CITYLIGHT
CHURCH

SERMON NOTES & TRANSCRIPT

The Power of Preaching

Level One of Hearing from God, and How to Get the Most from It

Preaching is the first level of hearing from God. It is not the greater portion, but it is powerful and available right away, and you can maximize it by choosing good preaching, showing up, and serving, while trusting the anointing to do what only God can do.

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SERIES
We're Rooted in the Bible, Week 2 of 6

MAIN TEXT
2 Timothy 3:14-4:5

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01

Sermon Transcript

Hallelujah. I'm going to invite you to join me in your Bibles in 2 Timothy chapter 3. 2 Timothy chapter 3. Last week we started a series on one of our values as a church, and that series is called "We Are Rooted in the Bible." That's a pretty good value. Would anybody say amen? We are rooted in the Bible. And this morning we're going to start talking through four levels of hearing from the Lord. Now, there are six messages in this series, but I want to be clear: there are four levels of hearing from the Lord, and today we're starting at level one. Today I want to talk to you about the power of preaching. The power of preaching.

So, 2 Timothy chapter 3. We read this last week, but we're going to go a little further this morning, and we're going to look at something that we didn't look at last week.

> **2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17** ESV
>
> 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

> **2 TIMOTHY 4:1-5** ESV
>
> 1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

So, 2 Timothy chapter 3, starting in verse 14: "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it, and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is breathed out by God" — or, as we talked about it last week, it is inspired — "and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work." Moving on to chapter 4: "I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry."

I want to draw your attention this morning to verse 17, that says that the man of God may be equipped for every good work. I could also draw your attention to verse 2 of chapter 4 that says, "Preach the word." What I want you to see here is that this is a letter that is written from Paul to a man named Timothy, who we often kind of treat from the pulpit as a child, but he is not. Timothy's a full-grown adult in the ministry at the time of this writing. In fact, when this is written, not only is Timothy Paul's protégé, but he is currently serving as the Bishop of Ephesus. He is not doing a small work. He is doing a significant work.

Second Timothy being written likely on the night before Paul is executed — he knows that that is imminent, but probably doesn't know it's going to be in the morning. And so he writes this letter to Timothy and gives him some very clear instructions. But what I want you to see is that the letter is written from preacher to preacher. This is BTS stuff right here. Behind the scenes. This is behind-the-scenes stuff. We're seeing a conversation between two men who are both in the ministry. And he tells him, he says the Bible is profitable for the training, or to make the man of God complete. It is profitable to make the man of God complete, that he may be trained in righteousness. Now, on one hand it is true that the Bible is profitable, and it is able to make the man of God complete, the woman of God complete. At one level that is true.

That is what it says here. The Bible is good for everybody in here. I would prescribe take it once a day and see what happens. Amen. However, because we know that this is written preacher to preacher, when he writes this phrase "man of God," it's actually a Greek word here — anthrōpos theou, the man of God. It actually means the messenger of God. It's the same phrase that people would use for people like Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, often talking about prophets of the Old Testament. And so what Paul is actually telling Timothy in this writing is, hey, the Scripture is good for you to do the ministry. The Scripture will help you preach the word. I don't know if y'all realize this, but the best preachers preach the word. Amen. In fact, Miss Lois came up to me a couple of weeks ago and she encouraged me.

She just said, "Preach the word. Preach the word. That's all it takes. Preach the word." And so this morning what I want to talk about is the power of preaching, because preachers are so powerful that the entire Old Covenant almost existed on the sound frequencies of preachers and prophets exclusively. That's how powerful preaching is. Thank God in the New Testament we have access to go before the throne of grace boldly in our time of need, and we don't need a priest to intercede for us other than that priest being Jesus Christ.

> **HEBREWS 4:16** ESV
>
> 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Amen. But nevertheless, preachers are powerful.

Now, we're talking about levels of hearing from the Lord. By the way, I've got to preach fast and loose this morning. I can tell some of y'all are like, I feel like he's already halfway through it. I am. We've got stuff to do today. We've got a trunk or treat on us. Amen. I've got hot dogs to eat, my friends. Amen. Holy Ghost wiener roast, in Jesus' name. And so we're talking about levels of hearing from the Lord, and I want you to hear this: that preaching is powerful, but it is not the greater portion. You have access to more of the Lord than you can get from a preacher. However, preaching is still powerful, but it's level one.

And because it's level one, what I want to do is I want to make sure that this morning we manage our expectations. You most likely will never only consume preaching and go home and hear the mysteries of heaven. That's probably not going to happen. You can live a good, godly life. You can get some direction for your life. The Lord may even speak to you in a special way. But you're probably not going to only consume preaching and then all of a sudden be able to move mountains. You're going to need a little more revelation than that. At the same time, because it's powerful, I want to make sure that we maximize the potential of preaching in your life. Amen. And so that's what we're going to talk about this morning, because preaching has a special grace on it. Preaching has a special grace.

> **ROMANS 10:13-17** ESV
>
> 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How then will they call on him in whom
> they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they
> to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How
> beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For
> Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing
> through the word of Christ.

In fact, Romans chapter 10 verse 13 says that "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, 'How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!' But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, 'Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?' So faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." Somebody say amen right there.

What's powerful about this is it tells us that you can begin hearing from the Lord from a preacher immediately. In fact, there's a case to be made that you can start hearing from the Lord before you ever give your life to Jesus Christ. In fact, it is hearing from heaven that allows you to respond to the gospel, and it comes through preaching. Preaching unlocks your ability to receive revelation immediately. Amen.

So what I want to do is I want to give you some real practical insights this morning to the power of preaching, and we're going to start with number one. Number one: good preaching equals good results. This is like real deep stuff. Good preaching equals good results. Good preaching equals good results.

