Lownes Free Church Sunday Morning – May 25, 2019

Nurturing God’s Family

Planting, Establishing, and Leading Local Churches

Practical Principles from The Pastoral Letters

“Proclamation and Partnership”

Or, “Yes, ministry is difficult, but you are NOT flying solo.”

2 Timothy 4:1-22

Though Paul faces execution, he is triumphant, for he has completed his mission and awaits a reward. Reading his final words (and between them) we find both his charge and legacy: Proclaim God’s Word, partner with others, and don’t be surprised when things go wrong.

**What are Paul’s key points?**

✓ The Solemn Strategy: Faithfully proclaim God’s Word. . .

Because mankind often prefers self-serving myths. vv. 1-5

Because your generation is the one now responsible. vv 6, 7

Because the reward of pleasing Christ is worth it! v. 8

✓ The Partnership Plan: Collaborate with faithful, willing teammates. . .

Because some will disappoint and prove unfruitful. vv.9, 10a

Because some will eventually prove invaluable. vv. 10b-12

Because some will need the help only you can provide. v. 13

✓ The Ministry Mind Set: Be vigilant, active, and prepared. . .

Because opposition to truth is severe and real. vv. 14, 15

Because human resources are in short supply. v. 16

Because God is our present Help and final Deliverer. vv. 17, 18

Because love and God’s work go on. vv. 19-22

***What is the Big Idea?***

*A church is sustained by vigilant, prepared leaders*

*who faithfully proclaim God’s Word in collaboration*

*with many different, faithful partners.*

***How do we apply these principles?***

***1. About the mission. . .*** Paul begins with God’s authority, not his own (v. 1; cf. 1 Timothy 6:13-16). How does knowing that our work is for and from God shape our attitudes? Our methods? How does knowing that God assures victory and grants rewards change us?

***2. About the message. . .*** Why is proclaiming truth so important (vv. 1-5)? Why don’t people respond positively to truth? Why are many teachers so quick to tell folks things they want to hear? What happens when we listen only to those things we want to hear?

***3. About the methods. . .*** Today we hear much about “networking,” but by that many mean only creating relationships which will further their careers. What is the difference between that and what you see Paul practicing (cf. Romans 16)? How are his methods of preparing and placing workers similar to Jesus’ ways? Why can it be tempting to work alone and forget about training others? Why is it hard (at times, for some) to trust others?

***4. About the ministry. . .*** One of our greatest enemies is our own set of faulty expectations. We expect people to welcome us, like us, be like us, listen to us, and cooperate with us. Paul’s experience and Jesus’ experience should cure us of that. Why do we make these faulty assumptions? Why are we surprised when people “jump ship,” misunderstand, or betray? How does Paul deal with his reality that no one stood with him at his first trial (vv. 16, 17)? How does Jesus prepare us? John 16:1-4