

“Coram Deo”  
2 Timothy 4:1  
(Preached at Trinity, October 16, 2022)

I'm supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord's Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I'll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. In **Chapter 3**, after warning Timothy of the ever-increasing presence of evil men upon the earth, Paul admonishes him in **Verse 14** to continue in the things that he had learned from Paul.  
**Verse 14** - "You, however, continue in the things you have learned and become convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned *them*,"
2. What “things” is Paul referring to in **Verse 14**? On one hand, Paul is speaking generally of his teaching and example – **Verses 10-11**  
But more specifically, Paul writes in **Verses 15-17** that he is talking about the Scriptures—God's Word.  
He calls it “sacred writings” in **Verse 15** and “Scripture” in **Verse 16**.
3. In **Verses 15-17** Paul gives a statement on the nature of God's transmission of His Word, as well as its indispensable value in salvation and sanctification.
4. As we move into **Chapter 4** Paul is continuing to press the importance of the Word of God. In essence, Paul is saying, because the Word of God is absolutely essential both to saving faith as well as our sanctifying growth, make it the focus of your ministry.  
“Preach the Word.”  
To press the weightiness of this Paul uses the phrase, “I solemnly charge you . . .”  
Then he calls upon the presence of God as his witness.  
“in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus”  
“God” refers to the Father and “Christ Jesus” refers to the Son.
5. This morning I want to pause to consider Paul's statement:  
"I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus"  
When I read this I was stricken by the force of its meaning. It's not as if this is the first time Paul ever used the statement.  
**1 Timothy 6:13 NAU** - "I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things"  
**2 Timothy 2:14 NAU** - "Remind *them* of these things, and solemnly charge *them* in the presence of God"
6. For Paul, this was a significant statement. He was calling upon God's presence as witness to his charge to Timothy. It is significant because it is at the heart of the Christian life. We must be constantly aware of God's abiding presence. To live before Him. To always be mindful of His watchful eye.  
There is a Latin phrase that describes it –  
*Coram Deo*. It is an important Latin phrase.  
*Coram*: before; in the presence of  
*Deo*: God  
Before God or in the presence of God.

**Psalm 56:13 NAU** - "For You have delivered my soul from death, Indeed my feet from stumbling, So that I may walk before God In the light of the living."

**1 Chronicles 13:8 NAU** - "David and all Israel were celebrating before God with all *their* might, even with songs and with lyres, harps, tambourines, cymbals and with trumpets."

**1 Timothy 5:21 NAU** - "I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus and of *His* chosen angels"

This passage: "I solemnly charge *you* in the presence of God" – *Coram Deo*

7. This is completely foreign to lost humanity. They deny the presence of God.

**Romans 1:25 NAU** - "For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever."

- A. Lost people live *in absentia dei* – in the absence of God, as if God does not exist, does not see. God is totally absent.

**Psalm 94:3-7 NAU** - "How long shall the wicked, O LORD, How long shall the wicked exult? <sup>4</sup> They pour forth *words*, they speak arrogantly; All who do wickedness vaunt themselves. <sup>5</sup> They crush Your people, O LORD, And afflict Your heritage. <sup>6</sup> They slay the widow and the stranger And murder the orphans. <sup>7</sup> They have said, "The LORD does not see, Nor does the God of Jacob pay heed."

**Psalm 10:4 NAU** - "The wicked, in the haughtiness of his countenance, does not seek *Him*. All his thoughts are, "There is no God."

**Psalm 14:1 NAU** - "The fool has said in his heart, "There is no God."

- B. Paul described it in **Romans 1**

**Romans 1:18-19 NAU** - "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, <sup>19</sup> because that which is known about God is evident within them; for God made it evident to them."

**Romans 1:21-22 NAU** - "For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened. <sup>22</sup> Professing to be wise, they became fools"

1. In other words, although the lost man knows of a certainty that God exists, he suppresses the truth. He hides his eyes from it and hardens his heart against it. In the darkness of his sinful heart he lives his life as if God is not there; as if God does not know; as if God does not see.
2. If he truly considered that God is watching every move he would tremble and cry out. But he denies the truth.

8. Life is about God. God's universal command is, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

Life is to be lived before Him, in His presence, in His sight, under His authority, for His glory. We live in the audience of One, seeking to glorify Him. We do everything before His ever-watchful gaze, with integrity, with faithfulness, with singlemindedness.

I. It is a convicting truth

A. God's ever-watching eye sees all.

1. This takes into account both His omniscience and His omnipresence
  - a. Nothing escapes God's knowledge
  - b. Nothing escapes God's presence
 

**Psalm 139:2-8 NAU** - "You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You understand my thought from afar. <sup>3</sup> You scrutinize my path and my lying down, And are intimately acquainted with all my ways. <sup>4</sup> Even before there is a word on my tongue, Behold, O LORD, You know it all. <sup>5</sup> You have enclosed me behind and before, And laid Your hand upon me. <sup>6</sup> *Such* knowledge is too wonderful for me; It is *too* high, I cannot attain to it. <sup>7</sup> Where can I go from Your Spirit? Or where can I flee from Your presence? <sup>8</sup> If I ascend to heaven, You are there; If I make my bed in Sheol, behold, You are there."
2. The knowledge of an ever-present, all-knowing God should have a profound effect upon how we live. He is always beside you, always before you. Does this knowledge make a difference in how you live?
 

