

Preach the word
1967 ordination service
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2 Timothy chapter four. I want to read the first five verses.

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; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. 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; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.¹

I want to turn over to another Scripture that you will find in the third chapter of the first epistle of Timothy.

This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous; One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?) Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.²

The Lord will bless his Word to our hearts.

I want, first of all, to make a defense, a scriptural defense of the office of the minister. We live in a day when this office is under attack and when there are many who say that there is no such thing in the Scripture as a minister of a local congregation.

¹ 2 Timothy 4:1-5.

² 1 Timothy 3:1-6.

Now I want to talk to you tonight about what God says in his book. When we think of bishops, of course, today we are apt to think of the diocesan bishops with [?] aprons and the lot. But these have no place in the Scripture.

Now if you turn with me to the book of the Acts of the apostles and the chapter 20, the apostle Paul for three years was ministering in the Church at Ephesus. Now he was going to be martyred for Christ preaching because the ilk—what we would say today the session of the Church—he called them together and he gave them a great change. And if you turn to chapter 20 and verse 28, speaking to the elders, you look at verse 17 says, “And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church.”³

Then he says in verse 28, “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers.”⁴

We read there of elders that rule and there is the office of ruling elder. The Church of Jesus Christ is not a democracy as some people think it is. The Church of Jesus Christ is a monarchy. Christ is the great king and head of the Church and he has delegated his authority as the supreme head of the Church to elders and there are elders who are to rule.

But it says here, “Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honour.”⁵ Now look at it. “...especially they who labour in the word and doctrine.”⁶

So there were elders who labored in the Word. They were ministering elders. They ministered the Word and there was one minister in the churches that were written to in the book of the Revelation.

Let’s turn to the book of the Revelation. And in the book of the Revelation you will find that the apostle was called upon to, “Write the things which thou hast seen,”⁷ verse 19 of chapter one of the Revelation. “Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.”⁸

First to chapter two verse one, “Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus.”⁹

When I was a boy I used to wonder who this angel was. I belonged to a church, but I never saw any angels in it. I saw plenty of fallen angels, but I never saw any angels. And then when I grew up and a little I learned that this word *αγγελος* (*ang’-el-os*) in the Greek translated here angel means messenger or minister. And it is in the singular, you will notice. He didn’t write unto the angels of one church. There was one angel for every church. Quite simple to prove then, isn’t it?

³ Acts 20:17.

⁴ Acts 20:28.

⁵ 1 Timothy 5:17.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Revelation 1:19.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Revelation 2:1.

Look at verse 20 of chapter one. This really gives the brethren something to chew on. You know, when I talk to my big brethren brother I like to bring him to this [?] and ask him where the angel is in his church.

“The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches.”¹⁰

There were seven churches, not 14 stars or 28 stars, but only seven. One messenger, one minister to every church.

I am talking about New Testament doctrine now which, of course, is hardly known today. Men have so many theories and they are trying to do away with the plain teaching of the Word of God.

Our brother is being set over this congregation as the ministering elder, the angel, the messenger to the people. I have to bring him a charge and this is a very solemn duty that falls on me and I must be faithful, personally faithful to him because some day I shall answer to the great king and head of the Church concerning the charge I would lay upon this young man who has been ordained here this evening.

I want you to notice in 2 Timothy chapter four, first of all, the minister’s charge.

“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.”¹¹

We have the minister’s charge. Then from verse two to verse five you have the minister’s commission. God has told him to do certain things. He hasn’t called him to run a bowling alley. He didn’t call him to do that. Here help him if he ever intends to. He hasn’t called him to be master and MC at the church dance. He hasn’t called him to be a sort of joker in the district, a suitable man to close up the proceedings of [?] of joviality at a young farmer’s club. He hasn’t called him to be that.

He has called him to do a work for all eternity, a solemn and eternal work. This young man has been commissioned.

And then in the previous chapter that we read we have the minister’s character.

So I want to talk to you about the minister’s charge and the minister’s commission and the minister’s character. Now, I want to talk to him about it because it has to do with him. That is why I have set him forward to sit there so that I can get my eyes upon him and really talk to him.

¹⁰ Revelation 1:20.

¹¹ 2 Timothy 4:1.