> **1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15** ESV
>
> 10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else
> is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than
> that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious
> stones, wood, hay, straw—13 each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be
> revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14 If the work that anyone has built
> on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though
> he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

1 Corinthians chapter 3, starting in verse 10. It says, "According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it."

Let's hang out right there on 1 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 10 for a second. I just want to give you a little context as to what's going on. In the chapters preceding, Paul is addressing an issue in the church of Corinth where they're essentially arguing over what preacher is better, and probably what preacher is right. Okay? And so they're having this conflict in the church of Corinth. And so what Paul says is, he says there's a foundation that is laid, and I've laid that like a skilled master builder.

So every time he talks about building in this context, he's talking about preachers. Preachers are builders in 1 Corinthians chapter 3. Okay? So he's talking about people who preach. So go to verse 11: "For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ." That's a good place to say amen. "For if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—" Now, hang on right there. Look at that again. If anyone — go back to verse 12. But I'm using the TV this morning because I've got handwritten notes, because I felt the Lord this week. Hallelujah. Forget them iPads, in Jesus' name. We upgraded to a TV. Hallelujah.

Gold, silver, precious stones. Okay, this is one quality of material that builders will build with. And then there's wood, hay, and straw. That's another quality of material that people are going to build with. You need to see those two things: gold, silver, precious stones; wood, hay, and straw. Verse 13: "Each one's work will become manifest, for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire."

Now, when we look at verses like this that use phrases like "the day" — because it says it there, "the day will disclose it" — we kind of immediately, especially in churches like ours, we immediately apply an apocalyptic type of perspective. We immediately go to rapture. We immediately go to the end of the world with you at judgment. All of this stuff's going to get burned up. That's how we look at it. We also tend to look at it as the wood, hay, and straw is our doing, and the gold, silver, precious stones is our doing, and whichever is good we'll get a reward in heaven for, or whichever's not good we'll have it burned up. But this is what throws that whole passage off, is the last line that says though the person himself will be saved. In any other way than an apocalyptic version of that for judgment would be written, you'd be punished. If you had a bunch of wood, hay, and straw, you'd suffer loss, you'd go to hell. So apparently that's not what that's talking about. How many of you are thankful that even if you do have some wood, hay, and stubble, the cross is enough? Amen. Just want to toss that in there.

We're talking about Bible teaching right now. What he's talking about with those materials — he's talking about the teaching that different people are bringing to the church. Some people are giving you this quality of teaching, and some people are giving you this quality of teaching. So what does it mean when it says "the day," if it's not apocalyptic? If it's not the day of judgment, if it's not when Jesus Christ returns and the eastern sky is split — if it's not that — that wasn't me — it means the day you go through something. The teaching you have received and you have invested in and you have committed yourself to — at that moment you're going to find out whether or not it was good teaching or bad teaching. Jesus, talking about prophets, said, "You will know them by their fruit." Not how do they behave, not how do they act.

> **MATTHEW 7:16 ESV**
>
> 16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

What does the teaching produce?

The people who follow them, teachers — what does it look like? So there's going to be a day where if you've invested yourself in bad preaching that produces bad results, you're going to get out here into something, the day is going to disclose it, you're going to go through a little fiery trial, and guess what: all that teaching is going to prove to not work worth a darn. I'll cuss up here. Amen. Hallelujah. I used to work for a preacher who would go, "Pardon my language, but that just ain't worth nothing." Ever met a preacher — I thought, I need to help you cuss better. I don't think that's good enough.

Hey, amen. I don't think that landed quite as well. Hallelujah. And so the teaching — when you walk through something, you're going to find out whether or not that teaching works. And this is the problem with a lot of stuff that we invest ourself into, is that the reality is it sounds good. And look, you've got to make sure — man, I should have just wrote a manuscript out this morning. Amen. You've got to make sure that you know the difference between good preaching and good preaching. Because some of y'all think good preaching is, "Well, hallelujah, God's going to do it, and he's going to give you a break." Well, three of you think it's good preaching, the rest of you're looking at me like, what in the world. Some of y'all think somebody getting up and preaching something that confuses you to the point of being cross-eyed is good preaching, because it's deep. I'm telling you, if it's Bible preaching — and it's in First... Second Timothy chapter 3 verse 14 says, "But as for you, continue in what..."

If it's the word, it's good preaching. If it produces fruit, it's good teaching. Amen. I consider myself a prosperity preacher to some degree. I mostly just like it because I like to say it online, tick people off. But amen. I believe God wants you to prosper. But here's the problem: most prosperity teaching is so pathetic, and it produces no results. Because anybody can rent a suit and rent a car and go to a money preachers' conference and look like they've got it together, and go home and stay awake all night with anxiety because they don't know how they're going to pay for their groceries this month.

That's not prosperity. But if the word produces fruit — good preaching equals good results. I want to say all of that, and the issue is this: the issue is that we are accumulating for ourselves preachers that say the stuff we want them to say, they make us feel the way we want to feel. And listen, 99.9 — man, I could just run a hole through the wall this morning — 99.9% of the time that is not someone telling you sin is okay. We like to act like that's what these false teachers are out here teaching, but they're just teaching you stuff that's wood, hay, and stubble. I have watched men of God who I'm sure are sincere in their ministry and sincere in their heart, but I have watched people behind the pulpit where I knew at the end of the event they were going to get a $20,000 honorarium, and they got up there and they said an hour worth of nothing, and everybody goes and buys up their whole product table, and I don't know what to do with that. I mean, I'm being honest with you — this as a preacher, I don't know what to do with that.

