



## Sermon, Sunday June 16, 2024 “Preach and Defend the Word of God”

**SCRIPTURE: 2 Timothy 3:14-17 & 2 Timothy 4:1-8** <sup>3:14</sup> But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it <sup>15</sup> and how from childhood you have known sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup> All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup> so that the person of God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. <sup>4:1</sup> In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: <sup>2</sup> proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage with the utmost patience in teaching. <sup>3</sup> For the time is coming when people will not put up with sound teaching, but, having their ears tickled, they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own desires <sup>4</sup> and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander away to myths. <sup>5</sup> As for you, be sober in everything, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully. <sup>6</sup> As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. <sup>7</sup> I have fought the good fight; I have finished the race; I have kept the faith. <sup>8</sup> From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

### Introduction: Apostle Paul's situation

Today is the fourth Sunday after Pentecost. Apostle Paul left several types of letters in the New Testament. First, it is a letter sent to a specific church, such as Corinthians or Philippians. Second, like Galatians, it is a letter sent to churches in a certain region. Third, like today's letter to Timothy, it is a letter sent to a specific individual.

In general, letters contain a lot of personal content, but 1 Timothy & 2 Timothy contains a lot of religious content for the public. With the heart of a father, Paul is teaching Timothy what the center of ministry is. New Testament scholars say that 2 Timothy is a letter written by Paul while he was imprisoned in Rome.

As Paul confessed in verse 6 of chapter 4 of today's text, he was thinking about his own death. At the time, Paul was imprisoned, and the fledgling Christianity was in a chaotic situation where it could not take root. Christians, at that time, were defenselessly exposed to many worldly ideologies. Therefore, many people easily strayed from the essence of the gospel. In this situation, the person that Apostle Paul could rely on for the gospel was Timothy.

### Body: Timothy, a man of the Bible

The story of Timothy becoming Paul's disciple is recorded in Acts 16:1-5. Apostle Paul leaves Barnabas on his second missionary journey and discovers Timothy in Lystra (Lystra was a city in central Anatolia, now part of present-day Turkey.) Timothy was a young man with a good reputation among believers in the area. When



Paul took him away, he circumcised him. This was to prevent the Jews from criticizing Timothy because his father was Greek. From then on, Timothy grows up to be Paul's disciple, co-worker, and Paul's most trusted successor.

In today's text, Paul calls Timothy a 'man of the Bible.' As mentioned in today's text 3:15, Timothy learned Jewish piety and the early Christian gospel from his maternal grandmother and mother from an early age. However, the Bible that Timothy read at the time was not the modern 66 books of the Old and New Testaments, but part of the Old Testament. This is because, at that time, the New Testament was not completed in the form it is today. In fact, we do not know exactly which Bible Paul is referring to. However, the Bible Timothy read was part of the Old Testament, which was recognized as authoritative.

In today's text, it is important that the standard by which Paul highly evaluates Timothy is related to the Bible. We can learn about Paul's attitude toward the Bible in today's text, chapter 3, verses 15-16. The reason why it was important to Paul that Timothy had learned the Bible well from a young age was because the Bible helps people believe in Jesus Christ and gives them the wisdom to attain salvation.

Ultimately, people who deeply know the Bible come to believe in Jesus Christ. However, there may be some who have doubts about this, because, at that time, all Jews learned the Bible from a young age. So you may be wondering why there were more people who did not believe in Jesus Christ than those who believed in him.

Of course, reading the Bible does not mean that everyone will unconditionally believe in the Lord. If we do not realize the central truth of the Bible, we cannot have faith in Jesus.

Even so, please do not misunderstand the value of the Bible. The Bible given to us contains the Word of God so abundantly and completely that it cannot be compared to anything else in the world. However, the important thing here is that we must properly know what the truth of the Bible is. For this, we must be able to interpret the Bible correctly. And the power to interpret the Bible correctly comes from accurately knowing Christian doctrine.

In today's text, the center of Christian doctrine is Jesus Christ. Therefore, we can properly understand the Bible by properly knowing and believing in Jesus Christ.

So, in today's text, Apostle Paul commands Timothy to firmly defend the word of God and the teachings of the gospel. Because this is the only way to maintain our faith.

Do these words of mine sound too obvious to you? However, keeping the Lord's word in our daily lives is not simple.

This is because people are more likely to focus on their own personality or religious feelings rather than the word of the Lord in their daily lives. Among those who attend church, there are those who come simply for the purpose of gaining psychological stability. While some people use religious life as a means of religious fulfillment or honor.

What we must guard against here is the act of basing our faith on things other than the word of the Lord.

Those who correctly learn and keep the word of the Lord are those who have gained freedom through Jesus Christ. These people do not use the religious freedom given to us through the Lord as an opportunity for self-indulgence, they study the Word more deeply and train themselves according to the Word. These people are not lazy in reading and learning the Bible. We must not forget that this godly life comes not from our religious accomplishments, but from true obedience to the Lord and the Word.

So, Paul tells Timothy in chapter 4 verse 2: **'Proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable; convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching.'**



Apostle Paul speaks of the urgency of spreading the gospel in this passage, because there comes a time when people do not want to hear the word of the gospel.

In fact, both in the past and now, people are preoccupied with what satisfies their ears. However, it is not easy for us to discern what this is. We can easily discern what is blatantly evil but, it is not easy to discern what comes to us under the disguise of godliness.

So Jesus said in **John 5:39-40**: **‘You diligently study the Scriptures because you think that by them you possess eternal life. These are the Scriptures that testify about me, yet you refuse to come to me to have life.’**

In the Gospel, the Pharisees and Sadducees asked for a sign from heaven to test Jesus. Regarding this, Jesus said: **‘A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah.’ (Matthew 16:4)**

Paul, who was aware of this spiritual situation in the world, tells Timothy, ‘But you, keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry.’ This means that even if people follow lies rather than the truth, those who believe in Jesus must endure suffering and complete the mission of spreading the gospel.

When many people think of spreading the gospel to the world, however, they mainly think of evangelism, church planting, and overseas missions. Of course, these are things the church must do. But, before these things, we must be able to reject things that are contrary to the gospel.

So what is opposed to the gospel? According to today's text, it is about people making up stories and living according to stories that satisfy their ears. Paul says that refusing these things means listening to the truth.

However, it is not easy to live if we listen to the truth. So, Paul tells Timothy to always be sober and preach the gospel. This means that even if Christian's face suffering, they should not give in to it and should protect the word of God.

This command from Paul also applies to us today. We must be able to defend God's Word in a world that cannot tell what truth is and what is made up.

In today's text, chapter 4, verse 1, Paul summarizes the words we must protect. That is, Jesus Christ will judge the dead and the living, and the Lord will return, judge the world, and rule the world with life. A person who clearly recognizes and believes this fact and is waiting will not turn a blind eye to something that is not the truth.

**Conclusion: I hope you will do your duty to keep the Lord's word.**

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ! Now let's summarize today's message. **Galatians 2:20 says: 'I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.'** This kind of life brings us freedom and protects and frees us from all legal life and thoughts.

So **Galatians 2:16 says: ‘know that a man is not justified by observing the law, but by faith in Jesus Christ. So we, too, have put our faith in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by observing the law, because by observing the law no one will be justified.’**

Please protect this word of God. Apostles Paul and Timothy lived that way, and countless forefathers of faith over the past 2,000 years of Christian history have lived that way. This Word of God will protect us, and through us, many people will be led into the new world of the Word of God. Amen!