The charge before God... This man stands before God. He doesn't stand primarily before his brethren in the presbytery, nor does he stand primarily before you who shall listen to him. He stands before God.

My brother, let me tell you that to stand before God means that God's eye is upon you. This does not refer to what you are merely in public, but this refers to what you are in private. God sees you no matter where you are and no matter what you do. You are standing before God. And it is a solemn thing to stand before God.

I would say to any man who desires to go into the ministry: Make sure before you go ahead one step that you are prepared to stand before God and give him an account of how you exercise your ministry. I would this very night resign from the solemn ministry of God's gospel if I wasn't dead sure that God called me. This, my friend, is the most solemn task that mortal man can face or mortal man can do.

You are charged before God. You stand, my brother, before the God who made the heavens. He has all power. You stand, my brother, before the God who is all wise and sees all things. And he sees your heart. He knows your motives. He can test you and hold you in the hollow of your hand. You could fool your brethren. You could give me fair [?] before the world, but you will not fool [?] before whom you stand. He searches the heart and tries the reigns.

You not only stand before God, but you stand before the Lord Jesus Christ. You stand before him who has been specially appointed and delegated to be the mediator of his elect people and to the great king and head over the Church. Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her. And if there is anything that Christ really loves, it is the Church that he died for. And, my brother, you stand before the one who sees you ministering in the dearest place to his heart.

[?] if you should put forth sinful hands [?] the Church with the Savior loves.

You not only stand before God and before the Lord Jesus, but you stand before the great judgment throne. The shadow of the judgment is upon every preacher.

The Lord shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing. And one day, my brother, you will solemn account to God of how you lived, of what you preached, of how you acted and of how you have conducted your ministry in this place.

This will not be a visitation of Presbytery. This shall be the visitation of the Lord of hosts upon your soul and upon your ministry. And upon you tonight there is the shadow of the judgment seat. You have to live with the judgment seat before you. You have to live in the light of the terrible day when God shall expose publicly before heaven, earth and hell the motives of your ministry. So this is the charge that you are charged with. It is a solemn charge.

And when I read these words I tremble. When I read these words I cry to God with Paul, “Who is sufficient for these things?”¹² When I read these words [?] and I say, “Oh God, keep me ever faithful to this terrible charge that you have put upon me.”

And, as I have said before, only the solemn call of God would keep me in the ministry of [?].

You are charged before God [?]. You are charged, friend, before the coming of Jesus Christ who is going to appear publicly and visibly and gloriously. You shall be presented before him as his servant for this district and you will be asked to give an account [?] what you did with your talent, how you occupied your time, how you occupied your talent, how you occupied the ability that God gave you, how you brought up your opportunities, how you invested the time that graciously provided you with.

How sad it would be if at the judgment seat you would be like the man who hid his talent in a napkin and barely did anything. At the judgment day the [?] sad calling upon this steward. He said to him, “Because you have done this, let your talent be handed over to he that hath.” And the point this man is placed with the hypocrites and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

This is the charge.

But there is not only the charge, but there is the commission. It is your commission to do something in this district. You are commissioned to preach the Word, to preach the Word of God. You are not commissioned to read essays. We have churches today that are filled with essay readers. And if they have lost their place in the manuscript, they are lost completely themselves.

I met one man trying to read an essay the other day to a congregation and page nine got mixed up with page eight and there was no connection. He lost the thread of his discourse and the people on the back seat of the pew, they clapped their hands. They mustn't have much time for him, stamped their feet and there was confusion in that service.

You are not called to be an essay reader. You are called to preach the Word, to be a prophet and to preach this book from Genesis to Revelation. And there are [?] things in this book, things that men don't like and things that will stir hatred in their heart against you. But, my fellow, you have got to preach [?]. Preach the Word.

And, of course, in the preaching of the Word you have got to be instant in season and out of season. There is no holiday for the minister. He can't take off his ministry and put it in wardrobe and say, “In a month's time I will be back to put on the garments once again.”

You are always a minister. You are always God's servant. You are always to be a [?] at every opportunity, in season and out of season has to be invested for Jesus Christ.

¹² 2 Corinthians 2:16.