What is the obsession with teaching that does nothing, goes nowhere, produces nothing, and leaves you the same as you showed up? But there was a little chorus we used to sing that said [worship]. I'm telling you, I may not be a good preacher, but I'm going to be a good preacher. Hallelujah. Four times in First Timothy he warns — Paul warns the Bishop of Ephesus four times — he says, do not get off into this pointless sensational nonsense. Four different occasions.

Because that's the temptation. The temptation is to get off into this goofy nonsense that does nothing. Good preaching equals good results. Number two — I feel prophetic this morning and I need to feel pastoral. Amen.

Number two: you have to show up. You have to show up. I'll tell you how to get the most out of preaching: you've got to show up.

> **HEBREWS 10:24-25** ESV
>
> 24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together,
> as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Hebrews chapter 10 verse 24 says, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and to good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as the Day is drawing near." Now, we used this to get y'all back in church after COVID. Amen. But that's not why it was written. But it tells you right there: when you come together, you'll be encouraged. There's something about showing up that releases the anointing of preaching in your life. Some of it is the teaching. Some of it is the oil that gets dispersed in the atmosphere. Amen.

But Lord, make me an oil diffuser, in Jesus' name. It's the oil that gets spread in the room. And showing up at this level — this is the dial you have the most control over. You may not be able to find all the good teaching. You may not be able to do all the research and find all the people. But you can show up. Show up. Show up. Be here. Show up. It's a dial you have control over.

I'm going to tell you, I am the result of showing up. And it was a different day, it was a different era, but I was in church Sunday morning, Sunday night, Tuesday night, Wednesday night. I was there for a Thursday night rehearsal. And I'm going to be honest with you — and teenagers, just don't listen to me unless God's called you to the ministry, and maybe this would be a good word for you — but I used to skip school and go hang out at the church, because I knew they had more for me over there than they had for me at the school. But I was called to the ministry. Every mama, calm down. I see y'all looking at me cross-eyed all of a sudden.

So I'm the result of showing up. There's a power in showing up. And let me just encourage you: you don't have to come to church every week. That's not what I'm saying. You do not have to come to church every week, unless... You do need to come to church every week. And here's what some of y'all don't understand: is that if you're going to operate at level one, if you're only living in the preaching realm of hearing from the Lord, this is your lifeline. This is all you've got. For some of y'all, this is the most spiritual activity you have in the week. Don't make it the most spiritual activity in the month, or every two months, or every 12 weeks. You've got to show up. If you need to be here, you need to be here.

> **ACTS 20:7-12** ESV
>
> 7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them,
> intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in
> the upper room where we were gathered. 9 And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into
> a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was
> taken up dead. 10 But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed,
> for his life is in him." 11 And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a
> long while, until daybreak, and so departed. 12 And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little
> comforted.

And Acts chapter 20 verse 7, it says, "On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul" — the apostle — "talked with them, intending to depart the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight." I feel that anointing today. "There were many lamps in the upper room where they were gathered, and a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer." I mean, he preached for a long time and he still had some stuff to say. "And being overcome by sleep—" Three of y'all have the anointing right there this morning. Amen. "He fell down from the third story and was taken up dead." Guy falls out a window and hits the ground and dies. "But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms said, 'Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him.' And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. And they took the youth away alive and were not a little comforted" — meaning they were comforted a lot by this.

And I'm going to tell you what I saw in this text: is that if you can get around a lot of preaching, there's a power in a lot of preaching. If you'll adjust that dial, you get around a lot of preaching, it'll make some things die in your life, it'll make some things come to life in your life, it'll bring some things alive, it'll turn up the passion level in your life, if you get around a lot of preaching.

So when I was young, I started to realize the power in preaching, and I realized something about coming to church every week. Can I have that? I know I ran off a minute ago not thinking about the cameras, but now I'm thinking about the cameras. If you come and listen to a message every week, it's kind of like getting an orange. How many y'all like orange juice?

Now, I'm not talking about that stuff you buy from the store. I'm talking about fresh squeezed orange juice. It is one of life's great delicacies. When God put Adam and Eve in the garden and told them to tend it — it's not written in your Bible, but it is inferred — he said, "Try the orange juice."

> **GENESIS 2:15** ESV
>
> 15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.

You have to know the Hebrew to see that. Amen. And so coming to church is kind of like getting an orange, and with this orange you can get a little shot of orange juice. Nobody wants a little shot of orange juice. But this is what you get if you come every week. And if you come back every week, you can collect little oranges every week, and then eventually you can make you a nice cup of orange juice, a good nice tall glass of freshly squeezed orange juice — unless by the

time you've got enough, the one you got back here started going bad on you, because this stuff don't last forever. And so if you're going week to week, or God forbid two weeks to two weeks, or a month to a month, it's going to take you a while to get enough oranges to make a big glass of orange juice. But you can get into environments like a revival or a conference, and you can go in and you can do session 1, session 2, session 3, the next morning session 1, session 2, session 3, and in the evening service, and you start to collect you a little bag of Dracula navel oranges for the trunk or treaters. Amen. And you collect you a bag of oranges, and in one setting you can get you a nice big freshly squeezed glass of orange juice. What I've learned is that when you're collecting like this, you can only go so far on the power of preaching. But when you get into some environments where you get into the conference, or you download the podcast, or you constantly take in good preaching that yields good results, you can actually get a significant word from God. See, with this you can get some instruction, some morality, some little insight, little principle that you put into your life. But when you get over here, you can actually start to get some significant insight into your life.

It happens in windows. But you can get significant insight into your life. When I was in the sixth grade — I'm not in the sixth grade — when I was 16... totally when I was 16 in the sixth grade. I don't like to talk about it. When I was 16 years old I went to a conference. I went to a conference, and at that point I'd already been called to the ministry, I had a direction for my life, and at that conference — morning, afternoon, evening, morning, afternoon — I was just enamored. I was soaking in the preaching of this meeting. And guess what: in that season, in that session, God gave me distinct insight for my future that I would have never gotten if I wasn't in a lot of preaching.

