

April 25th and 26th

Preacher at Cambridge

"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." 2 Timothy 4:1-2

Locked pews. Every one of them locked so people would be barred from hearing the gospel proclaimed. We don't have these styles of pews at Christ Church, so it may be difficult for you to picture in your mind. A locked pew looks similar to a nursery door that comes up to your mid-chest. These were locked shut so people could not sit in the sanctuary. To counteract this act, the young preacher put benches in the aisles. The people just threw those benches into the church courtyard. Since Sunday mornings wouldn't work for the preacher, he started Sunday evening gatherings. But guess what happened then? The leaders locked the doors of the church so no one could get in. The preacher's name was Charles Simeon. How did Simeon respond to these acts?

Simeon responded with being faithful to God's Word. According to Warren Weirsbe, Simeon had little to no training in Bible study, sermon preparation, or pastoral ministry. Therefore, he rose early in the am to study the Bible and pray. As Weirsbe writes, "he was teaching himself that he might be able to teach others, and God met his needs." Sounds awfully similar to Paul's encouragement to Timothy early in 2 Timothy: "*and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*" Men, your call is different than mine...at least that's how it appears on the surface. However, God gives the call to all of us to make disciples. This commission from our Master is given to each one of us. We all have a circle of influence that God has given us to be intentional in shepherding. God has called us to show people the way. It's similar to different tools in the toolbox. There are different tools to accomplish the task. God's goal is to build His kingdom, just like you would build a house. The goal is the house...and you use screws, nails, hammers, drills, ladders, etc. to accomplish the goal. Every tool is needed...and so are you. Never underestimate your role in God's kingdom! Will you ask God to use you today? He's looking for your faithful obedience.

I'll end this devotion with a personal note of thanks. I'm so thankful for the opportunity God's given me to serve you all. Thank you for the privilege. God's story in my life is like Simeon's story; It is about what God has taught me in 12 years at Christ Church. Simeon had to learn love and humility; he had to learn that orthodoxy alone was not sufficient for an effective ministry. In Simeon's own words, "True, you are not to keep back the fundamental doctrines of the gospel: but there are different ways of stating them; and you should adopt that which expresses kindness and love, and not that which indicates an unfeeling harshness." Simeon learned to minister with love, and God has taught me the same thing. Finally, Simeon's goal for every sermon was to "humble the sinner, exalt the Savior, and promote holiness." Will you pray with me that God would use me to live and preach faithfully the gospel of Jesus Christ? I need your continued support and prayer. I continue to pray for God's work in all of us as we serve our King together!

Spend some time today to ask God to encourage the elder and deacon team at Christ Church. Pray for them that all of them would be faithful to serve Christ as they serve others.

For Further Reading: Ephesians 6:10-18