



*A publication of Living Water 414:*

# The Amerindian Messenger

*Gospel and ministry helps for Amerindian Christians in Guyana*

Fall 2019

Volume 2, Issue 1

## The Work of the Preacher

### Issue Theme:

### The Preacher and His Work

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- The Example of the Preacher
- The Support of the Preacher

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“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine” (2 Timothy 4:2). In this verse, Paul describes to Timothy, in a very simple way, the work of the preacher. The foundation of the preacher’s work is preaching—“preach the word.” A preacher does not have the right or authority to preach anything except the word of God. While everyone has an opinion, God’s “opinion” is what matters.

Paul also told Timothy to be “instant in season, out of season.” In other words, Paul wanted Timothy to be prepared to preach no matter the circumstances. “In season” and “out of season” is familiar to those who expect to find fruit growing at certain times of the year. On one occasion during Jesus’ ministry, he looked for some figs to eat from a fig tree as he was traveling. The Bible

says, “And seeing from afar a fig tree having leaves, He went to see if perhaps He would find something on it. When He came to it, He found nothing but leaves, for it was not the season for figs” (Mark 11:13). Unlike the fig tree, Paul wanted Timothy to be ready to preach “in season” (when folks were willing to listen to God’s word) or “out of season” (when folks were not willing to listen to God’s word). The message of God’s word does not change depending on the willingness of the audience to hear it.

Paul then gives Timothy 3 short and simple commands: “reprove, rebuke, exhort.” “Reprove and rebuke” are negative in their nature. The word “reprove” has to do with bringing a wrong committed to the attention of the one who committed the wrong. “Rebuke” has to do with urging the person to correct the wrong. “Exhort”

is a positive command and has to do with encouraging a person. Each of these tasks are necessary for a preacher of God’s word.

Finally, Paul tells Timothy to accomplish these tasks “with all long suffering and doctrine.” Long suffering refers to patience. Preachers can sometimes get discouraged when they go about the tasks of “reproving, rebuking, and exhorting” when they do not see results from their efforts. However, it is important to perform these tasks with patience and teaching which is another word for “doctrine.”

Second Timothy 4:2 is a good summation of the work of the preacher. Although there is certainly more that goes into his work, this verse describes the heart of the preacher’s work.

*Preach the word . . . (2 Timothy 4:2)*

## The Example of the Preacher

To the young preacher Timothy, Paul writes, “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12). Even though Timothy was young, these same areas are important for all preachers to consider when it comes to their examples. A preacher must live what he preaches or else he will have a hard time talking to others about Jesus.

The first area that Paul told Timothy to “be an example” in is “in word.” “In word” would refer to the way a preacher talks in his everyday life. The Bible has much to say about the Christian’s speech in general, so it is important for the preacher to be careful with his words (see Matthew 12:36-37; Ephesians 4:29; Colossians 3:8; 4:6; James 3:1-12).

The second area mentioned by Paul is “conduct.” “Conduct” or “manner of life” goes together with speech. People who use filthy language live filthy lives. After all, people usually talk about doing something before they do it. Those who talk about good things do good things, and those who talk about bad things do bad things. It is important for Christians to live in such a way that they let their “light shine before men” to let others “see your good works and glorify your Father which is heaven” (Matthew 5:16). If such is true of all Christians, then it is certainly true of preachers.

The third area mentioned by Paul is “love.” Yes, preachers must be an example in how to love one another. Jesus said, “By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). No one should understand love better than the Christian. After all, a Christian is one who treats others the way he or she wants to be treated (Matthew 7:12). A Christian is one who thinks of others before self (Philippians 2:3-5). A preacher both preaches this kind of love and lives this kind of love.

The fourth area mentioned by Paul is “spirit.” In this verse, “spirit” has to do with the attitude of a person. An American automobile maker by the name of Henry Ford once said, “Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t--you’re right.” What did he mean? He was talking about attitude. In a similar way, a preacher must have the right kind of attitude in preaching the Gospel. He must speak the truth, but he must also speak it in love (Ephesians 4:15). He must deal with positive things and negative things with an attitude of love and humility.

The fifth area Paul mentions is “faith.” Do preachers really believe what they are preaching? It would not make sense for them to be preaching if they did not. In Paul’s second letter to Timothy, he mentioned some of the things that Timothy looked to in Paul’s own example. Paul’s “faith” was

one of those areas that Timothy looked to as an example: “But you have carefully followed my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, love, perseverance . . .” (2 Timothy 3:10). The faith of the preacher should set an example for others to follow.

The sixth and final area Paul mentions to Timothy is “purity.” It is interesting that Paul used the same word when he was talking to Timothy about how to treat younger Christian women in the church. He writes, “Do not rebuke an older man, but exhort him as a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, with all purity” (1 Timothy 5:1-2). A preacher must be careful with his treatment, thoughts, and actions with females. If preachers think of women “with all purity” then he will treat them with “all purity.” Members of the church must see their preacher as one who lives a pure life before them and follow his example of purity.

Truly, the areas that Paul encourages the young preacher Timothy to be an example in are areas every preacher needs to give careful consideration and practice. May it be every preacher’s desire and prayer to be a good example to the church of our Lord.