Reprove. The minister is called to reprove. He is to reprove sin. This is an [?] task. This is a terrible task to reprove. The call of God is to reprove sin [?] sins of our day, got to be reprov'd. Great [?] and immorality that are so rife in the land. [?] pleasure mad age. The minister of God has got to reprove them in the name of the Lord.

This is a task that needs the strength of heaven and the courage of an apostle and the fire of a prophet. You have not only to reprove, but you have to exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Exhortation is part of your [?]. You have to exhort men to get out of the apostasy.

But if you look here, set in here as a parenthesis there is this word, "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."¹³ And that is the day in which we live. After their own lusts, the apostate churches have heaped to themselves teachers having itching ears.

Look at that word "heap." That means there will be a superabundance of apostate preachers. You will be alone. There are not heaps of gospel preachers. You can hardly find gospel preachers. Oh, there are evangelicals, yes, with the emphasis on the jelly. And you can call them jelly fish. You get plenty of those. You can get a heap of them any time. And the jelly fish, you fishermen know, you stand on it, you get a good sting. If you stand on these jelly fish, my, it will sting.

I want to tell you tonight in this meeting, friend, that there are not many who stand for God. The apostasy, the apostates are heaped up with just a few preachers. Just a few men [?] you will be lonely. You will [?] lonely if you stand for God. And not too many want to associate with you. There will not be many who want to say, "That man is my friend." When you walk down the street many will pass on the other side. Many will be ashamed of your stand.

Paul said about people who were ashamed of me the prisoner of Jesus Christ. There are people who will be ashamed of you. And you have to go on exhorting them in this evil day, exhorting them with the doctrines of the book. And if this book teaches anything, it teaches separation from apostasy. [?] What relationship can there be between Christ and the antichrist? None. And a man that is saved cannot scripturally sit with a man that is unsaved and wish him Godspeed and unite with him in ordaining others who know not God and obey not the gospel.

Henry Cook said, "Tell me how can [?], Unitarians and [?] unite to form a pure church?" He said, "It can't be done."

Today we have these evangelicals uniting with me that hate the gospel and then in the general assembly had to wait. Dr. [?] stood up and tore the Bible [?].

¹³ 2 Timothy 4:3.

Man, these men protested not because he tore the Bible to pieces, but because he insulted their scholarship. So he came back on to the forum and he says, “If I have hurt any preacher, any minister of the church, I am very sorry.”

My friend, he has hurt the Lord, but he didn't express sorrow for what he had done to Jesus Christ.

I am not a bit interested what anybody thinks about me, but I will be standing up for the honor of Jesus Christ. [?], the honor of the Savior.

We have Mr. [?] who said, “We have preachers going around the country preaching what they call biblical separation, but what I call sinful segregation.”

My friend there is a biblical separation. I am called to separate from those who know not God, who obey not the gospel. It is in the book, very strongly in the Word of God. And I would like just to read it to you so that you know where it is, the sixth chapter of 1 Timothy and verse three. This was quoted tonight by the clerk in the charge. It is in one of the questions that our brother answered, verse three.

“If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words,”¹⁴ 1 Timothy six and three, “even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness...”¹⁵ This refers to the [?] and the [?] and the [?] of the general assembly.

Mr. Nicholson used to say hair was an unclean animal in the Scriptures. And these professor hairs of the assembly's colleagues, he says, “They are unclean, too.” And he was reading [?]. When you hit the bull's eye, the bell rings and the bell rang when old Nicholson preached. I would like to ring the bell right now in your heart tonight.

He says, “He is proud.”¹⁶ God says [?] stood up in the assembly and tore the Bible to pieces at his feet. [?] Said something else in front of him. He said he is a know nothing. He doesn't know nothing, know nothing [?].

He says he is [?]. That is what the Bible says about it. This is pretty strong language, isn't it? This is the language of the Holy Spirit, not what Ian Paisley [?].

And when God looks at the general assemblies, apostates, he says they are a bunch of know nothing proud jokers. [?] who park their lot in the true Church of Christ who belong to the synagogue of Satan. It shows, “about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness.”¹⁷

¹⁴ 1 Timothy 6:3.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ 1 Timothy 6:4.

¹⁷ 1 Timothy 6:4-5.

