

Topic: 2. Tim. 4: 1-8.

General Purpose: Consecration

Specific Purpose: Though this sermon I hope to present to the audience their calling for preaching and the existing need in the world for preaching as to move them to do mission work.

Central Theme: You have a mission.

- I. Explain the fact that every believer has a mission
- II. The mission that the believer has is the same one that the first church had
- III. The way to fulfill the mission is the same as in the N.T. times
- IV. The need in the world cries for you to fulfill your mission
- V. Be the one who fulfills his mission

There are two questions that can define our attitude toward evangelism and missions. What does the church exist for? And the second question is very similar, yet more personal. What do you exist for? In regard to the first, preacher John Piper once said: “Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn’t... worship therefore, is the fuel and goal of missions.”

This could be the most condensed reason for the existence of the church. Indeed, the church was created to worship the Lord, to praise God’s name and exalt Him above all and at all times; and this is done not only through the regular services that the church celebrates; but it is to be done at all times through the behavior of the believer. The apostle Paul put it very well when he said in Romans 12:1 “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.” So the life of the believer is to be a constant worship service to the Lord. Yet, missions do exist and that is a clear indication that worship does not exist in many different countries in this world, including the United States. Particularly now more than ever the lack of worship in the USA has become more obvious in the story of the nation. Barna says that: 41 % of Americans are not going to church on regular bases, and we are talking about people who consider themselves to be worshipers of God. A worshiper that does not worship is a like a mosquito that does not bite. Yet, this is speaking only of those who call themselves Christians. What about those who don’t consider themselves to be Christians? People are more and more every day disassociating themselves from the Lord, and the question is this: What is the church going to do about it? (What is the American Church going to do about it?)¹ What is the church in Delaware going to do about it? What are you going to do about it? This takes me to the second question. Suicide rates are getting higher every day the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control estimates that in the USA suicide is the second leading cause of death among people who are 25-34 years old; and it is the third leading cause of death among 15- and 24 year olds. It was the 11th leading cause of death in the USA in 2005. Do you want to guess what one of the main reasons for its increase is? A lack of purpose in life.

¹ when people hear the word church in the sense that you are using, they (at least Americans) assume you are talking about the American church, unless you specifically say “the global church.” we tend to be ethnocentric.

That almost sounds ironic to me since the Bible is very clear on the mission that believers have as a group and as individuals. I am here to tell you that we as a church, as Christ's church, we do have a mission you as an individual also have a mission, and I want to challenge you to fulfill it.

I believe that by analyzing the very thing that the N.T. church and Jesus emphasized the most, we can arrive at an answer to the question of purpose.

Let's start with Paul.

It was about the year 66 A.D. where he was in house imprisonment in Rome, in which he was awaiting for his final sentence, the elderly Paul writes to his son in the faith Timothy. This was his last letter, and in it, he bared his soul in the form of advice, encouragement, exhortation, and warning. To finish, he summarized his whole message to Timothy in the following words:

“In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage-with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gathered around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their eyes away from the truth and turn aside to myths. But you, keep your head in all situations, endure headship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry. For I am already poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finish the raise, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will award to me on that day-and not only to me, but also to all who have long for his appearing.”

The primary work of Timothy was to preach. His conscience encouraged him to preach. Soon, Paul was not going to be on earth any more. Once the voice of him whom from Jerusalem to Illyricum had fully proclaimed “the Gospel of Christ.” It was necessary for another voice to arise and proclaim the good news. Yet, there was another motivating factor, the opportunity to preach was vanishing. The times were already approaching when men would no longer pay attention to the message of life, but instead, they would look for teachers that would preach with words that would make the listeners feel good about themselves, and proclaim a false peace. Therefore, it was necessary for Timothy to take advantage of the present conditions and preach at that precise time. Another reason for him to start at that precise moment, was that he was constantly in God's presence. The divine eye was constantly looking at him and at his labor, and finally, because of the perspective on the final judgment in which the Lord Jesus, “the Chief Shepherd”, would award an incorruptible crown of glory to those who had faithfully fulfilled their mission 1. Pet. 5:4. Paul was also encouraging him to be consistently prompt to fulfill his mission of preaching.

The words spoken to Timothy have a great application to the church of Christ. Its primary task was preaching. When Jesus went up to the mount of olives and called those whom

He had chosen to be the twelve apostles, He chose them with the purpose “that they might be with Him and that he might send them out to preach and to have authority to drive out demons.” Their communion with Christ would be preparation. Their miracles of healing would be the credentials for their message for the time being while Christianity was being spread. Their central work was to be; preaching.

When the twelve were sent out in couples, two by two, to go and preach through the province of Galilee, His instructions were: “as you go, preach this message;” Mat. 10:7. When the apostles asked for a sign of the second coming of the Lord and the end of the world, he indicated that “this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come;” Mat. 24:14

When the Master wanted to reduce the great commission into the smallest form he said: “Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation;” Mark 16:15.

The priority of preaching was well understood by the first church. When Philip descended from the Samaritan city “he proclaimed Christ there;” Acts 8:5. When Peter presented himself before the Roman Centurion in Caesarea he told him that: “He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that He is the One whom God appointed as judge of the living and the dead;” Acts 10:42. When the Greek philosophers wanted to describe Paul they did it by saying: “he seems to be a preacher;” Acts 17:18. The Athenians were very right for indeed the apostle Paul considered preaching to be his primary task; as we will see in his declaration to the church in Corinth: “For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel;” 1. Cor. 1: 17. Paul felt so strongly about preaching that he considered it an impossibility for someone to believe without someone preaching;” Rom. 10: 14. Paul said: “this is what we preach, and this is what you believed;” 1. Cor. 15:11.