*“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also” (2 Timothy 2:2).*

*“Imitate me, just as I  
also imitate Christ”  
(1 Corinthians 11:1).*

To our preachers...

Preaching God's word is the greatest work. Psychologists tend to the mind; cardiologists, the heart; preachers, the soul. Each of you has the skill set to grow God's kingdom in your village because you are farmers, fishermen and laborers. As ministers of Christ's gospel, we farm, fish, and labor in God's vineyard. You are doing a great work, and I am thankful for each of you. Although I do not know the depths of your earthly toils, I can relate, however, to your spiritual struggles in ministry. I walk with you. Encourage one another. Keep the faith. Pray often. Visit the weak. Refrain from sin. Keep your eyes on Jesus. Heaven is the prize. Until we meet again...

## At the Lord's Table: Thoughts on Communion

**“He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil”** (1 John 3:8).

There are many things that could be mentioned when partaking of the Lord's Supper. Sometimes, what the bread and fruit of the vine represent is discussed (Matthew 26:26-28). The command to remember the Lord's death until he comes again is often mentioned (1 Corinthians 11:23-26). Also, the suffering that Jesus underwent on the cross comes to mind (Luke 24:46). In addition to these important facts, there is the victory that Jesus has over the devil. Because of Jesus' sacrifice, the seed of the woman (Christ) was able to bruise the head of the serpent (Genesis 3:15). Because of Jesus' sacrifice, Satan was bound so that Christ could “spoil his goods” (Matthew 12:25-29). Because of Jesus' sacrifice, Jesus was able to begin to “destroy the works of the devil” (1 John 3:8). The ancient foe of mankind is suffering defeat because of the sinless sacrifice of the Son of God.

## Thoughts on the Collection

The New Testament church follows a pattern of worship that includes giving on the first day of the week (1 Corinthians 16:1-4). Giving was something commanded by Jesus (Luke 6:38) and generously obeyed by the early church (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-35). When Christians give, it should be looked forward to because God is so generous in the way he gives to us (James 1:5). One thing to keep in mind is that Christians do not give to God as though he *needs* something from us. God already owns everything as he says in Haggai 2:8, “‘The silver is Mine, and the gold is Mine,’ says the Lord of hosts.” Instead, the Christian gives to show in a cheerful way (2 Corinthians 9:7) how much he or she appreciates the blessings of God.

**For every beast of the forest is Mine, And the cattle on a thousand hills. I know all the birds of the mountains, And the wild beasts of the field are Mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell you; For the world is Mine, and all its fullness.** (Psalm 50:10-12)

# Important 2020 Dates

## Richmond Church of Christ

### Elders

Mike Dye  
Danny Hunt  
Joe Koger  
Bret Oakes  
Orrin Nearhoof

elders@richmondcc.net

*Living Water 414 has been the international missions ministry of Richmond Church of Christ since 2014.*

January 2-14—proposed Culvert City Seminar

April 2-14—proposed Culvert City Seminar & VBS

July 2-14—Seminar & VBS, location TBA

October 1-13—Seminar, location TBA

## Living Water 414

David A. Paher

Richmond Church of Christ  
1500 Lancaster Road  
Richmond, KY 40475  
U.S.A.

Cell: 001-1-810-471-2962  
Guyana only: 592-601-5816  
David@LivingWater414.org

*Living water for a thirsty world  
(John 4:14)*

WWW.RICHMONDCC.ORG

WWW.LIVINGWATER414.ORG

## The Support of the Preacher

“Even so the Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel” (1 Corinthians 9:14). It is amazing, indeed, how that the Lord provides what is necessary to make sure the gospel is spread. If anyone ever had a question about whether a preacher should receive financial support, the apostle Paul answers that question in 1 Corinthians 9. Paul uses several illustrations to make this point in this chapter. He asks 3 rhetorical questions (a question whose answer is obvious) in verse 7: “Whoever goes to war at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? Or who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock?” The answer

to all three of these questions is: NOBODY. Later in verse 9, Paul uses a farming illustration from Deuteronomy 25:4, “For it is written in the law of Moses, ‘You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain.’” What is Paul’s point from these illustrations? Everyone (even animals) receive support to do their work. Whether it be a soldier, a farmer, a shepherd, or even an ox, everyone needs to have their needs met from the work that they do. It is no different for preachers. There is an important point to keep in mind from Paul’s words. Preachers DO NOT get paid TO preach. Preachers get paid so that they CAN preach. In other words, nothing (including finances)

should hinder the spread of the gospel. The preacher’s family must be supported. The preacher’s home must be maintained. The preacher’s ongoing needs must be met. That is why preachers and missionaries must often go out and raise financial support (much like the apostle Paul received, Philippians 4:15-16; 2 Corinthians 11:8) until a local congregation can afford to support the needs of a preacher. Therefore, since the Lord commanded that those who preach the gospel should live from the gospel (again, 1 Corinthians 9:14), it should be a joy for churches and individuals to make sure that the financial needs of the preacher are met. (see 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).