

The Work of an Evangelist

2 Timothy 4:5

Introduction

1. Throughout history men have constantly changed the definition and task of the evangelist or preacher.
2. As with all changes to the religious practices as defined in the scriptures, these were made in such a way that they exalt the man rather than God.
3. But the work of an evangelist is a function in the kingdom that God designed to serve Him, to serve the body as a whole and to glorify God.
4. Any man who takes on this responsibility must understand what God expects of him.

Discussion

I. The Evangelist's Charge.

- A. His charge defined in his purpose.
 1. The roll of the evangelist or preacher is made unmistakably clear in the writings of the apostle Paul.
 2. This work can easily be summed up in one word – SERVANT.
 3. Therefore, not matter how much we preachers exalted in today's religious world; we must not forget that his true place in God's kingdom is as a servant to all.
 4. Such was Paul's attitude of himself in 1 Cor. 9:19, "*For though I am free from all, I have made myself a servant of all, that I might with the more.*"
 5. This same attitude was also impressed upon Timothy in 2 Tim. 2:24-2.
- B. Yet as a servant the Evangelist's charge is very specific.
 1. A true servant, a faithful servant, is only faithful when he is fulfilling the specific tasks that his Lord gives him.
 2. Consider how a manner is run, for instance.
 - a. Paul illustrates this principle in 1 Corinthians 12 illustrating the church as a body (1 Cor. 12:15-19).
 - b. Let us say the evangelist is a hand, he cannot fulfill the same tasks as the eye.
 3. To charge someone is to "lay a command or injunction upon" (Webster's).
 4. A charge to an evangelist is a specific command given to that man.
- C. The evangelist's charge is clearly given in 2 Tim. 4:1-5.
 1. To preach the word. This is very fitting as we find the definition of "evangelist" is "messenger or bringer of good news."
 2. To reprove, rebuke and exhort with patience and teaching (2 Tim. 4:1-5).
 - a. His teaching must consist of the whole counsel of God: if the Bible says it then a faithful preacher will preach it!
 - b. This teaching is for the purpose of equipping the saints, or putting tools into their hands so that they too can do the Lord's work (Eph. 4:11-12).

- c. The word which he teaches is also to be filled with the Lord's instruction concerning morality, purity and righteousness.
3. Be watchful in all things. Only when he is watchful will he know which part of God's counsel to preach at any given.
4. Therefore, in order to accomplish the work of an evangelist he must both study to show himself approve, and be about doing the Lord's work.
5. He is also commanded to make his life an example to all so that they may see in him how they ought to live (1 Tim. 4:12, 15-16).
6. The evangelist is commanded to diligently study. For this he must realize that, even though God's word is perfect, he is not. He must therefore continually strive, with all the saints, to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord (2 Tim. 2:15; 2 Pet. 3:18).

II. Some Practical Lessons.

A. Learning the devotion needed to be a preacher.

1. We all know that it is easy to get caught up in things that pull us away from our responsibilities.
2. This same challenge exists for preachers as well.
3. That is why Paul instructed Timothy in 2 Tim. 2:3-4 to endure as a soldier.
4. This is a wonderful lesson for all men, not just preachers.
 - a. There are many things in this life that can pull us away from God if we let them (Our sins, money, entertainment, physical positions, selfish desire).
 - b. The only way any of us are able to remain faithful to God and to hold true to the call of the gospel is if we continually strengthen our devotion to Him and to doing His will.
5. For preachers, we must look to Paul's example who said, "Woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (1 Cor. 9:16).
6. He was willing to die for the work that God had set him to do (Acts 21:13).

B. The love one must have.

1. What does it take to be willing to give up anything and everything for the sake of preaching the gospel?
 - a. A great devotion to Christ, as we have discussed.
 - b. An immense love for all men, such as the love of Christ.
2. Therefore we see in Paul his love for all the churches (2 Cor. 11:28-29).
3. Something that I am striving to learn is that is that no matter how people treat us, whether they love us or hate us, the only way I can be a faithful servant of God is if I strive to have the same love for that person and Christ does.
 - a. Therefore Paul wrote, "*For the love of Christ compels us*" (2 Cor. 5:14ff).
 - b. Again, Jesus applies this principle to all of us as He says, "*But I say to you who hear: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you*" (Matt. 5:27-28).

C. His motivation

1. It is very easy for us to do things for reasons other than pleasing God.

- a. As a younger preacher it is not uncommon to hear, “well done, good sermons, I enjoyed that, you will go far.”
 - b. Not that I do not appreciate those comments.
 - c. But there are many who believe they have failed as a preacher when they do not receive such comments. These are as the Pharisees as Jesus describes them in Matt. 23:5-7.
2. 1 Thess. 2:4: The motivation of a faithful preacher ought to be to do the Lord’s will (as Jesus) and to attain to eternal life (as Paul in Phil. 3:8-11).
 3. Again, this same attitude is applied to all of us, as Jesus also says in Matt. 23:8-12.

D. Endurance.

1. A preacher must only preach God’s word. Depending on the people who hear him his message will either be glad tidings or strong rebuke.
2. But, in spite of men’s constant desire to downplay God’s word, the preacher must strive to have endurance to hold to the one true gospel message.
 - a. Titus 2:1: “*But as for you, speak the things which are proper for sound doctrine.*”
 - b. 2 Tim 1:13: “*Hold fast the pattern of sound words which you have heard from me, in faith and love which are in Christ Jesus.*”

Conclusion

1. The work of an evangelist is very clear. Let us therefore encourage all who set their hand to this work to strive for this standard.
2. And to remember that salvation must always be on his lips.

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