

Church Organization

The Preacher

Introduction:

The church of Jesus Christ is authorized to be organized locally (Phil. 1:1). This lesson shall examine the authority for the located preacher who is found in the equation of Philippians 1:1 as a saint of God. The preacher does not occupy an official office as do the elder and deacon within the church; however, as members exist in the church so do preachers. This lesson shall examine the preacher and his relationship to the church of Christ.

I. Identifying the Preacher:

A. Preacher:

1. The word “preacher” (*kerux*) = “A herald (one who proclaims important news)... one who made proclamation in the public assemblies... he gives notice, announce... to command publicly” (LS 432). The word *kerux* is a noun and so identifies an individual’s title (cf. Friberg 636)..
2. Preachers in the NT:
 - a. Jesus was known as a preacher (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; Mk. 1:14, 39; Lk. 4:44; 8:1; 9:6).
 - b. All the apostles (Lk. 9:1-6).
 - c. Paul (I Tim. 2:7; II Tim. 1:11) (Note that the word preacher is defined as a public herald of truth at I Tim. 2:7).

B. Evangelist:

1. The word “*evangelist*” (*euaggelistes*) = “the bringer of good tidings, an evangelist, a preacher of the gospel... on who brings good news” (LS 322).
2. Evangelist in the NT:
 - a. Jesus was an evangelist (Lk. 4:43; 8:1).
 - b. Timothy (II Tim. 4:5).
 - c. Philip (Acts 21:8).

II. Qualifications of the Preacher:

- A. Must be found faithful (I Cor. 4:1-2).
- B. One who will preach truth in love that brethren may be edified (Eph. 4:15).

III. The Message of the Preacher:

- A. Truth (Gospel) (Acts 13; 20:26-27; 26:1ff; I Cor. 15).
- B. Some preach lies (Ezek. 13:17-19; II Pet. 2:1ff) and comfort sinners in their sin (Jer. 23:13-17; II Tim. 3:1ff).
- C. All are to be put to the test (I Jn. 4:1-6).

IV. Consequences of Preaching said Message:

- A. Some will believe (cf. Acts 2)
- B. Some will oppose and give looks of hatred to the words of the preacher who preaches truth (Jer. 18:18-23; Ezek. 3:8-9; II Cor. 1:3-11; II Tim. 4:1-5).
- C. The Word of God instructs the preacher to endure such treatment (II Tim. 4:5).

V. The Work of the gospel preacher:

- A. Studying and teaching God’s Word (I Tim. 2:7; 4:13).
- B. Challenge self and hearers to know God’s laws (Ezek. 22:26; II Tim. 2:15).
- C. Planting the seeds of the Gospel to the lost (I Cor. 1:21; 3:6-7).
- D. Teaching brethren not to go beyond the things that are written in God’s word (I Cor. 4:6).

