



# Preparing Souls To Serve The Lord

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## The Word of God, Preparing Preachers, and Supporting Students

By  
Brian R. Kenyon

As we prepare for the beginning of our thirty-fourth year of training preachers, several thoughts come to mind as to the reason we exist, the preparation we offer, and the needs that we have due to the need that all have for hearing the Gospel (Rom. 10:13-17). Reflection of this will center around three points found in Second Timothy 3:14-4:5.

### The Word of God

First, *the word of God must be learned*. Paul said to Timothy, "But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus" (2 Tim. 3:14-15). It was imperative for Timothy to live his life based upon the word of God he had been taught. The apostle Paul (cf. 2 Tim. 2:2) and Timothy's mother and grandmother ("from a child thou hast known" cf. 2 Tim. 1:5) were involved in his training.

The reason why the word of God must be learned is given in the next two verses, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished

unto all good works" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). The entire, authentic and correctly translated, Bible is "God breathed" (the meaning of the Greek word translated "is given by inspiration of God"). The Bible is from the very mind of God and is, therefore, "profitable." Since the Bible *completely* furnishes the person of God for *every* good work, what other source does humanity need to know God and His will? The answer, of course, is "None!" Man-made creeds, catechisms, "latter day" revelations, religious "constitutions," and other supposedly divine writings are absolutely unnecessary—and, in fact, detrimental—to seeking God. If these contain less than the Bible, then they do not contain enough; if they contain more than the Bible, then they contain too much; if they contain exactly all that the Bible contains, then they are the Bible. We must accept the Bible and the Bible alone for all religious authority. Indeed, the word of God must be learned!

Second, *the word of God must be taught*. Implied in the fact that the word of God must be learned is the fact that the word of God must be taught. Paul told Timothy, "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; Preach

the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:1-2). One reason revealed in this passage why the Word must be preached is because Judgment Day is coming! Jesus came the first time to save the world from sin (Jn. 3:16-17; 12:46-48; Lk. 19:10), but when He comes again, it will be to judge the world (Heb. 9:27-28; Jn. 5:25-29; Mt. 7:21-23). Preaching prepares souls for Judgment Day!



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Furthermore, note the object which is to be preached: "the word," not human creeds or philosophies. Timothy was to preach the inspired Scriptures (2 Tim. 3:16). Note some synonyms in this context that will help us understand what is to be preached: "holy scriptures" (2 Tim. 3:15), "scripture" (2 Tim. 3:16), "the word" (2 Tim. 4:2), "sound doctrine" (2 Tim. 4:3), and "the truth" (2 Tim. 4:4). When preachers preach this and people accept it, souls will be ready for Judgment!

Third, *the word of God must be continued in*. Paul already told Timothy that preaching is to "be in season, out of season" (literally, "when the time is right, when the

time is not right"). Paul further explained, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables" (2 Tim. 4:3-4). Clearly, Paul's words ring true in our generation. The religious world in general, and, unfortunately, some churches of Christ, are no longer interested in "sound doctrine," calling it legalistic, old fashioned, and irrelevant. Scores of individuals have turned away from "the truth," basing their religion instead upon the self-proclaimed, totally unproven tall-tales and fantasies of false religion.

In the midst of a world like this, the temptation is great to turn away. Thus, Paul's admonition, "But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (2 Tim. 4:5). Preachers must have enough understanding, conviction, and love for "the truth" to see them through the difficult times that will inevitably come.

### Preparing Men to Preach

Since 1969 the Florida School of Preaching has been training preachers because of and based upon the truths surveyed above. Although times have changed, the word of God has not (cf. Rom. 15:4; Jude 3; Rev. 22:18-19). Training men to preach must involve teaching them the word of God (2 Tim. 3:14-4:5) and how to defend it (1 Thess. 5:21; 1 Pet. 3:15). Adequately preparing men to preach also involves more than mere "book work." There are things that preachers must learn about preaching that are not found in textbooks, but which are best taught in person by those who have been in the field a great portion of their lives. Every instructor at the school has been (and most still are) involved in full-time

preaching. This is one reason why the board has not consented to correspondence or on-line classes.

In addition to their training in the word of God by those who have lived in preaching, students are taught the fundamentals of English grammar and composition. Communicating the Gospel is important in every aspect. Because the technology today is a great tool of communication, students are also taught how to use computers in local work and evangelism. When men complete their training here, they have a solid foundation on which to build and evaluate any further formal education they may pursue.

