

# “Fulfill Your Ministry”

October 19, 2009 – WRBA Annual Meeting

*“I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge the living and the dead, and because of His appearing and His kingdom: Proclaim the message; persist in it whether convenient or not; rebuke, correct, and encourage with great patience and teaching. For the time will come when they will not tolerate sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, will multiply teachers for themselves because they have an itch to hear something new. They will turn away from hearing the truth and will turn aside to myths. But as for you, be serious about everything, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”*  
2 Timothy 4:1-5 (HCSB)

## I. PROCLAIM THE MESSAGE.

1. In the original Greek the word used here is “kerusso,” which means to preach, to communicate, to exclaim, or to proclaim. It’s not reserved for preachers, though. It’s reserved for anyone with a changed life.
2. The demoniac known as Legion, once delivered by Jesus, clothed and in his right mind, begged to accompany Christ and His disciples.

*“But He would not let him; instead, He told him, ‘Go back home to your own people, and report (Greek word ap-angel-lo) to them how much the Lord has done for you and how He has had mercy on you.’ So he went out and began to proclaim (kerusso) in the Decapolis how much Jesus had done for him, and they were all amazed.”*  
Mark 5:19-20 (HCSB)

3. I believe in lifestyle evangelism. In fact, I believe if Christians today would live what they claim to believe, we’d see revival break out in every church.
4. You can’t preach it if you don’t live it. But you can’t live it and not preach it, or proclaim it. The command here to young Timothy is to verbalize the message. But what is the message? KJV calls it the “word.”
5. In the Greek it’s the “logos” – the Word of God, the gospel – the good news. What we are to proclaim is the cross of Jesus Christ! Now, your method may differ from mine, but the message should be the same.
6. Paul told us in Ephesians 4 to “speak the truth in love.” For most of us the truth part comes easier than the love part.
7. We have modified Hebrews 4:12 to say, “For the word of God is living, and powerful, and heavier than any 20-pound sledgehammer.” No, it’s sharper than any two-edged sword. It cuts to the heart of the matter.
8. But not like a serial killer, but a Master Surgeon. Our message is good news. Let’s not forget that. Fulfill your ministry.

## II.

### XPECT OPPOSITION.

1. Let’s look back at our text again, beginning in verse 2:
2. Have you figured out yet that sheep bite? I learned early on in ministry, if you want to get your feelings hurt – if you want to get gutted and left for dead – just go to church! They’ll fix you right up!

3. We expect opposition from the devil. At least you better. If the devil's not opposing what you're doing, you're playing for the wrong team, friend! We expect the world to oppose us. After all, the devil is the god of this world.
4. But Paul is talking to Timothy about opposition within the church. He says they will "turn away from hearing the truth." They were once listening, but no more. Paul knew very well about opposition.

*"A wide door for effective ministry has opened for me - yet many oppose me."*

1 Corinthians 16:9 (HCSB)

5. Even in this very letter Paul states that "everyone in the province of Asia has deserted me" (1:15). And, in 4:10, Demas has deserted him as well.
6. Maybe there's some of you here this evening that are facing opposition. You're serving God, and loving His people, but you're weary from the battle. Like Paul, you feel deserted and alone.
7. Let me remind you, friend, you're not alone. There's One who sticks closer than a brother. There's One who will never leave you nor forsake you. There's One who is the Source of restoration for the soul.
8. He knows all too well about opposition. He knows firsthand what it feels like to be betrayed. He personally experienced the pain of desertion.

*"For I am persuaded that not even death or life, angels or rulers, things present or things to come, [not hateful deacons, or grouchy shower committees, not VBS leaders or WMU directors, not venomous pastors or that mean preacher's wife] hostile powers, height or depth, or any other created thing will have the power to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord!"*

Romans 8:37-39 (HCSB)

9. On several occasions, while facing opposition of one kind or another, I have confided in Bro. Maurice as a counselor, a sounding board, or a punching bag! Always receiving words of encouragement.
10. But on one of those occasions, he said something to me that connected deep down in my spirit. I want to share it with you now. He simply said, "Sometimes when a farmer is plowing, he encounters a stump.
11. He is then faced with a decision. He can stop plowing, changing his mission from plowing to stump removal. Sometimes this is necessary. But sometimes it's more productive to just plow around the stump."
12. Time has a way of dealing with stumps. Some of you need to hear this: man didn't call you, and he can't un-call you. If God called you, look to Him for strength. Proclaim the message. Expect opposition. Fulfill your ministry.

