2 Timothy
Last Words, Lasting Words
Preach the Word
2 Timothy 4:1-5

Home Group Questions

- Read our text, 2 Timothy 4:1-5, and make observations. What challenges you? What convicts you? What inspires you?

- Yet again we think about the difference between a theology of glory and a theology of the cross. Look at the definitions below and interpret the text through both theological lenses. I am not sure how a theologian of glory would make this text fit into his/her system.

- The Sinclair Ferguson podcast *Things Unseen* focused this past week (beginning on September 14) on the topic of preaching. It would be good for you to subscribe to this podcast and listen to the (approximately) six-minute talks from this past week, especially the first one, "How Important is Preaching?"

    - Would you agree with Ferguson's claim that the Reformers (Martin Luther, John Calvin, Heinrich Bullinger) understood correctly when they claimed that the preaching of the word is the primary means of spiritual formation, above, even, our personal Bible reading or neighborhood Bible study?
    - Read 1 Corinthians 1:18-25 (the last text in the Scripture notes below) and discuss why the gospel and the preaching of the gospel, although counterintuitive and counter-cultural, are necessary and fruitful for those "who have ears to hear?"

- Without revealing identities, how have you seen people who once held orthodox beliefs develop itching ears (or "turned their ears away") from gospel truth to receive and accept false doctrine? What were the appeals and traps that lured them away? Have you ever been tempted to turn away? What kept you tethered to the Lord?

- Spend time reflecting on the application points from the sermon and then close in prayer with the truth of our text on your mind:

1. Live as though the Lord is present, because he is
2. Pray for the faithful preaching of the word, pray for faithful preachers, and pray that we will all be eager to hear the word
3. Live the gospel and always be ready to share it, whether it is convenient or not

Sermon Notes

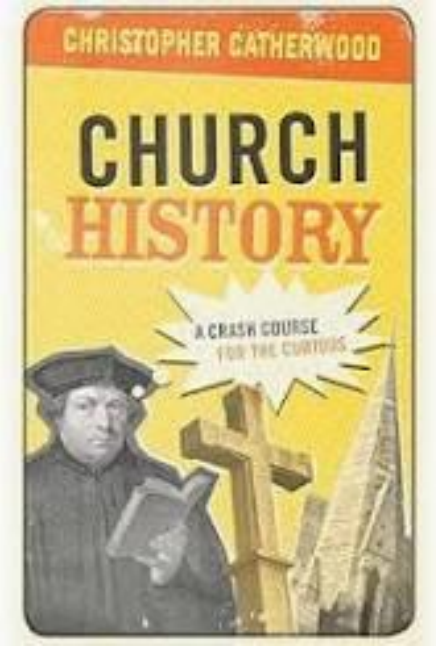
A Theology of Glory: A theology of glory presupposes that I can achieve glory (salvation) by my good works. "A theology of glory expects total success, finding all the answers, winning all the battles, and living happily ever after. The theology of glory is all about my strength, my power, and my works." (Gene Veith)

A Theology of the Cross: Our sin has separated us from God. Since we can never undo the wrong we have done, and since our very nature is sinful from birth, it is impossible to reach God through our own efforts. Because he loved us, God made a way for us to live with him eternally by sending his Son to live the life we could not live and die the death that we deserved. God meets us, in Jesus, at the cross. The life we live as followers of Jesus is a cross-centered life – we are dead to self and alive to God.

Sinclair Ferguson Podcast – listen to the five latest six-minute messages (beginning September 14) about preaching.



Excellent short book for an introduction to church history:



Scripture Associated with the Message

James 3:1 Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that **we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.**

Hebrews 13:17 Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as **those who will have to give an account.** Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word.

When Paul used the word that is translated **preach** or **proclaim**, it was almost always tied with the preaching of the gospel. Consider the following two passages:

1 Corinthians 1:22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but **we preach Christ crucified,** a stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Acts 17:10 The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. 11 Now these Jews were

more noble than those in Thessalonica; they received the word with all eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so.

Galatians 2:2 I went up because of a revelation and set before them (though privately before those who seemed influential) **the gospel that I proclaim** among the Gentiles, in order to make sure I was not running or had not run in vain.

Ephesians 6:18 . . . praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

Matthew 11:15 He who has ears to hear, let him hear.

Galatians 3:1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? **It was before your eyes (when Paul preached to them) that Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified.** 2 Let me ask you only this: Did you receive the Spirit by works of the law or by hearing with faith? 3 Are you so foolish? Having begun by the Spirit, are you now being perfected by the flesh? 4 Did you suffer so many things in vain—if indeed it was in vain? 5 Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you do so by works of the law, or by hearing with faith— 6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"?

2 Corinthians 2:15 For **we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing, 16 to one a fragrance from death to death, to the other a fragrance from life to life. Who is sufficient for these things?** 17 For we are not, like so many, peddlers of God's word, but as men of sincerity, as commissioned by God, in the sight of God we speak in Christ.

1 Corinthians 1:18 For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written,

"I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart."
20 Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? **21 For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe.** 22 For Jews demand signs and Greeks seek wisdom, 23 but we preach Christ crucified, a

stumbling block to Jews and folly to Gentiles, 24 but to those who are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.