Finding men to train remains one of our biggest challenges. Proportionately consistent with the rate that many in the church become complacent and disinterested in the word of God is the difficulty in recruiting students and finding support for them. This is why it is imperative for those who still love God and His word to help us find men to train. Like the Christians in Lystra and Iconium, let us keep an eye open for men within our congregations who show the desire and character necessary for preaching (cf. Timothy, Acts 16:1-3).

### Supporting Students

The biggest hindrance (in my estimation) to finding more men to train is the lack of financial support while they are in school. Men decide in all stages of life to become preachers. Some, like Timothy, are young when they decide to preach, while others, like Saul of Tarsus, are well into their secular careers before deciding to preach. Put ourselves in the position of a man who decides he wants to preach. Could we right now leave our secular job and spend the next two years in intensive training? How about if we had two years of support to provide for our family while we trained? The difference is obvious.

Next to being a Scriptural

elder (1 Tim. 3:1-7; Tit. 1:6-9) and, perhaps, being a godly parent, is there any more important work to be done on earth than that of preaching the Gospel? Surely, we can understand the importance of training preachers! Are preacher students worthy of support? Certainly so (cf. 1 Cor. 9:9-14). If our military sees the need to financially support recruits while they are in "boot camp," then surely we can see the need to financially support those who are training for the more nobler task of preaching the Gospel.

We need your help in finding and supporting full-time students. I was encouraged by the response given at our 2002 lectureship. Just four months after September 11, with uncertain finances, and with markets (and contributions) way down, concerned brethren contributed enough money to offset our lectureship expenses. Yet, when times are prosperous, we have trouble breaking even. The difference is that the faithful will rise to the occasion when they see the need and believe in the work, no matter the outside circumstances. Brethren, the need for more people to hear the Gospel is present, and the work we do in training preachers is legitimate, necessary, and right. If the faithful will not help in finding and training preachers, then who will?



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TRAINING PREACHERS SINCE 1969

**REGISTRATION SCHEDULE****FLORIDA SCHOOL OF PREACHING**

FALL SEMESTER Begins August 19, 2002

DATE \_\_\_\_\_ REGISTRATION FEE: \$5.00 \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ SS# \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

DATE OF BIRTH \_\_\_\_\_ SPOUSE'S NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE # \_\_\_\_\_

## PLEASE CHECK CLASSES DESIRED

HOURS	COURSE	INSTRUCTOR	CREDIT
Monday			
_____ 8:30 - 12:00	Hebrews & Galatians 21343	Davis	3
_____ 1:00 - 4:15	Intro to Old Testament 31379	Kenyon	3
Tuesday			
_____ 8:30 - 12:00	Old Testament History 21339	Stearsman	3
_____ 1:00 - 4:15	English Grammar 11324	Kenyon	3
Wednesday			
_____ 8:30 - 12:00	Life of Paul 21362	Stearsman	3
_____ 1:00 - 4:15	Topical Studies 11344	Kenyon	3
Thursday			
_____ 8:30 - 12:00	Ezekiel & Daniel 21314	Stearsman	3
_____ 1:00 - 4:15	Song Leading 11333	Davidson	3
Friday			
_____ 8:30 - 12:00	World Religions 31375	Blackman	3
_____ 1:00 - 4:15	Sermon on the Mount 31380	Kenyon	3

Extension Classes 2002-2003, Evenings, 7:00 pm to 9:30 pm

**AUBURNDALE, FL**

Orange Street church of Christ Building  
Thursday 863-967-1757

Fall 2002: Hebrews & Galatians 21343 .....Bob Bauer  
Spring 2003: Denominational Dogmas 12331 .....Bob Bauer

**HIGH SPRINGS, FL**

High Springs church of Christ Building  
Monday 904-454-2930

Fall 2002: Revelation 21359 .....Gene Burgett  
Spring 2003: Genesis-Exodus 12309 .....Gene Burgett

**JACKSONVILLE, FL**

Wesconnett church of Christ Building  
Thursday 904-771-5075

Fall 2002: Life of Christ 11317 .....James Colwell  
Spring 2003: Hermeneutics 12301 .....Steve Atnip

**SARASOTA, FL**

Midway church of Christ Building  
Tuesday 941-355-6785

Fall 2002: General Epistles 21349 .....Mike Elledge  
Spring 2003: Minor Prophets 22346 .....Mike Elledge

**WARNER ROBINS, GA**

church of Christ Building, 1947 Watson Blvd.  
Tuesday 478-922-3056

Fall 2002: The Life of Paul 21362 .....Gene Stilwell  
Spring 2003: The Pentateuch 22341 .....Gene Stilwell

*Return Service Requested*

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