



## CrossRoads Notes:

Turn Your Bibles to 2 Timothy 2:15

*Title: The Proclaimer's Responsibility*

*Theme: When Preaching is Truth Proclaimed*

*Series: Essentials for Church Growth*

Read 2 Timothy 2:15

**Introduction:** *Bruse Waltke tells the story about the time his wife was in college and in her economics class they chose to do a test involving two white mice.*

If church attendees are not offered the milk and wheat bread of God's Word they become listless in service to Christ, to the Body of Christ and unable to fulfill their part of the "Great Commission." When people choose not feed upon the Word of God and choose to feed the flesh what it wants, live in the world's view and listen to the lies of the devil, they become irritable, aggravating to be around and lack strength to fulfill God's ultimate plan for them.

Christians who feed upon the Word of God are raised up by the Lord Jesus Christ to spiritual health. Their walk with the Lord is vibrant and alive, full of hope and vision even in lean times. As we catch the truth that God's Word is food for the spiritual heart we begin to understand that it is imperative that preachers proclaim the whole wheat bread of God's Word.

**Proposition:** I would propose to you that it is the responsibility of preachers to proclaim and teach the Word of God in a way that insures there is healthy milk and meat for the children of God to feed upon. Jesus said, "It is written, 'Man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4)

**Interrogative Sentence:** *Just what should be seen in the spiritual heart of the proclaimer of God's Word? What Holy Spirit gift does he possess? What is his charge and who gets the glory for what is done through him?*

**Transitional Sentence:** *The first truth to grasp in the "Proclaimer's Responsibility" is to have a witness of the Holy Spirit that the person who preaches the Word of God is born again. John 3:3 says, "I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born again. Ezekiel 36:26-27 says, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put My Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep My laws."*

What the Holy Sprit wants you to grasp is "born again." It is of great importance for this spiritual birth to take place in the man who stands behind the pulpit. The preacher

must have a spiritual rebirth so he can proclaim the truths of God, live in fellowship with God the Father, Christ the Savior and walk in step with the Holy Spirit.

A modern day authority on Judaism, C. F. Moore, writes, "The Pharisees were a party whose endeavor... was to live in strict accordance with the Law... [and] interpret [through] study [of the expositions] of the Scribes, and... to bring the people to a similar conformity." Josephus, a contemporary Jewish historian describes them as, "A certain sect of Jews that appear more religious than others, and seem to interpret the laws more accurately." (The New International Dictionary of the Bible)

Think of this. In John chapter 3 we read of an expert of the law of God, a studier of the writings of the Scribes, and we read of him coming to Christ in the dark of the night. In his discussion with Jesus about the Kingdom of God, the Lord said to Nicodemus, "You are Israel's teacher... and you do not understand these things..." about being born again? You see Nicodemus had asked, "How can a man be born after he is old?" (John 3:4)

Nicodemus was not the only Pharisee who knew the law of God and yet had no true revelations of the written law. In the Book of Acts we read of the Pharisee who was once Saul, (Acts 7:58; 13:9) but became the Apostle Paul after Christ came into his spiritual heart and life. (Acts 9:17)

The Bible teaches that once Paul received the Holy Spirit of Christ he received true revelation of Scripture and a zeal for the Lord burst forth with illumination. After Ananias laid hands upon Paul, who was Saul at that time, his eyesight was restored, he received the Holy Spirit, and was baptized. (Acts 9:18; Matthew Henry Commentary; The Bible Knowledge Commentary; The New Bible Commentary; A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory; Who's Who in the Bible; Thru the Bible) Paul's extraordinary theological understanding now had Holy Spirit illumination enabling him to have the right relationship with Christ. The Bible says he, "...grew more and more powerful and baffled the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ." (Acts 9:22)

A college degree from the most up to date Theological Bible School in America will not enable the preacher to catch the heart of God as he studies the Holy Scriptures. Revelation can only begin once a sinner has come to Christ. All preachers must be born again.

"Again" (*anóthen*) means born from above. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary; Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament; Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains; The New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries) Being born again causes the repentant sinner to begin a new relationship with God the Father and Christ His Son, and walk in step with the Holy Spirit.

The first question that should be asked of anyone who wants to preach and teach God's Word is, "Are you born again?" Too often it is just assumed by church attendees that a person holding credentials or ordination papers with some denomination or fellowship have the anointing to preach God's Word. This is a dangerous assumption.

**Transitional Sentence:** The proclaimer's first priority is to be truly born again before he stands behind the pulpit. His next responsibility is to exercise his Holy Spirit gift to "prophesy." Romans 12:6 says, "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith." "Prophesying" (propheteia) here is "...not primarily prediction but communication of revealed truth that will both convict and build up the hearers." (The Expositors Bible Commentary) It is a special gift that enables the preachers (Ephesians 4:11) to expound the Holy Scriptures. (Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon) This Holy Spirit gift enables the proclaimer of God's Word to declare the Lord's purpose, whether by reproof and admonishing the wicked, or comforting the hurting and afflicted. (Enhanced Strong's Lexicon; The Pulpit Commentary) This gift enables the preacher to make known the will of God, which is designed to influence men. (Barnes Notes)

All Christians are to consider the gift of prophesying as an important endowment for edifying the Body of Christ and for the purpose of proclaiming God's truth to those who are without Christ. It is those who have Holy Spirit revelation of this gift who get the most out of the service where the preaching and teaching of God's Word is proclaimed. Your heart attitude toward the Holy Spirit given gift of "prophesying" is what determines how much you get out of the preaching and teaching of God's Word. Some go to church and Bible studies hungry and others see the preaching and teaching of God's Word as just a part of the service that needs to be tolerated. It is the Holy Spirit illuminated who grasp the truths of the Sunday morning preaching service and catch the life changing truths of a certain Bible study.

