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**A Charge To Keep I Have**

(2nd Timothy 4:1-2 KJV)

*1I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;2Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine.*

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reaching and moreover leading a ministry as Pastor is a serious responsibility and a solemn charge. In fact neither of us should take this biblically ordained divine appointment lightly nor should the brethren. In Wesley’s words it is: A charge to keep I have, a God to glorify, a never-dying soul to save, and fit it for the sky. Help me to watch and pray, and still on Thee rely, O let me not my trust betray, but press to realms on high.

“A charge to keep I have” is based on the Old Testament passage in Leviticus 8:35-36. This text involves the ordination of Aaron and his sons in the consecration for the priesthood. But here in the text before us we read another “charge.” It is a charge for the person and I and all who preach the gospel must take personally. In 2 Timothy 4:1-2, the apostle Paul charged his young protégé that the task that he has beforehand carries a full bucket of accountability to fill empty hearts with the message of Salvation—and that’s to effectively, “Preach the Word” and to be instant in season and out of season.

To preach the Word is to clearly articulate the revealed will of God. God’s Word is Truth (John 17:17). And Truth is objective! Not subjective! Neither can one aspect of truth be isolated to the exclusion of the rest of the Word. For then you will find yourself on shaky ground spiritually and doctrinally. Indeed the totality of God’s Word comprises the Truth (Psalm 119:16). Preaching that benefits and blesses its hearers must be Bible-based and Christ-centered. And those who carry the word as earthly vessels with spiritual golden treasures tucked sweetly therein must give book, chapter and verse for all we say.

The old adage declares “speak where the Scriptures speak and be silent where the Scriptures are silent” is still relevant in the 21st century. And you must as Paul encourage the young preacher Timothy (2nd Timothy 2:15 KJV) *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

Preaching should appeal to the heart, emotions, mind, conscience and will of the hearer. Exhortation and encouragement are much needed today. There is an old adage that says preachers should “afflict the comfortable and comfort the afflicted.” It requires judgment to know what is needed at a given point in time, to a particular group of people willing to adhere to the Word of God!

In 2nd Timothy 4, Paul gives a charge to Timothy as he nears the end of his life. The book of 2nd Timothy is known as Paul’s swan song because it was the last book Paul had written before his life ended. Paul wanted to prepare the next generation for a better ministry than what he obtained. Paul is reminding Timothy of what he should do and to continue to do things that are right.

All people need to hear the gospel, and we are charged to preach God’s Word. Paul emphasizes that we need to reach lost people. Written about 67-68 A.D., Paul makes suggestions that can be applied to the time period we live in right now. In the first four verses, Paul is earnestly testifying, charging Timothy of all he had previously written to him as a foundation for all that the scriptures entail.

1. **The Adherence Of Paul**

(2nd Timothy 4:1 KJV)

*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;*

Paul charges Timothy before God and Jesus Christ who judges the quick and the dead and will come again. Paul is charging Timothy to preach the Word, to tell the divine truth, because he was a pastor at the church of Ephesus. Always be equipped, prepared, operational and ready to share the gospel with someone, not knowing when he’s going to have an opportunity. When opportunities arise, share the Word—and when opportunities lack go and find where the willing and unwilling vessels hangout.