Stay with them. Is that what the Bible says? [?] to them, help to support them. The Bible says, "From such withdraw thyself."¹⁸

Mr. Gilly says that is sinful segregation. My Bible says it is separation.

Then when he is challenged, he backs off the board and says, "Mr. Paisley is a Hitler."

[?] I have heard that before. That is [?] would say. He is just a parrot of the old apostates. And they are in this church. He starts doctoring with the confession of faith and [?] to believe. This is more serious and he said we don't really when we sign the confession believe the pope is the antichrist.

So you have [?] who says he doesn't believe it and you have [?]. I got *Wither's* magazine the other day. Withers is the minister of Fishers. Mr. Nicholson used to say that Fisher [?] to waddle. That was the previous minister, but now it is Withers. That was [?].

And he said that this is only an extremist who believe, would believe that dear papa is the antichrist.

I want to say, my friend tonight that the Reformers because they believed the pope was the antichrist. This is why they burned them.

The last words that Thomas Cranmer said, "I reject the pope as antichrist." And they pulled him down and they burned him for saying that. And Mr. Gilly says [?].

I want to tell you, friend, any man that deserts the name and the prerogatives of God almighty is an antichrist. The Bible says even now there are many antichrists. We in the Free Presbyterian Church believe that the reformers were right. We have no apology to make for them. We believe they were men of God. We believe that the greatest revival since Pentecost was the Protestant Reformation.

God, send us another Reformation. It is what the Church needs today.

[?] withdraw and get out, stand up, shout out, get out and stay out. That is what the Bible teaches.

[?] just obey the Word.

You say, "What about my Sunday school class?"

God doesn't mention your Sunday school. What about the business. God is not interested in your business. It is the honor of his book [?]. You obey God and God will bless you.

¹⁸ 1 Timothy 6:5.

I lived in the hope of that dear man [?] when it came to Sandy [?] they said, “You have sat up in the agriculture business and we will not allow you to plow our fields. We will not allow you to thresh our corn if you join the Free Presbyterians.

He said, “All right. I’ll just starve, but I’ll obey God.”

I went down to see him after he come out, friend, and he did more business than any other man in the country. And every one of his sons are flourishing businessmen today, some of them with the biggest businesses in the countryside.

Do you think God is any man’s debtor, do you? I don’t. I believe that if you obey God, God will bless you. [?]

You say, “What about the future?”

That’s God’s business. You just obey God.

When the Free Church started a man came to me and said to me, “Paisley, your influence is finished.”

Well I said, “I never had much anyway, so it wouldn’t matter to me.”

[?] more influence today than I ever had. And it is an influence for good. What other protestant preacher could get 5000 people at the diamond and [?] on a Sunday evening at nine o'clock? You just find him in Ulster. What other preacher could get 1400 people in a tent in [?] with every church against him on a Sunday evening and 19 people gloriously saved as a result of the preaching of the gospel? What other preacher is going to build the biggest protestant church in Great Britain and Ireland? Just you find him, friend.

It is not because this preacher is anything. He is only a nobody and a nothing, but because he obeys God and preaches this book [?], not because there is any better but Ian Paisley, for Ian Paisley knows his sins and his [?] but I know that Ian Paisley’s God will not fail him. I know that. I am proving it. I have been in tight places. I had three months in prison with my brethren and in the prison cell I proved that God doesn’t let you down.

I am talking about hard scary realities. God will not let you down. Just believe him. Do what he tells you. Brother, you have got to preach this.

So turn their ears away from the truth. [?] Watch them in all things. You watch. Watch that the holy light of zeal doesn’t burn out.

You know, the greatest danger to a minister is when he is [?], when the church is filled.

I have a lot of people in my congregation who think that the preacher should tone off now and then. One lady said, “I wish Mr. Paisley wouldn’t be so [?].” [?] tone off a little, be nice.

[?] time to come and sit in my drawing room and drink afternoon tea with me, have a little talk about the weather, about the things that are going on. It would very nice to have the pastor come and sit with me.

Friends, God never called me to drink tea in a lady's parlor. God called me to give out a sword and fight the enemies. [?] I would just like to go into that parlor, put my foot under that table and [?]. Spill all the tea over her nice carpet, say, "Hallelujah. I am going to preach the gospel." I love to do that.

