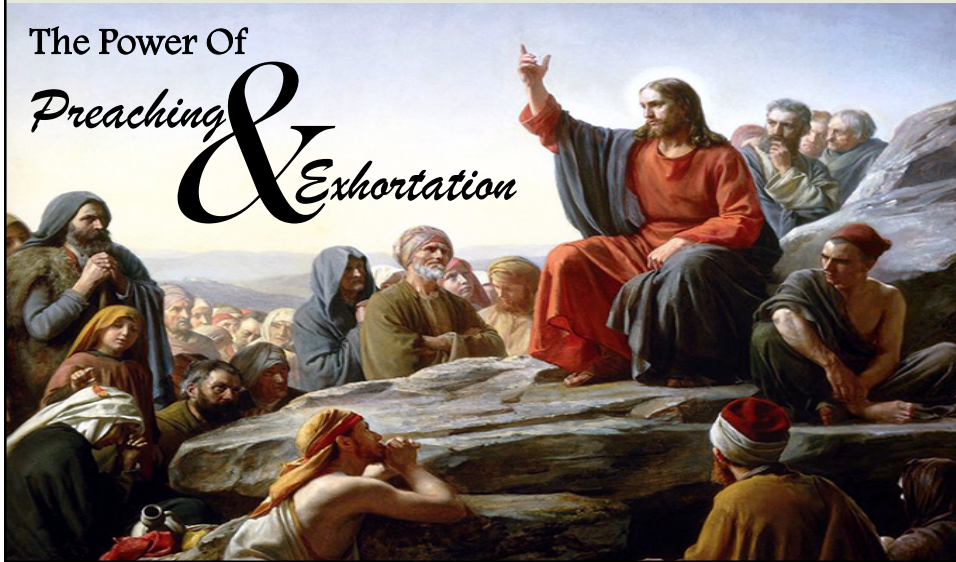


WELCOME

The Power Of

Preaching & Exhortation



Scripture Reading: 1 Thessalonians 5:11-22 (p988)

APOSTOLIC EXHORTATIONS

Translation: **ESV**
Unless Otherwise Noted

Apostolic Exhortations

Understanding This Word

“**Exhortation**” = An urgent appeal; it is issued strongly, therefore the subject matter is of an important nature.

- It also carries the idea ‘to summon’ (Strong’s)
- When brethren in the church are exhorted by God, he is summoning them to His side, by way of an urgent, strong appeal, by ‘imploring’

Joshua 24:15 (p198) “... choose this day whom you will serve ... But as for me and my house, we will serve the LORD.”

Exhortation Breakdowns

v11 – imperative statements (commands); verse has an UPWARD direction.

The actions of encouragement and building are for spiritual betterment.

Apostolic Exhortations

Ephesians 4:29 (p978) “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear.”

- All corrupt speech is condemned by God; Corrupt = rotten, worthless (Strong’s) – it does no good to anyone
- We cannot defend using it in certain circumstances
- Rather, the words we speak must be for the benefit of others; it edifies them, it blesses them (may even correct them)

H.L. Boles (commentator) – “Paul’s rule is this: ‘If you can’t build up, shut up!’” - our love is foundation of this



This is antithesis of Cain ... God: “**Where is Abel your brother?**” ... Cain: “**am I my brother’s keeper?**” (**Genesis 4:8-9** p3)

- Well WE are our brothers’ keepers; and the upward direction of every member is to be our concern.

Apostolic Exhortations

When Paul was talking about not doing things that make a brother stumble, he said:

Romans 14:19 (p949) **“So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.”**

- So this is OUR business, as the Lord’s church, as members of Strathmore.

v12-13 – Esteeming church leaders and diligent laborers

- Re: these members, Paul uses the words: respect and esteem, and re: the whole assembly: being at peace.

- And the ‘peace’ is really a product of the assembly and the leadership working well together.



The church should be FULL of diligent laborers who regularly use their talents to glorify God and build up the church.

- Think of the church functioning as a well-oiled machine; every part is doing its work.

Apostolic Exhortations

Would you not have joy, peace, if every ministry area of the Strathmore Blvd church of Christ was producing fruit, under the guidance of the leadership?

v14 – Warn and Build Up the Spiritually Struggling

- “admonish the idle” – KJV: “warn them that are unruly” ... Greek = out of order, slack in the performance of their duties (Strong’s); Thayer: ‘deviating from the prescribed order of rule’

- This is opposite of what we just read in **v12-13**, as godly order and faithful performance of duties is uplifted/honored.