But you have to show up. Amen. Just some tips for showing up and maximizing preaching. I would encourage you: bring a physical Bible, and turn your phone off. I know it's 2025. I love the internet. I'm on the internet. I will be on the internet. Most of our money comes from the internet. But I put the phone away when I get in the word. I put the phone away when I get into preaching. So put your phone away, get a physical Bible, and bring you a notebook. Bring you a notebook, because you never know when the Lord's going to speak something to you and you need to write it down. You never know when you're going to hear something — I never heard that before, I need to write that down.

And then there's another way that you can maximize preaching, and this is number three, and I have got to move quickly. Number three is that the servants know the secret. The servants know the secret. I'm not going to read it, but in John chapter 2, Jesus goes to a wedding with his mother, and they run out of wine. And his mother comes and tells him, and he says, "I don't have nothing to do with this. Why are you coming and talking to me about it?" And she turns around to some people in the kitchen and she says, "Whatever he tells you to do, do it." And he says, okay.

"Well, bring me some water vats." They were about 30 gallons each, several of them. And he said, "Okay, well, go ahead and dip into that and you can serve that." And they dip in there and the water has become wine, and they take it out to the host of the party, and he goes, where in the world did this wine come from, and why is it so good? And the Bible says that he didn't know where it came from, but the servants knew. The servants knew.

> **JOHN 2:1-11** ESV
>
> 1 On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus also was
> invited to the wedding with his disciples. 3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have
> no wine." 4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." 5 His
> mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." 6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the
> Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with
> water." And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the
> master of the feast." So they took it. 9 When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did
> not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast
> called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk
> freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now." 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at
> Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

The people who had been attending and were behind the scenes with Jesus — they knew what was going on. When a preacher is up like this — and this is a curated... I'm a little less curated than I normally am this morning. I'm feeling the anointing. But this is a curated version of preaching. You're getting a more polished version of what I want to tell you. But there is a behind-the-scenes version of insight that every preacher has. There's a behind-the-scenes version that people who serve in ministry have an opportunity to see that others don't have an opportunity to see.

In fact, every preacher has a tap, and if you can tap them, something's going to flow out. In fact, the other night, Wednesday night, had Jon and Makala in my office talking about serving in ministry. And I don't know what Jon said, but son, he tapped something, and the next thing I know I'm just sharing all types of Bible insight. It's just pouring out of me.

Why? Because servants know the secrets. And so showing up is the dial you have control of at this level of hearing from God, but serving is the only way that you can tap into revelation at this level of hearing from God. Because when you serve, you get access to things that not everybody gets access to. I had a preacher tell me one time — I said, "Would you mentor and disciple me?" And he goes, "The best way for me to mentor and disciple you is for you to show up and help me." I thought that was selfish at first, till I realized that was the same model Jesus used. That's the same model he uses, because servants know the secrets.

I'm going to close right here. I'll talk to you just for a second about the supernatural element. By the way, if you would like to serve, you can use that connect card there in front of you, and you can drop it in an offering bucket on the way out today. If you'll let us know you want to serve in ministry, we will get in touch with you and make sure that that happens. You can also show up this afternoon and just bring me a hot dog every 10 minutes. That's a special. That's the Hebrew meaning of armor-bearer: hot dog bringer. I want to talk to you about the supernatural element for just a moment. The supernatural element. There is a supernatural element to preaching. You have the control of the dial of showing up, you have the control of good preaching, you do have the control of serving and getting behind-the-scenes access to information and to insight, but there is a factor called the anointing. We've talked about this quite a few times. The anointing makes the difference. Amen. I've always realized there was something about preaching I couldn't quite put my finger on.

And one day I was reading in Revelation chapter 14. I want to show you what it says.

> **REVELATION 14:6** ESV
>
> 6 Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people.

Revelation chapter 14 says, "Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people." There's an angel flying directly overhead and he's preaching the gospel to people on earth. For that "flying overhead" there in the Greek — if you guys have a NASB or an NRSV, it's translated "midheaven." The Greek word is mesouranēma. Midheaven's a good phrase for that. The way the ancients viewed this, it was like as high as our atmosphere went, as high as the sky went — and obviously we know that there's the universe; this was a perspective — but as high as our sky goes, right before it crosses over into heaven. And so when he says this, there's almost a picture of: there is an angel who's peeking down outside of heaven, through the seal of our atmosphere, preaching the gospel to people on earth. For years I've had it happen. Other preachers have had it happen.

I've had it happen in almost every church I've ever preached in. I'll preach something and then I'll go out — if I'm traveling I'll go to my product table, if I'm on staff or something, or like here, I'll just go hang out in the lobby if I can get there — and I'll have someone come up to me after I preach. Again, other preachers have told me they have this happen. Someone will walk up to me and they'll tell me how, when I said X, Y and Z, it was exactly what they needed to hear that day — except I know I never said X, Y and Z. I didn't say it, because a lot of times people will say it and I'm not even sure I believe X, Y and Z.

And they'll go, "When you said X, Y and Z this morning — if you only knew what I was walking through, I needed to hear that." And all I can figure — and I'm being a little fun with it, being the angel in the midheaven — but all I can figure is the Holy Ghost somehow grabs whatever I say in the atmosphere and says, "You're doing okay, I'm going to fix it for a second," and then before it reaches you the Holy Ghost has repackaged and reworked it. And I don't know what that noise is. That's how the Holy Ghost sounds when he works. And then all of a sudden when it hits you, it's the exact thing you need. All because you sat under good preaching that produces good results, you showed up, most likely this is going to happen if you serve, and then the supernatural element kicks in. It's like the preaching is just reinterpreted in the air. There's a power in preaching. There's a power in preaching, and I'm grateful for it. I'm saved because of it. I'm called to the ministry because of it.