As the Holy Spirit examines your heart today, what does He find your thoughts focused on during the preaching and teaching of God's Word? Can observers of your life say, "That is a child of God who loves to hear the Word of God proclaimed and grasps the truths of solid Bible studies!"

The gift of prophesying is to be exercised in accordance to the faith of the proclaimer who is speaking forth the message. "Faith" (*pistis*) here is what can be believed, trusted. (DBL Greek) A preacher of God's Word is not governed by his emotions or by his love to preach, but by the leading of the Holy Spirit as the Word of God is revealed to his mind and illuminated into his spiritual heart.

Those who prophesy are to interpret divine revelation according to the strength, clearness, fervor and qualities of faith bestowed upon them by the Holy Spirit of Christ. The preacher's conviction on how and when to preach and teach God's Word comes from their relationship with Christ. The doctrine of the preacher, what he believes, and the truths of the message proclaimed must be in proportion to the doctrine of faith as revealed in both the Old and New Testament. (Word Studies in the New Testament; Meyer; Matthew Henry Commentary; The Expositors Bible Commentary)

God changes a man's spiritual heart, but he uses the personality He originally gave him. God does not want everyone to preach and teach the same and use the same methods. There are prophets like Pastor David Wilkerson, communicators like Ken Davis and there are great teachers like Dr David Jeremiah. These great proclaimers of truth were not all trained by the same type of ministry.

Proclaimers who want to enjoy proclaiming truth and be seen faithful in their calling will watch, listen and prayerfully consider who Christ wants them to learn from. The last thing a preacher would want to do is take a poll from the congregation and find out who their favorite TV preacher or author is. Any preacher who would do that will be torn to bits, confused, frustrated and out of the ministry in no time.

The man who will be used of God to proclaim the truths of the written Word has the Holy Spirit gift of “prophesying.” He will exercise his gift through the faith given to him through God’s grace and is taught of others who have proved faithful in their ministries.

**Transitional Sentence:** *Preachers who preach truth have the gift to prophesy and they know the charge to the soldier of Christ.* 2 Timothy 4:1-4 says, “In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of His appearing and His kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths.”

In the charge, “Preach the Word!” “Preach” (kerússo) means to especially preach, publish or announce religious truth, the gospel with its attendant privileges and obligations, in this gospel dispensation. It is to proclaim publicly after the manner of a herald always with authority such as to beckon people to listen and obey what is proclaimed. (The Complete Word Study Dictionary; Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament; Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon: Wuest Word Studies in the Greek New Testament)

The proclaimer is to always be ready to share God’s Word in fervency of spirit, taking heed of sin, call sinners to repentance, believe in what he preaches and live a life of holiness. Proclaimers must preach in and out of season, let no opportunity slip and not shift his duty to someone else when it is his opportunity to proclaim. (Matthew Henry Commentary; The Bible Knowledge Commentary; Tyndale Concise Bible Commentary)

Preachers and Christians who prayerfully seek to handle the Word of God correctly are God’s messengers and neglecting to heed to the message they proclaim has serious consequences.

The Holy Spirit has two questions for you. “Does the church you attend have proclaimers who preach the Word?” When it is clear that the preacher or teacher is prayerfully administering the Word of God, “What is your attitude and response?”

**Transitional Sentence:** *The preacher is not to present book reviews, not politics, not economics, and not the current topics of the day.* He is to preach the Word or step down from the pulpit. The last truth to grasp today is proclaimers of God’s truth do not take glory upon themselves. 1 Corinthians 3:7-9 says, “So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building.”

Preachers are only the Lord's instruments, they do not bring sinners to Christ, enable people to believe, empower Christians to be successful in the Great Commission or bless the people of God. Only the Lord can do that. Preachers enjoy victories in the Lord's battle for the souls of mankind only when God brings about those victories. Holy Spirit illuminated preachers say as the Apostle Paul, "I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that He considered me faithful, appointing me to His service." (1 Timothy 1:12)

**In Closing:** *"Preaching is Truth Proclaimed" only when those who teach what the Bible says are born again. When preachers exercise the gift of "prophesying," when preachers are obedient to their charge, "Preach the Word" and when preachers preach is a way that brings glory to God, to Christ and under the anointing of the Holy Spirit.*

Preachers who enjoy the privilege of proclaiming truth are those who give ear to what the Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "...devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress. Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers." (1 Timothy 4: 13-16)

What American churches need is not preachers ordained by denominations and fellowships, but shepherds who know Christ personally as Savior and Lord, who have the anointing of the Holy Spirit to preach, who fulfill their charge to preach the Word of God and who enjoy the Lord strengthening them for service unto Christ Jesus.