"But watch thou in all things."¹⁹ Don't let the light turn low.

Brother, what about the prayer candle? Don't let it burn out. Don't ever do anything for God if you don't pray. I haven't done it once in my life. I have got it lit for God.

You know, when you are busy for the Lord, you can let sacred fire burn out within your soul. You are going every day and [?] traveling thousands of miles doing all sorts of things over and above your own pastoral work. You can lose the fire. But preaching, instead of being pure gold, can only be an alloy. Oh, watch, my brother, watch your [?]. Don't let [?] get into your heart. You will face many difficulties. You will get many disappointments. Men all around the country will call you all things of the day. Don't try to answer. Let the Lord do it. Just stand up first [?] I will never be done of it. [?] 10 seconds [?] be a fool. The devil would like me to do that. But I will not be doing that.

I am like Nehemiah. I am doing a great work on God's wall. I am not coming down to meet Sanballat. But if you say anything about my Lord, I'll be at them with [?]. Don't [?] let your name perish. Let them take your name along with others. [?]

"Do the work of an evangelist."²⁰

Never lose an opportunity to lose preach the gospel. I had a bunch of men [?] and they were scared [?] didn't like him to be away from home. Then one night they had a meeting and they said, "We'll keep the preacher at home. We will pass a rule. He will have to pay all the supplies."

They met me and they said to me, "If you go away anymore you will pay the supply."

I said, "All right. I will pay the supply [?]."

So he did. He blew them all out, every one of them. Next time there was an election in the church I never said a word. I never told [?]. And they were all blown out, one by one. The next committee when they read the minutes of the meeting they said, "That's a terrible thing to do [?]. Brother we will make it up to you." They did make it up to me.

¹⁹ 2 Timothy 4:5.

²⁰ Ibid.

You think I'd quit evangelizing? No, friend. I went on putting up tents, preaching in halls, getting men saved. [?] preach all the time and God gives the opportunity. [?] my church [?] more members when I preached the gospel. Did I neglect my own church? Not at all. I was there twice on Sunday and I was doing all this extra.

My brother, do extra for God. Go the second mile. Don't just preach twice on Sunday and once during the week and then sit back and say, "I've done well." If God gives you people to preach to, preach every day. Preach twice a day. If I could get a congregation five times on a Sunday I would preach to them. After all, the old preacher preached 10 [?].

I was reading one day in the life of Spurgeon and he preached eight meetings. [?].

Brother, "Do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."²¹ You are a minister [?]. You couldn't get a greater offer. You couldn't be called to a greater task. You couldn't have a greater master. You couldn't have a greater [?].

[?] You are going to win souls for [?]. [?] soul at God's right hand or [?] Immanuel's land. You don't know who [?] saved at prayer meeting. I was standing at the tent door in [?] last night and a big fellow [?] had a hand on him like a vice and I am [?] strong [?] you know. He caught my hand and the blood ran up my arm. He said, "Brother, I never told you that you were preaching some time ago in Lurgan town hall." He said, "I was sitting in the seat and the Holy Ghost came [?]. And this was the first time I was able to get to you to thank you." He said, "I am going to [?].

You are going to do that shortly, man. And I will say nothing more about it because there is a young lady here and her eyes are flashing fire [?] instead of hammering this man, she was trying to hammer me. [?] not to be a brawler. You are not to be quick tempered. You are to know how to control your tongue [?]. You are not to be a striker. If a man strike you, you are not to strike back. You keep your hands in your pocket. You will be struck [?].

I remember growing up at the book table at [?] convention, a Presbyterian elder and a justice of the peace came out of his house with a dog lash in his hand and he lashed me right across from my ear to my [?]. Friend, if I ever felt like putting my hand out and taking a man out [?].

The Lord said to me, "Paisley, not a striker. Keep your hands in your pocket." The Lord [?], so I did.

[?] not very long after [?] the Lord will take care of you [?]. Clean and straight. Your private life is to bear the [?] of scrutiny. Nobody can point a finger at you before God, no skeletons in the cupboard, not [?] man walks in the broad day light [?].

Keep the charge, do the work [?] but by the grace of God [?] for his name's sake. Amen.

²¹ Ibid.