- E. Edification (Eph. 4:11-12) (note: elders, preachers, apostles, prophets, and teachers all worked together in the church at Ephesus that brethren may be built up in the knowledge of Christ).
 - F. Put brethren in remembrance of their salvation (II Tim. 2:14).
 - G. To be a guardian of the truth (II Cor. 2:16-17; I Tim. 6:20).
 - H. “*Charge*” (*paraggello* = to transmit as a message... to give the word, give orders... to order recommend, exhort... to give orders” [LS 594]) false teachers who “*teach a different doctrine*” (I Tim. 1:3).
 - I. Consider three modes of the preacher’s work:
 1. “*Reprove*” (II Tim. 4:2) (*elegcho*) = “to disgrace, put to shame... to treat a speech with contempt... to put one to shame... to cross examine, question, for the purpose of disproving or reproof, to censure, accuse.” (LS 249).
 2. The preacher is to *rebuke or admonish* (II Tim. 4:2) (*epitimaō*) = “to tax with fault, rate, chide, rebuke, reprove, censure severely” (Thayer 245). “Censure, criticism, chastise” (LS 305).
 3. The preacher is to **exhort** with all **longsuffering** (II Tim. 4:2).
 - a. **To exhort** (*parakalesō*) = “to address, speak to, call to, call on, which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc” (Thayer 482).
 - b. “*Longsuffering*” = *Makrothumia* “patience, forbearance, long-suffering, slowness in avenging wrongs.”
 - c. Clearly the shaming, chiding, demanding of an explanation, taxing with fault, and severe censure is to be done with a spirit of patience that the subject of such chiding be not discouraged.
 - J. Help establish an eldership in local churches that false doctrines and teachers may be “*sharply reproofed*” (Titus 1:5, 10-13).
- VI. Preachers are to be compensated for their labor:**
- A. NT reveals that preachers were paid for their labor (I Cor. 9:6-16; I Tim. 5:17-18).
 - B. Some preached while laboring in other fields (Acts 18:3).
 - C. The preacher’s motivation for said labor is not fame and fortune but rather the souls of men (II Cor. 2:17; 11:9; II Thess. 3:8).
- VII. Brethren’s View toward Preachers:**
- A. Told to pray for the success of their work (II Thess. 3:1-2).
 - B. Brethren are never to elevate the preacher as though he were more important than others (I Cor. 1:12-16; 3:3-7; 4:6).
- VIII. Duration of Local work:**
- A. Should the preacher stay at one local church for 3, 7, or 24 years?
 - B. Note: Paul remained in Ephesus preaching for three years (Acts 20:31). Luke preached 7 years in Philippi (AD 51 – 58; Acts 16:40; 20:6). Philip was the evangelist in Caesarea for 24 years (AD 34-58; Acts 8:40; 21:8).
- IX. The Preacher and Elder’s relationship:**
- A. Examining who the preacher is can be summed up in the idea of being a steward of God’s word (cf. notes above). The preacher manages God’s word!
 - B. The elder in the body of Christ is the shepherd of God’s people on a local level. The elder uses God’s word as his guide to keep the church pure.
 - C. We have an example of a church that had elders while a local preacher worked with them in the NT. The church in Ephesus had elders (Acts 20:17; I Tim. 5:17-22). While Timothy was in Ephesus, Paul tells him, “*do the work of an evangelist*” even though elders were present (cf. II Tim. 4:5).

- D. Note that the elder has charge of the brethren with the word of God and the evangelist is to be a guardian of truth. There is a clear distinction made between the two's work. When the elder uses the evangelist as a tool in the local church for edification the church will certainly be strong. When, therefore, the elders choose a man to serve as an evangelist let them put the man to the most strenuous test (I Jn. 4:1, 6).

Conclusion:

Paul charged Timothy to "*preach the word*" (publicly proclaim the gospel) with a spirit of "*urgency*" (II Tim. 4:1-2). Timothy was to preach "*in season and out of season*" (4:2). The idea of preaching "*in season*" = "well timed, in season, seasonable, opportunely" (LS) or "Timely, opportune, seasonable, convenient" (Moulton 173). To preach "*out of season*" = "Ill-timed, unseasonable, inopportune" (LS 25). There would be times when the message was well received and other times when people did not want to hear the message. Brethren would say, "This is not the time for such a lesson." The reason for the "*charge*" to "*preach the word*" in the manner of II Tim. 4:2 was that the time had come when brethren would not "*endure the sound doctrine; but, having itching ears, will heap to themselves teachers after their own lust.*" To have "*itching ears*" is to have a desire to hear a message that made the audience feel good as opposed to convicting of sin. When the audience comes to this point they have turned from truth.

The preacher's charge is to keep the truth in all its purity. Salvation will come through this saving message and he is thereby to guard it and preach it (II Tim. 2:10). The preacher must thereby be a man of conviction and one who is not fearful of ungodly men (II Tim. 1:7-8). The preacher is one willing to take a stand against false teachers and their doctrines (I Tim. 1:3). The preacher is a soldier of Christ, one willing to be subject to the world's scorn and brethren's looks of hatred (II Tim. 2:3). He will not be one that is swayed by popular opinion that goes against truth (II Tim. 6:20). The Lord's church needs men who are willing to wage war against sin and help bring many to a hope of eternal salvation.