



THE IMPORTANCE OF PREACHING THE WORD OF GOD 29:18

This **proverb** is almost always misinterpreted and misapplied because of a misrepresentation of the word “*vision*” For certain, what is suggested by the word *vision*” is of extreme importance, and significance, something of great magnitude, and consequence, for where it is lacking “*people perish*” The word “*vision*” does not have reference to a mere **goal** or **purpose**, but is the Hebrew word for “*oracle*” or “*prophecy*” It refers to “*the declaring, the proclaiming, the making known, the preaching of God’s Word*” A “*vision*” was “*a communication, not furnished by nature, not the product of human intellect or imagination, but a communication from God*” We read in I Chronicles 17:15 “*According to all these words, and according to all this vision, so did Nathan speak unto David*” The message of the Old Testament prophets was called a “*vision*” [Isaiah 1:1; Obadiah 1:1; Nahum 1:1]. In Habakkuk 2:2 Habakkuk is instructed “*Write the vision and make it plain upon tables*” In the Old Testament “*prophets*” (preachers) were called “*seers*” [I Samuel 9:9; II Samuel 24:11; I Chronicles 9:22; 26:28; 29:29; II Chronicles 9:29; 16:7, 10; 19:2; 29:30], and in Habakkuk 1:1 it reads “*The burden (utterance), which Habakkuk the prophet did see*” There were also those who spoke “*false visions*” and “*visions of their own heart*” [Jeremiah 14:14; 23:16]. In I Samuel 3:1 we read of the spiritual condition during the time when Samuel was called of God—“*And the Word of God was precious (rare, scarce), in those days (he goes on to explain), there was no open vision*” At the time when God called Samuel, there was no open **proclamation**, and **revelation** of the Word of God! This was a sign of God’s judgment [Lamentations 2:9; Ezekiel 7:26]. The word “*vision*” has reference to the “*Lord’s message*” given to the “*Lord’s messenger*” [Haggai 1:13], and the message declared, proclaimed, and made known under the leadership of the *Holy Spirit*.

The importance of this “*vision*” is seen from the fact that “*Where there is no vision, the people perish*” The word “*perish*” means “*to become ruined, spoiled, destroyed, or wasted, to deteriorate, or to weaken*” The idea is, that where there is no **proclaiming**, **making known**, and **preaching** of God’s Word, people will **deteriorate**, be **ruined**, and **destroyed!** This **proverb** like many of the others is **antithetical** (a parallelism), in which two ideas are contrasted with one another. The second line states the same principal of the first but from an opposite standpoint. The two lines are usually connected by the conjunction “*but*” The second line of this **proverb** reads “*he that keepeth the law, happy is he*” The word “*law*” corresponds to the word “*vision*” so the contrast is not between those who have not the benefit of preaching, and those who have it, but between those who take advantage of such, and those who do not. **THIS STRESSES THE TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE OF THE PREACHING AND THE RECEIVING OF THE PREACHED WORD!**

I. THE IMPORTANCE OF PREACHING EMPHASIZED IN THE WORD OF GOD

1. God's Method Of Making Known His Mind Is Preaching:

In the Old Testament when God wanted to deliver a message to a king or a nation, He would raise up a prophet [Amos 7:14-15], and God gave them the message they were to preach [Jonah 3:2]. God not only gave the message, but also the ability to declare and make known the message [Ezekiel 2:4-3:14]. In the New Testament, God had a message for the churches of *Asia*, and that message was delivered to the messenger of each respective church, and it was the messenger's responsibility to deliver the message as delivered to him [Revelation 2:1, 8, 12, 18; 3:1, 7, 14]. There is a tremendous emphasis upon preaching all through the New Testament. *John the Baptist preached* [Mark 1:7]. *Jesus preached*, in fact He left healing to preach [Mark 1:33-39], and He is seen preaching in Mark 2:2. *Christ* organized His church, and He commanded them to preach [Mark 16:15; Matthew 10:7, 27]. Why did He command them to preach? Because, "*Where there is no vision people perish*" We read in Mark 16:20 "*They went forth and preached everywhere?*" The early church preached everywhere [Acts 8:1, 4, 5, 25]. The Word of God was preached in the desert [Acts 8:35], and in the synagogues [Acts 9:20]. When the church of *Antioch* sent out *Paul* and *Barnabas* as missionaries, they went forth and preached everywhere they went [Acts 13:5; 14:6-7, 20, 21, 25]. *Paul preached* to the educated ones at *Mars Hill* [Acts 17:18], and he would later instruct young *Timothy* in II Timothy 4:2 "*Preach the word be instant (ready) in season out of season*" Why? Because "*Where there is no vision people perish*" All through the Bible we see the preaching of the Word of God! It was preached before kings and rulers, it was preached before ordinary citizens, and peasants! It was preached to the great intellects, and it was preached to the ignorant and unlearned! It was preached to masters, and to slaves! It was preached to Jew and Gentile! The reason, no matter where you go, or to whom you go, this is true "*Where there is no vision the people perish*" The message of the Lord is not vague, or ill-defined, or uncertain, but plain, exact, and direct!

