is one of serving others.
6. This is the pastor's work. It's the work of preaching and teaching with constant patience and persistent repetition. This sets us up what will follow in **Chapter 3**
 "Remind them" implies repeating something that has previously been taught. It is constant work, essential work. God's Word must be taught continually.
2 Timothy 4:2 NAU - "preach the word; be ready in season *and* out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction."
7. God's Word must be the driving force of our life. How will we live? What will direct our lives?
 LBC Chapter 1: Of the Holy Scriptures
 1. The Holy Scripture is the only sufficient, certain, and infallible rule of all saving knowledge, faith, and obedience.