For most of my life in the Lord — well, for half of my life in the Lord — I lived at this level where it was just preaching. Preaching can take you a long way. Preaching can do a great work in your life. Hopefully at some point you'll be exposed to a little bit better preaching than this. Amen. But that's not a good... amen. Lord, I'm marking a demerit on that. Amen. But God will do a great work in your life through preaching. But it's still level one. It's level one. This is not the highest place you can go in the Lord. Next week we're going to start talking about how you can receive from the Holy Spirit directly, in a way that you can trust as the Holy Spirit, in a way that you can know that God is talking to you, in a way that you can know without a shadow of a doubt that you are hearing from heaven. This is a strange thing that we're going to do, but I feel the Holy Ghost on this right now. Thank you, Lord. In a church like ours — and it's probably everywhere, but you know, you know all the stuff that's going on in your house, right? You know all the knobs that squeak in your house. And I know our world, this world of Pentecost. I know it. That's just the world I'm in.

In churches like ours we have given ourselves to so much sensational nonsense, and we've been gripped by it. And it's not just you. I'm not just talking to you — me too. I've sat in them rooms where the preacher preached everybody into a whirlwind of nothing. Everybody's terrified, people going down on the ground not under the power. I like it when people go down under the power. If we're going to fall down, let's go do it at a Walmart, make some TikTok videos out of it or something. Amen. Let's do something fun. But I'm not going... I don't need that.

But we've given ourselves to such sensational teaching. We're constantly on edge, we're constantly anxious, we live without peace, we live without breakthrough. We get all over people about having a negative confession. What about having a false confession? What about saying I'm okay when I'm not okay? And if you haven't been okay for 20 years and you've been saying you're okay, maybe that teaching was wood, hay, and stubble. I believe that your words create your world. At the same time, Jesus never healed anybody who didn't say they were sick. By some people's measure, every person Jesus ever healed had a negative confession.

"I can't walk." "I can't get in the pool." "I can't see." "I got leprosy." "My child's dead." "My servant's dead." "My child's sick." "My son's demon-possessed." And you'd be sitting here with your favorite prosperity preacher's book in your hand, wagging it in their face, going, "How dare you say something like that?" Well, because that's what it is. Some of us have given ourselves to teaching that almost sounds more like a pamphlet for our political party than it does a doctrinal statement. I know y'all let me get away with Pentecost, so that's why I started with it, and now I'm going to talk about — but we're sending money to prophets who are no more reading the word than they are just watching the news. Do you understand that if you prophesy something's about to happen in Israel every 30 seconds, you're going to be right? "There's something happening outside of Tel Aviv. I can sense it in the spirit."

"Something happened 15 minutes ago. It's going to happen in another 15 minutes." And we're sending these people money. We're buying every book they come out with, even though the last six times they prophesied the world was going to end, it didn't happen. Quantifiable false teachers, and we just like it because they like our guy. At the same time, our life has fallen apart, it's not going where we need it to go, we're under stress, we're under... and there is no profitableness in the teaching we're receiving. And God has given us the power to have breakthrough in our life. The cross has accomplished everything you need, and then we sit here and take in eight hours of preaching podcasts that talk about everything in the Bible but the cross. And I just think we need to take a minute this morning.

We need to raise our hands to heaven and we need to repent, and we need to hit the refresh button. Sometimes when we have computer problems, the only way to solve it is to wipe that hard drive clean. And I'm telling you, sometimes the only way to fix a problem when you've given yourself to this — I almost want to call it superstitious nonsense in the pulpits. I'm trying to be nice. I want to kick this thing over, I'm telling you. I believe this. Two years ago — we have a trunk or treat tonight, Holy Ghost, I need to get moving, we've got chairs to move — two years ago I was invited to preach at a friend's church. About six months before that, I had gotten the word for what I was going to preach, and then I got it again on Thanksgiving before I went. It was in January. I went, and I'd gotten the word twice, just download from heaven — I'll talk to you about how to get that in a few weeks. Download from heaven, had the word. And then I went to preach.

It was like a week away, and the Lord gave me a message for the church. And I thought, what is that? Then I got this six months ago, and now I've got a sermon that is not that. And the Lord said, "That word wasn't for the church, it was for you." The Lord had spoken to me twice going into 2024. He said, "This will be the year of prophetic release." And that was a word for me. I didn't really know what to do with it, but I was traveling as an evangelist, and I figured, hey, that's fine, I can go out and prophesy and that's all good. And then months later we're in the pastoral ministry again, and the Lord said, "This is going to be the year of prophetic release."

We're going to take a moment. We're going to do what I just said. But I want to say something: I love y'all. I can't not operate under this thing that God has. I can do messages on how you can have more friends. I can do messages on how you can be happier every day. I can do messages that tell you workout routines for y'all to follow. I can do all of that. I can. And it'd be a lot easier, because everybody'd be a lot happier and church'd grow a lot faster, and I could do all that. In fact, all I've got to do is get up here and prophesy about what's going to happen in Israel in 15 minutes. Y'all be real fascinated with it.

Amen. People be coming from all over, people be traveling in for hours to hear that something is indeed going to happen. Again, I can't do that. I believe God has put an anointing in this pulpit in this season to prophesy to everything that will keep you from breakthrough, everything that will hold you back, everything that will stop you. And I could preach the message for the smiles. I could preach the message to get you to cooperate — the amount of things pastors have told me: if you'll just do this, you'll get your people to cooperate with... I'm here to break whatever stronghold is in front of you and get it out of the way. And if you don't love me for a week, I'm just going to be okay with that. But I'm going to prophesy to this nonsense.