Important Point: Brethren are to issue these warnings to members behaving this way (not just the work of leadership).

- As with the other points in this verse, we have a responsibility to one another in the church.

YES! ... We Are Our Brother’s Keeper

Apostolic Exhortations

- “encourage the fainthearted” – those that are ‘faint’ need to develop further spiritually; they lack courage/have little faith.
- We are all at different levels of faith.



Lesson from Jesus: He took the faith that was there, and worked to GROW it.



Pleading
of Jairus

- In **Luke 7:1-10** (p863), Jesus marvelled at the faith of the centurion
- “**But say the word, and let my servant be healed**”
- And yet in **Luke 8** (p866), the synagogue ruler Jairus begged Jesus to heal his dying daughter
- No rebuke for not having same faith as centurion

But Jesus Took Jairus’ Faith And Challenged It



Apostolic Exhortations

- “help (support) the weak” – one who is weak is without strength, and a ‘support’ provides strength to lift up/hold up
- Weakness can take a variety of forms: may be weak in biblical knowledge, maybe life is oppressing them (and their strength is dried up), maybe weak in standing up to the wiles of the devil (give in to sin)



Church brethren are to be there, to provide whatever support is needed for that Christian. And by implication, that Christian needs to accept the help.

- “be patient with them all” – the fact of the matter is that the idle/unruly, the fainthearted, and the weak are not going to fix the issue overnight.



This is not a license to ignore it, or let something serious linger within a person, but we are not quick to write people off – we keep working with them.

Consider: **Titus 3:10** (p999); some patience offered.

Apostolic Exhortations

v15 – Practice Righteousness with One Another

- Do not seek revenge; follow Christ’s teaching – do not seek an eye for an eye. **Rom 12:21** (p948) - “overcome evil with good”
- Even when wronged, practice righteousness

v16-18 – Christ is to be YOUR LIFE (**Col 3:4** p984)

- Christianity is NOT the worship service (it’s part of it).
- Notice these words: “always” ... “without ceasing” ... “all circumstances”



Our rejoicing in God, praying to God, and giving thanks to God are to completely FILL US.

- And we live this way IN SPITE OF circumstances

v19-22 – Hold Fast to Sound Doctrine

- At the time of this writing, the NT had not been written yet
- The doctrine of Christ was revealed miraculously through the Holy Spirit; **John 16:14** (p902) – would declare Christ’s words

Apostolic Exhortations



But in the first century, they were not to believe every spirit (**1 John 4:1** p1023).

- Demons teach (**1 Timothy 4:1** p992).
- Therefore, they were to test the spirits (**1 Jn 4:1** p1023).
- And here in **1 Thess 5:21** (p988), Paul says to 'test everything.'



- WE MUST DO THE SAME!

- So much teaching comes to our ears; we are buffeted by every wind of doctrine
- So we need to discern what the will of God is (**Rom 12:2** p947); we are commanded to understand his will (**Ephesians 5:17** p978).

**God DEMANDS We Recognize
Truth From Error, With The Measure As
The WORD of GOD**

Apostolic Exhortations

The Bible tells us:

How To Be Saved	Church Organization
How To Stay Saved	The Work of the Church
How To Worship God	Morality/Ethics of God

- God would have us only speak the truth (not lie)
- He would have us not lust after things or people
- He would also have us be sober-minded/alert/in control

Ephesians 5:18 (p978) "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit."

- We should be under the influence of the Spirit, not alcohol

We are called to God's moral and ethical standard.

This Is All Part Of God's Holy Doctrine

Apostolic Exhortations

An Exhortation Favourite

... and it's a collection of 4 exhortations in one verse.

Jeremiah 6:16 (p634) "Thus says the LORD: "**STAND** by the roads, and **LOOK**, and **ASK** for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and **WALK** in it, and find rest for your souls."