2. God Uses The Preaching Of The Word For Spiritual Well-Being:

The Lord uses the preaching of the Word to save sinners. We read in I Corinthians 1:21 "*it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe*" The reason that we are to "*preach the gospel to every creature*" is because the gospel "*is the power of God unto salvation*" [Romans 1:16]. We read in Romans 10:17 "*So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God*" *James* wrote in James 4:15 "*Of His own will begat He us with the word of truth*" GOD USES THE PREACHED WORD to encourage His people in the service of the Lord! He uses the preached Word to strengthen, the faith, the resolve, and the inner man of His people! He uses the preached Word to comfort, hearts that are hurting! He uses the preached Word to heal the spiritually diseased! He uses the preached Word to revive, sluggish hearts, and to impart zeal in God's service! He uses the preached Word to convict hearts of that which is contrary to the Lord! He uses the preached Word to humble, the hearts of the proud! He uses the preached Word to guide and direct, and to enlighten His people of His will and ways, and to reveal the needs of man! He uses the preached word to correct error, and to protect, and to warn His people of danger and pitfalls along the way! He uses the preached Word of God to give hope, and to give assurance! He uses the preaching of His Word to help us move forward spiritually, and to mark and measure where we are! He uses the preached Word of God to save the lives of His people, and to rescue them from their self-destructive ways!

II. THE IMPORTANCE OF HEARING AND RECEIVING THE PREACHED WORD

1. Where The Word Of God Is Preached, People Are Responsible To Hear And To Receive The Message:

It is a good thing to sit under the sound of the Word of God, but such makes one responsible! This is brought out in the second line of the proverb *“but he that keepeth the law, happy is he”* The preached Word is to be **received** [James 1:21]. The word “receive” means “to take, to accept, to welcome, and to believe” It means that we are to act as a receptacle or container! The word “receive” means that we are “to show hospitality to the Word of God” We do this by **paying attention to it**, by **enjoying its company**, and **desiring it to stay!** THERE MUST BE A RECEIVING OF ANY GOOD THING BEFORE THE GOODNESS CAN BECOME OURS! It is to be received as the *“engrafted (implanted) word”* IT IS TO BE RECEIVED SO THAT THERE IS AN ACTUAL LIVING UNION BETWEEN US AND THE WORD!

2. Where The Word Of God Is Preached, A Proper Attitude Toward It Is To Be Maintained:

Paul warned the *Thessalonians* who had “received the word.....with joy of the Holy Ghost” [I Thessalonians 1:6] not to “despise prophesyings” [I Thessalonians 5:20]. The word “prophesyings” has reference to the preaching of God’s Word, and the word “despise” speaks of a danger of developing a wrong attitude toward the preaching of God’s Word. The danger is that one would “set at nought, to think down upon, to think lightly of, to regard lightly, to care little for; to set aside or reject the preaching of God’s Word” ❶ We Despise The Preaching Of God’s Word By Not Earnestly Praying For The Preaching Of It [Ephesians 6:19-20; II Thessalonians 3:1]. ❷ We Despise The Preaching Of God’s Word By Not Preparing Our Hearts To Receive It. ❸ We Despise The Preaching Of God’s Word By Not Giving Proper Attention-There should be close **attention**, eager **concentration**, and **eagerness** when the Word of God is preached. ❹ We Despise The Preaching Of God’s Word When We Are Hearers Only And Not Doers [James 1:22]. ❺ We Despise The Preaching Of God’s Word When We Willfully And Deliberately Absent Ourselves From Hearing The Word Of God, Or When We Reject The Message.

God, Himself, the **infinite**, the **eternal** One, the **incomprehensible** One, the **sovereign** One of the universe, the **all-knowing**, never erring, never changing One, the One who holds our life in His hands, the One to whom we are accountable to, speaks to us through His preached Word, OH, HOW WE OUGHT TO TAKE SUCH SERIOUSLY! He communicates to us through the preached Word, He unveils through the preached Word! Where there is no proper preaching and proper hearing of the Word of God *“people perish”* They invite ruin and destruction into their lives! They begin to deteriorate and weaken spiritually. People are placed in the very midst of danger. Where there is no proper preaching and hearing of the Word of God devotion begins to decay, holiness starts to decline, hope begins to evaporate!