This isn't going to be a church that is wrapped up in superstition and myths and speculation and dates on calendars and politics and nonsense. We're going to preach the word. We're going to believe the word. We're going to receive from God. That's what's going to happen here. In fact, I just want to put it out there: if you are tired of nonsense in the pulpit, Saraland Church is ready for you. I'm about to take it down brick by brick. I'd take it all down at once, but I'm not super strong. Amen. I'll start working out. Let's lift our hands to heaven. Heavenly Father, thank you for your mercy and your grace towards us, God. Thank you that even in moments where we have given ourselves to absolute nonsense, your grace and your mercy has kept us, Father.

I thank you that the cross of Calvary is greater than any teaching that we have believed or subscribed to that isn't taking us anywhere. God, I thank you that in your rich mercy, sometimes you allow us to believe things that may not be great beliefs in order to get us where you want us to be, so that we can receive the truth of the gospel. Father, for every moment that we have made much of everything but your Son and his finished work, we repent. Father, every teaching that we have been fascinated with even though we've known it's not producing in our life, we repent. Father, for everything that we have subscribed to in the pulpit that has reinforced our agenda versus changed us into being a person who operates in the kingdom, we repent. And God, we ask you for a fresh anointing — a fresh anointing that brings us into the place where we receive good preaching that equals good results, Father; where we can receive revelation through serving; where we can experience the power of being in the room. God, make us picky and choosy about the word. Holy Spirit, give us a more refined taste. God, give us a desire to know more about the gospel of Jesus Christ. Father, we thank you today. We thank you that your word is powerful.

Your word is anointed. Your word does not wither. It does not fade. It does not return void.

> **ISAIAH 55:11** ESV
>
> 11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

You do what you said you would do. Father, we thank you.

> **PSALM 119:160** ESV
>
> 160 The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.

Psalm 119 verse 160 says, “The sum of your word is truth.”

02

Preaching Notes

Before You Preach

This is week two of a six-week series on the value “We’re rooted in the Bible.” Over the next four weeks the series walks through four levels of hearing from the Lord. Today is level one: hearing from God through preaching.

Set expectations early. Preaching is not the highest place a believer can go in hearing from God, but it is powerful, and most people never go beyond it. The goal is to manage expectations and maximize the potential at the same time.

The written notes stop after the first point; the rest of this outline is built from the message as preached. The close turns prophetic: a call to repent of sensational, speculative and politically flavored teaching in our own movement. Preach it as a word to the house, including yourself, not as a jab at outsiders.

Introduction

> **2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17** ESV
>
> 14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you
> learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able
> to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and
> profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God
> may be complete, equipped for every good work.

> **2 TIMOTHY 4:1-5** ESV
>
> 1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by
> his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke,
> and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure
> sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own
> passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 But as for you,
> always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

Look at verse 17: “that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:17). And at chapter 4, verse 2: “preach the word” (2 Timothy 4:2).

A LETTER FROM PREACHER TO PREACHER

The Holy Spirit wrote 2 Timothy for all of us, because, as we saw last week, the Bible is inspired. But practically, it is a letter from the apostle Paul to Timothy. We often treat Timothy from the pulpit like a child. He was not. He was a grown man in ministry, Paul's protégé, leading the church at Ephesus. Paul wrote near the end of his life, knowing his execution was coming: "the time of my departure has come" (2 Timothy 4:6).

So this is a conversation between two preachers. This is behind-the-scenes stuff.

"Man of God" (*anthrōpos theou*) echoes a title the Old Testament gives to God's messengers: Moses, Elijah and the prophets. On one level, Scripture equips every believer, every man and woman of God. But this phrase shows that the Word is first of all preparing those who preach it. The best preachers preach the Word.

Preachers are the primary way most people hear from God, not by importance but by use. It is not that preachers matter more. It is that most people don't go beyond this level of hearing. Under the Old Covenant, God's people depended almost entirely on priests and prophets. Thank God, in the New Covenant we can "with confidence draw near to the throne of grace" (Hebrews 4:16), and we need no priest to stand between us and God except Jesus Christ. Still, preaching is powerful.

Preaching Is Level One

You have access to more of the Lord than you can get from a preacher. Preaching is powerful, but it is not the greater portion of revelation. It is level one.

So let's manage expectations. If preaching is all you take in, it will be rare for your phone to ring with heaven on the other line. You can live a good, godly life, get direction, and even hear the Lord speak to you in a special way. But you probably won't consume preaching alone and suddenly move mountains. At this level, you get to listen in on the conversation, and that shapes you spiritually.

At the same time, there is a special grace on preaching. You start hearing from the Lord through preaching before you are even saved. It is how you get saved.

> ROMANS 10:13-17 ESV
>
> 13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How then will they call on him in
> whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And
> how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As
> it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" 16 But they have not all
> obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" 17 So faith comes
> from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

Preaching unlocks your ability to receive revelation immediately.

Here are three things you control, and one you don't, to get the most out of preaching.

1. Good Preaching Equals Good Results

> **1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15** ESV
>
> 10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and
> someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a
> foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation
> with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—13 each one's work will become manifest, for the Day
> will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.
> 14 If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work
> is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

Context: in the chapters before this, the church in Corinth was arguing over which preacher was better and which one was right. In this passage, the builders are preachers. Paul laid the foundation, Jesus Christ, and others build on it.

There are two kinds of building material:

- gold, silver, precious stones;
- wood, hay, straw.