### III.

## FULFILL YOUR MINISTRY.

1. I read recently about Charles Thomas Studd, who was saved under the ministry of D.L. Moody. At the age of 25, he was already on the mission field in China. But after ten years there, he felt God's call to India.
2. He served as pastor in India for six years then felt a call to Africa. There he served God for 21 years, enduring sickness and several heart attacks. When asked about his life of hardship and sacrifice, he said these words:

*"If Jesus Christ be God, and died for me, then no sacrifice that I can ever make for Him can ever be too great."*

*“Let us not slide through this world, and then slip quietly into heaven, without having blown the trumpet loud and long for our Redeemer Jesus Christ. Let us see to it that the devil hold a Thanksgiving service in hell when he gets the news of our departure from the field of battle.”*

3. Charles Studd died on the mission field, doing what God had called him to do – fulfilling His ministry. His last word was simply this: “Hallelujah!”
4. I also read about Charles Simeon, a pastor in Cambridge, England in the late 1700’s. For the first five years of his pastorate, Pastor Simeon wasn’t allowed to preach the evening sermon. His assistant did instead.
5. Finally the assistant left, and Charles hoped to finally be allowed to preach twice on Sundays. But it was not to be. Instead, the new assistant pastor was given the responsibility.
6. Not to be outdone, Simeon decided to start an alternative Sunday evening service. But the church officials locked the pews. So, Bro. Simeon brought in chairs. But they threw the chairs into the street.
7. He had his parishioners stand, so they changed the locks on the building. Now, most of us would have felt God calling us elsewhere, but not Charles Simeon. Despite failing health, and the spiritual attacks he faced, Charles Simeon remained pastor of this same church for 54 years.
8. He preached until two months before his death. Toward the end of his life, well-meaning friends began to suggest he retire, let someone younger come in and take over. “You’ve done your time, brother. Take it easy.”
9. But Charles Simeon replied, *“Shall I not run with all my might, now that I have the finish line in view?”* None of us here know how close we are to the finish line. But we know that we’re closer today than we were yesterday.
10. It’s real easy to get discouraged. It’s real easy to get distracted. It’s real easy to get comfortable. Maybe some of us feel like we’re shadow-boxing.
11. We’ve set the spiritual cruise control. We’ve fallen into a rut, and we make excuses about why our ministry is not being fulfilled.
12. We hide behind our limitations like the size of our budgets, and our lack of education, and the number on our church roll.
13. Still others are playing it safe, afraid of jeopardizing their generous salary package, their nice home, or their retirement.

*“After David had done the will of God in his own generation, he died...”*

Acts 13:36 (NLT)

14. What a simple verse, yet so profound. We all know about the failings of David. From lust, to adultery, to murder, David really stepped in it. Yet God’s Word, which is without error, says he did the will of God. How?
15. Because our God is a God of second chances. His Word says “though a righteous man falls seven times, he will get up.”
16. Stop making excuses and get up! Secondly, David served God in his own generation. Our forefathers couldn’t serve this generation. The generation coming after us can’t serve our generation. They have their own to serve.
17. It’s up to us to reach this generation with the Gospel. It is my responsibility to fulfill my ministry. I can’t pawn that off on anyone. Neither can you.
18. And finally, David died. It’s coming to us all. There is a finish line. There is an end to this race. And then? What did Paul use to motivate Timothy to fulfill his ministry? Listen again to verse 1:

*“I solemnly charge you before God and Christ Jesus, who is going to judge the living and the dead, and because of His appearing and His kingdom.”*

- 19. I will one day stand before the One who saved me, then called me, and qualified me, and equipped me. I want to hear, “Well done, good and faithful servant.” How about you?**