Sstand

Look

Ask

Walk

- God is using a metaphor: travellers on a journey and they come to a crossroads/have to make a directional choice

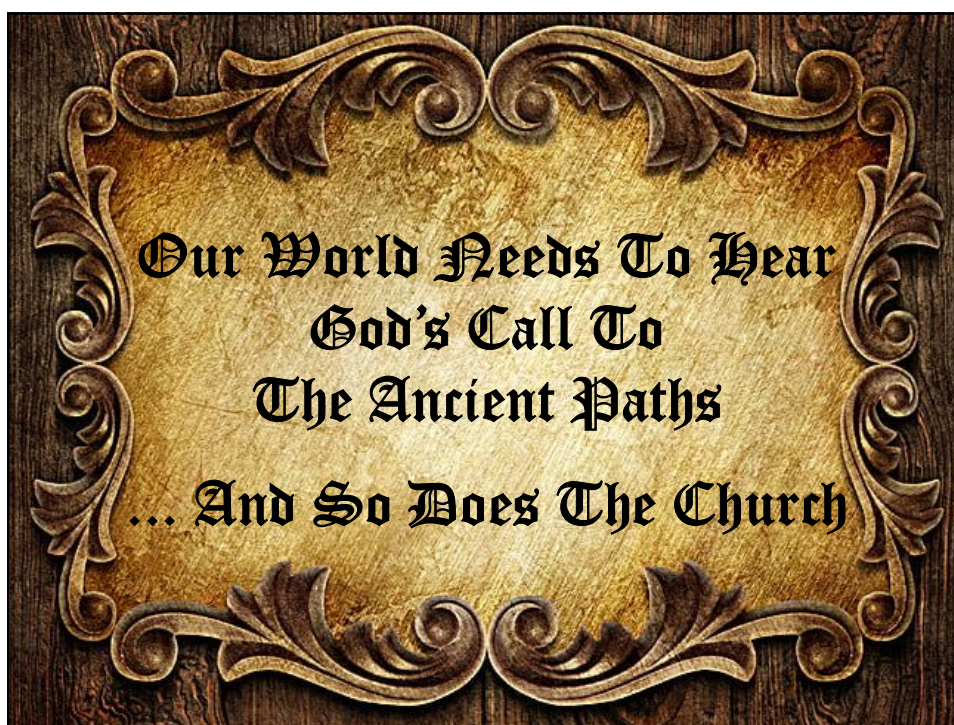
- 1st action: have to stop/presented with a decision

- must give careful consideration/examine the choices; one choice is definitely right/other is definitely wrong

- Should ask for original laid path (what God laid); it is the good way; it is the way of righteousness

- Call to obedience/it is walking God's path ... His way; when we obey all 4, it comes with blessing ... REST

***Under The New Covenant, The Ancient Path Is
The Doctrine Of Christ***



Apostolic Exhortations

Conclusion

We are exhorted to *truly* be the people of God in Scripture.
We are summoned by God to His side, and therefore are identified with him ... and his *soul-saving ministry*.



When Jesus was preaching/healing, he observed how helpless the people were (sheep). It was in this context where Jesus said to his disciples:

- “**The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few.**”
(**Matthew 9:37** p814)

Toronto and the GTA Is a Harvest Field

- Many are struggling/no life direction/confused (religiously)
- They all need God; need to know the love of Christ

Who Is Going To Go?

Apostolic Exhortations

**If You Are Identified With God
(have responded to HIS exhortations)
Then YOU Are To GO!**

THE HARVEST IS READY!

And God Needs Laborers, And Needs Them NOW

- It is not for the paid preacher to do the work by himself
- It is an activity for **ALL THE SAINTS**, as they are equipped for the work of ministry by the elders and the preacher
(**Ephesians 4:11-12** p977).
- Paul described his ministry as the ministry of reconciliation (**2 Cor 5:18** p966); soul-saving message: “**be reconciled to God**” (**v20**) ... this message is applicable to all flesh.

As Christians, This Is OUR Message



RESPOND TODAY!

The Gospel of Christ
I Corinthians 15:1-4

Hear Believe Repent Confess Baptism Faithfulness
Rom 10:17 Jn 8:24 Acts 17:30 Rom 10:9,10 Acts 2:38 Rev 2:10

An illustration of the Resurrection. A stone is rolled away from the entrance of a tomb. A bright light emanates from the tomb. A woman in a white robe is standing in the tomb, and a man in a white robe is standing outside, gesturing towards the tomb. A white cloth lies on the floor of the tomb.