We tend to read "the Day" here as the final judgment. But the passage ends, "he himself will be saved, but only as through fire" (1 Corinthians 3:15). Whatever this fire is, it does not cost the person his salvation. Thank God, even if you have some wood, hay and straw, the cross is enough.

Paul is talking about the teaching people bring to the church. So read "the Day" this way: it is the day you go through something. On that day, the teaching you received, invested in and committed yourself to will be tested, and you will find out whether it was good teaching or bad teaching.

Jesus said of prophets, "You will recognize them by their fruits" (Matthew 7:16). Not just how they behave, but what their teaching produces. If you invest yourself in teaching that produces nothing, the day will disclose it. You will walk through a fiery trial and find that it does not work.

So know the difference between preaching that sounds good and preaching that is good. Good preaching is not the preaching that makes you feel the way you want to feel, and it is not preaching so deep it confuses you. **If it is the Word, it is good preaching. If it produces fruit, it is good teaching.**

- I believe God wants you to prosper. But much of what passes for prosperity teaching produces no results. Anyone can rent a suit and a car and look like they have it together, then go home and lie awake worried about groceries. That is not prosperity.
- Paul warned that people would "accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions" (2 Timothy 4:3). Most of the time that is not someone saying sin is okay. It is teaching that is wood, hay and straw: sincere, maybe, but it goes nowhere.

- Paul warned Timothy again and again in 1 Timothy not to get pulled into myths and pointless controversies (1 Timothy 1:4; 4:7; 6:4, 20), because that is the temptation.

What is the obsession with teaching that does nothing, goes nowhere, produces nothing, and leaves you the same as you showed up? You don't have to leave the way you came in.

2. You Have to Show Up

> HEBREWS 10:24-25 ESV
>
> 24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

We used this verse to get people back to church after COVID, but it tells us something important: when we come together, we are encouraged. **There is something about showing up that releases the anointing of preaching in your life.** Some of it is the teaching. Some of it is the oil that is spread in the room.

Showing up is the dial you have the most control over. You may not be able to research every teacher. But you can show up.

I am the result of showing up: Sunday morning, Sunday night, Tuesday night, Wednesday night, Thursday rehearsal. I knew the church had more for me than anywhere else.

If you only live at level one, this is your lifeline. For some of you, church is the most spiritual activity of your week. Don't let it become the most spiritual activity of your month.

> ACTS 20:7-12 ESV
>
> 7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered. 9 And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. 10 But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." 11 And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. 12 And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.

There is power in a lot of preaching. Turn up that dial and it will make some things die in your life, bring some things to life, and turn up your passion.

Illustration: the orange juice. Coming to church once a week is like getting one orange. You get a little shot of fresh orange juice. Come back every week and you collect oranges until you can make a tall glass, as long as the

first ones haven't gone bad. Come every other week or once a month, and it takes a long time to make a glass. But get into a concentrated environment, a revival or a conference with session after session, and you can collect a whole bag of oranges and make a big glass in one setting. Week to week you get instruction, morality, insight and principles. In concentrated environments you can receive a significant word from God.

Illustration: the conference at sixteen. At 16, already called to ministry, I went to a conference and soaked in every session: morning, afternoon and evening. In that season God gave me distinct insight for my future that I would never have received if I had not been in a lot of preaching.

TIPS FOR SHOWING UP

- Bring a physical Bible.
- Put your phone away.
- Bring a notebook. You never know when the Lord will speak something you need to write down.

3. The Servants Know the Secret

Tell the story of the wedding at Cana (John 2:1-11). The wine runs out. Mary tells the servants, "Do whatever he tells you" (John 2:5). Jesus has them fill six stone jars, each holding twenty or thirty gallons, with water, then draw some out and take it to the master of the feast. He tastes the water now become wine and does not know where it came from, "though the servants who had drawn the water knew" (John 2:9).

The people behind the scenes with Jesus knew what was going on.

What you hear from the pulpit is a curated, polished version of what a preacher wants to tell you. But every preacher has a behind-the-scenes version of insight, and people who serve in ministry get to see what others don't. Every preacher has a tap. Get near it while you serve, and something will flow out.

Showing up is the dial you control at this level of hearing from God, but serving is how you tap into revelation at this level.

Illustration: "show up and help me." I once asked a preacher to mentor and disciple me. He said, "The best way for me to mentor and disciple you is for you to show up and help me." I thought that was selfish until I realized it was the same model Jesus used.

If you want to serve, fill out a connect card and let us know.

4. The Supernatural Element

You control the dial of showing up. You control whether you sit under good preaching. You control serving and the behind-the-scenes access it brings. But there is one more factor: **the anointing.** The anointing makes the difference.

> **REVELATION 14:6** ESV
>
> 6 Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people.

"Directly overhead" translates the Greek *mesouranēma*; some translations say "midheaven." In the ancient picture it is as high as the sky goes, right before it crosses into heaven. Here is an angel at the edge of heaven proclaiming the gospel to people on earth.

Almost every preacher has had this happen. Someone comes up after the service and says, "When you said this, it was exactly what I needed today." But you never said it. Offered with a smile as a picture, not a doctrine: it is as if, somewhere between the pulpit and the person, the Holy Spirit takes what was said and repackages it, so that when it reaches the hearer it is exactly what they need. It is as if the preaching is reinterpreted in the air.

That is the power of preaching. I am saved because of it. I am called to ministry because of it. For half of my life in the Lord, I lived at this level. Preaching can take you a long way and do a great work in your life.

But it is still level one. Next week: how to receive from the Holy Spirit directly, in a way you can trust and know without a shadow of a doubt that you are hearing from heaven.

Conclusion: A Call to Repent

In our Pentecostal world, we have given ourselves to sensational teaching. I am talking to myself too. We have sat in rooms where the preacher whipped everyone into a whirlwind of nothing.