Transition: This is what I have said so far: You do have a mission. Your mission is the same one as the first church had, and your mission is to be fulfilled in the same way that the first church fulfilled its mission.

The first church had a mission, they understood that the world was lost in the darkness of sin. That they had no communion with God, and that they did not know God and because of that they did not worship Him. So, the first church gladly received the task of preaching. A task that was appointed by Christ, a task that they fulfilled by making preaching a priority in their lives. By existing in this world to worship Christ through preaching the Word. The task has not changed. 2008 years later, the need for evangelism remains the same and the way to fulfill that need remains the same. Just as the eating process has not change in hundreds of years, the way to fulfill the need of Christ in the world remains the same. It is by preaching. Preaching the world of God just like Timothy, in season and out of season. You may say, well, I am not ready to preach the word of God yet. Your hesitation may be because you are misunderstanding your task. Your task is not to stand up in a pulpit on Sunday morning, and speak from the Word of God. Your task is to preach the world of God, regardless of the place or the circumstances. You are to make the love of God known to this world. Just like Martin Luther said; (paraphrasing) “preach always and if necessary open your mouth.” For the love of God has to be made known not only through what we say, but also through what we do.

You are to fulfill your mission of preaching; preaching everywhere there might be a lost soul. Just like D.L. Moody. Moody made a covenant with God that he would witness for Christ at least one person each day. One night, about ten o'clock, he realized that he had not yet witnessed; so he went out into the street and spoke to a man standing by a lamppost, asking him, "Are you a Christian?" The man flew into a violent rage and threatened to knock Moody into the gutter. Later, that same man went to an elder in the church and complained that Moody was "doing more harm in Chicago than ten men were doing good." The elder begged Moody to temper his zeal with knowledge. Three months later, Moody was awakened at the YMCA by a man knocking at the door. It was the man he had witnessed to. "I want to talk to you about my soul," he said to Moody. He apologized for the way he had treated Moody and said that he had had no peace ever since that night on Lake Street when Moody witnessed to him. Moody led the man to Christ and he became a zealous worker in the Sunday school.

Moody was ready to fulfill his mission at all times. He did not have to do it in a pulpit, he could do it from anywhere. Members of the first church preached while the church was together, individually, in outdoor places, in indoor places, in front of very important politicians, in front of very poor people. The reason: everyone had to hear the transforming message of Christ Jesus.

Transition: You are to fulfill your mission in the kingdom of God. You are to do it by preaching the world of God; and the reason is simple, the world is dieing without Christ.

I believe that if there has being a generation where Christ is so obviously needed, it is now. Now it is almost unnecessary to speak of the need of preaching, because you would think that the need is speaking for itself.

The number of Atheists in the world is increasing every day. The world's ignorance of Christ is growing all the time. I was watching a TV show from England called "Win Beadle's Money." It was created with the same concept of the American Show, Win Ben Stein's money. In the show, to win Beadle's money, the participant had answer more correct questions than Beadle. They both had to answer the same 10 questions. Guess what was one of the questions that Beadle missed: "in what river was Jesus baptized." He said Galilee. The truth is that he had no clue. **3:10** The increasing ignorance of this world is alarming. People do not know what ethics is, they don't know what honor and respect are as well as what righteousness and justice are, and that is because they do not know God. And you are the instrument that God wants to use so that they may know Him. Are you ready to be the one who is going to be used by God, either here or over seas? Are you going to be an instrument of glory for the Lord? I challenge you to not be the one who sits back and watches things happen, but to be the one who is used by the Lord to make things happen.

You my friend have a mission; and I encourage you to fulfill it.

Conclusion

Our daily bread in its Feb. 4, 1994 issue, wrote about Fritz Kreisler (1875-1962), the world-famous violinist, who earned a fortune from his concerts and compositions, but he generously gave most of it away. So, when he discovered an exquisite violin on one of

his trips, he wasn't able to buy it. Later, having raised enough money to meet the asking price, he returned to the seller, hoping to purchase that beautiful instrument. But to his great dismay it had been sold to a collector. Kreisler made his way to the new owner's home and offered to buy the violin. The collector said it had become his prized possession and he would not sell it. Greatly disappointed, Kreisler was about to leave when he had an idea. "Could I play the instrument once more before it is consigned to silence?" he asked. Permission was granted, and the great virtuoso filled the room with such heart-moving music that the collector's emotions were deeply stirred. "I have no right to keep that to myself," he exclaimed. "It's yours, Mr. Kreisler. Take it into the world, and let people hear it."

Even though music is so powerful, its power does not compare to the powerful Word of God. The Word of God is a treasure that we have, a treasure that we possess that has the power of bringing peace to a anguished world. To bring joy to a sad world, to bring life to a dead world. May we share the wonderful melodies of the message of salvation with the world, in the nations where Christ is not worshiped, where God almighty is not recognized as Lord. May we share the gospel of salvation with our neighbors that do not know about Christ. May fulfill our mission by not being selfish and sharing this power of God for salvation to the whole world. May we fulfill our mission of sharing the love of Christ. May you fulfill the mission of sharing the love of God.

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