

Preaching Out Of Season

In 2 Timothy 4:2, Paul said, "*Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction.*" What is meant by this expression "*out of season?*" Sometimes, the reception one gets to gospel preaching shows it to be "*out of season.*" Though there may be some initial interest, in the end there is not much fruit born to our efforts. Where is good preaching "*out of season?*"

It may be out of season in a local church. This is Paul's chief concern when exhorting Timothy. In the assembly of the saints, a time would arise when gospel preaching was no longer desirable. Paul seems to say, "Preach it anyway, even if it is unseasonable, for as long as you can." We do not simply preach in the church as long as there are favorable results.

Another "*out of season?*" application would be in the preaching we do to the world. Some places have more favorable responses to the gospel than others. What if you are living in a place where the word falls on deaf ears? You preach it anyway! Paul had a much better response from the people of Berea than in Thessalonica (Acts 17:11), but he preached to all of them!

A third idea is that preaching is sometimes "*out of season?*" due to changing times. Although at one point in our history, New Testament preaching became popular, and many flocked to hear it and obey. But now it is hard to find interest today, much less obedience, and the temptation is to blame ourselves. At best we feel guilty and at the worst we begin to employ carnal tactics to "draw" people to the gospel. Preaching God's word is just sometimes "*out of season,*" and it may be that is the case right now.

What are we to do? Remember that we are called to faithfulness, not results. The increase is God's doing and should there be none, we must continue preaching. Noah preached over 100 years and unless he converted his seven family members during that time, he converted NO ONE! Was he a failure? Absolutely not. This goes to show that we cannot lose heart in preaching when it is "*out of season.*" Pray for the spiritual harvest to whiten again and for the preaching of God's message to be "*in season?*" once more.

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