- We live on edge, anxious, without peace and without breakthrough.
- We get on people about a negative confession, but what about a false confession: saying "I'm okay" when you are not? If you haven't been okay for 20 years, maybe that teaching was wood, hay and straw. I believe our words shape our world. But many of the people Jesus healed started by telling Him exactly what was wrong: "I can't see." "I have no one to put me into the pool." "My daughter has just died." "My servant is lying paralyzed at home."
- Some of what we take in sounds more like a pamphlet for a political party than a doctrinal statement.
- We send money to prophets who are watching the news more than reading the Word. If you predict something will happen in Israel every 30 seconds, eventually you will be right. Their predictions keep failing, and we keep buying their books because they like our guy.
- Meanwhile our lives are falling apart, and there is no profit in the teaching we are receiving. The cross has accomplished everything you need, and we take in hours of podcasts about everything in the Bible except the cross.

So let's raise our hands and repent. Sometimes the only way to fix a computer is to wipe the hard drive and start fresh.

Illustration: the year of prophetic release. Going into 2024, the Lord spoke to me twice: "This will be the year of prophetic release." I thought it was a word for a church I was invited to preach at. The Lord said, "That word wasn't for the church. It was for you." Months later I was back in pastoral ministry.

I could preach messages on having more friends, being happier, or workout routines, and the church might grow faster. I could prophesy about Israel every week. But I believe God has put an anointing on this pulpit in this season to prophesy against everything that keeps you from breakthrough.

This isn't going to be a church wrapped up in superstition, myths, speculation, dates on calendars, politics and nonsense. We're going to preach the Word. We're going to believe the Word. We're going to receive from God.

PRAYER

Lead the church in a prayer of repentance:

- Thank God that His mercy and grace have kept us, even when we gave ourselves to nonsense, and that the cross is greater than any teaching we have believed that is not taking us anywhere.
- Repent for making much of everything but His Son and His finished work; for teaching we were fascinated by though it produced nothing; for anything we followed in the pulpit because it reinforced our agenda instead of changing us.
- Ask for a fresh anointing: to receive good preaching that equals good results, to receive revelation through serving, and to know the power of being in the room. Ask God to make us picky about the Word and give us a hunger for the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- Close with His promise: His Word "shall not return to me empty" (Isaiah 55:11), and "The sum of your word is truth" (Psalm 119:160).

03

Scripture List

Every passage read, cited or alluded to in the message, in the order it comes up.

Read

Read aloud in the message.

2 TIMOTHY 3:14-17	14 But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it 15 and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, 17 that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.
2 TIMOTHY 4:1-5	1 I charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and by his appearing and his kingdom: 2 preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching. 3 For the time is coming when people will not endure sound teaching, but having itching ears they will accumulate for themselves teachers to suit their own passions, 4 and will turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths. 5 But as for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.
ROMANS 10:13-17	13 For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." 14 How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? 15 And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!" 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" 17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

1 CORINTHIANS 3:10-15	10 According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. 11 For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. 12 Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw—13 each one's work will become manifest, for the Day will disclose it, because it will be revealed by fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. 14 If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. 15 If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.
HEBREWS 10:24-25	24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.
ACTS 20:7-12	7 On the first day of the week, when we were gathered together to break bread, Paul talked with them, intending to depart on the next day, and he prolonged his speech until midnight. 8 There were many lamps in the upper room where we were gathered. 9 And a young man named Eutychus, sitting at the window, sank into a deep sleep as Paul talked still longer. And being overcome by sleep, he fell down from the third story and was taken up dead. 10 But Paul went down and bent over him, and taking him in his arms, said, "Do not be alarmed, for his life is in him." 11 And when Paul had gone up and had broken bread and eaten, he conversed with them a long while, until daybreak, and so departed. 12 And they took the youth away alive, and were not a little comforted.
REVELATION 14:6	6 Then I saw another angel flying directly overhead, with an eternal gospel to proclaim to those who dwell on earth, to every nation and tribe and language and people.
PSALM 119:160	160 The sum of your word is truth, and every one of your righteous rules endures forever.

Cited

Named or quoted along the way.

MATTHEW 7:16	16 You will recognize them by their fruits. Are grapes gathered from thornbushes, or figs from thistles?

JOHN 2:1–11	1 On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. 2 Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. 3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, “They have no wine.” 4 And Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come.” 5 His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.” 6 Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. 7 Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water.” And they filled them up to the brim. 8 And he said to them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast.” So they took it. 9 When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom 10 and said to him, “Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now.” 11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

Alluded to

Drawn on without naming the reference.

HEBREWS 4:16	16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
GENESIS 2:15	15 The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to work it and keep it.
ISAIAH 55:11	11 so shall my word be that goes out from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, but it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.

Pastor Jason Mayfield

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Pastor Jason Mayfield is the Senior Pastor of Citylight Church in Saraland, Alabama, where he and his wife, Ashleigh, lead a church devoted to Building Lives on Jesus. His preaching is rooted in the Bible, full of hope, and grounded in one conviction: an incredible life is built on the finished work of Jesus Christ.

For more than 20 years, Pastor Jason has given his life to the local church. He has been credentialed with the Assemblies of God for 21 years and ordained for 14, and he has led revitalization in churches that went on to rank among the Top 100 Fastest-Growing Churches in America. He carries a deep conviction that the church can be both excellent and supernatural, and a passion for revival.

He is an author and the creator of Tear Up Your Bible and POWER 27, a daily rhythm of Bible reading, prayer and worship. His resources have helped more than 100,000 people go deeper in the Scriptures. Above every title, his greatest joy is seeing people meet Jesus, be filled with the Spirit, and grow into everything God has called them to be.

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