**Psalm 115:1 KJV** - "Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory"
3. We read of Enoch:
 

**Genesis 5:24 NAU** - "Enoch walked with God; and he was not, for God took him."

  - a. The great testimony to Enoch in **Hebrews 11** is that "he was pleasing to God"
 

**Hebrews 11:5 NAU** - "for he obtained the witness that before his being taken up he was pleasing to God."
  - b. His focus was upon God more than men – he was a God-pleaser.
  - c. His focus was more upon God than upon this life.
  - d. His life was one of holiness – he pleased God.
  - e. His life was lived in light of the presence of God – he walked with God.
4. Paul also made every effort in life to live as unto the Lord
 

**Acts 24:16 NAU** - "I also do my best to maintain always a blameless conscience *both* before God and before men."

  - a. For Paul his motive in all things was the glory of God. All things were done as before God. "Coram Deo" – in light of God's abiding presence. He sees all.
  - b. Paul's continued teaching was that of the pursuit of holiness – seeking to live a life set apart for God. He exhorted Timothy:
 

**1 Timothy 6:11 NAU** - "pursue righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance *and* gentleness."

- B. We must do all things to the glory of God
1. God's glory is described by two aspects
    - a. Inherent or intrinsic glory and ascribed glory.
    - b. Intrinsic glory is that which belongs to Him by virtue of who He is. It is the full expression of His being – His Divine attributes.
    - c. Ascribed glory is that which men recognize and proclaim of God.
  2. As Christians we have a responsibility to recognize and proclaim the glory that God possesses.  
**Psalm 29:2** – “Give unto the LORD the glory due unto his name; worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.”
  3. Our purpose for existence is to glorify God – that is, to declare His glory. God's glory should be our goal in everything we do.
    - a. This must be our goal in every action. As we comprehend His abiding presence we seek to reflect Him.
    - b. As Christians our desire must always be to demonstrate to all men the greatness of God in our lives.

II. It is a comforting truth

- A. As we live *Coram Deo* we are continually reminded of God's abiding presence
1. God tells us: **Heb. 13:5 ESV** - "I will never leave you nor forsake you."
  2. It is particularly comforting during times of adversity.  
**Deuteronomy 31:6 NAU** - "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."
    - a. In our greatest trial, He is there. At the time of our greatest need, He is there.
    - b. When Paul was in prison he felt all alone, deserted by all the brethren – but Paul knew that he was not alone.  
**2 Timothy 4:16-17 NAU** - "At my first defense no one supported me, but all deserted me; may it not be counted against them. <sup>17</sup> But the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me"
    - c. This is a never-failing comfort.  
**Psalm 23:4 KJV** - "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou *art* with me"
    - d. Matthew Henry: “Those who make the glory of God their end, and the word of God their rule, the Spirit of God the guide of their affections, and the providence of God the guide of their affairs, may be confident that *the Lord goes before them*, as truly as he went before Israel in the wilderness, though not so sensibly; we must live by faith.”<sup>1</sup>
  3. It is also true as we conduct our work – Jesus charged us to go forth with the Gospel and then promised us that He would be with us  
**Matthew 28:20 NAU** - "and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

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<sup>1</sup> Matthew Henry, *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible: Complete and Unabridged in One Volume* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 1994), 113.

- B. In the face of our weakness God is with us.
1. This was God's word to the resistance of Moses.  
**Exodus 3:11-12 NAU** - "But Moses said to God, "Who am I, that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring the sons of Israel out of Egypt?" <sup>12</sup> And He said, "Certainly I will be with you, and this shall be the sign to you that it is I who have sent you: when you have brought the people out of Egypt, you shall worship God at this mountain."
  2. Moses learned that God's presence was absolutely essential. He learned to pray for God's abiding presence.  
**Exodus 33:15-16 NAU** - "If Your presence does not go *with us*, do not lead us up from here. <sup>16</sup> "For how then can it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your people, may be distinguished from all the *other* people who are upon the face of the earth?"
  3. This was also God's word to Joshua.  
**Joshua 1:5 NAU** - "No man will *be able to stand before you* all the days of your life. Just as I have been with Moses, I will be with you; I will not fail you or forsake you."
  4. And this is God's word in the face of Gideon's resistance.  
**Judges 6:15-16 NAU** - "O Lord, how shall I deliver Israel? Behold, my family is the least in Manasseh, and I am the youngest in my father's house." <sup>16</sup> But the LORD said to him, "Surely I will be with you, and you shall defeat Midian as one man."
  5. In essence God says to us as we cry out in our weakness, "Of course you are weak. But I am Almighty. You need me so I am with you."  
 Jesus tells us:  
**John 15:5 NAU** - "I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing."
  6. What are you going through? Do you feel overwhelmed? Is it because you are trying to go it alone? Is it because you have forgotten God is with you?

#### Conclusion:

1. We must live our life Coram Deo, always mindful of His watchful eye. It is a solemn thought. We must labor so that our entire life might be glorifying unto Him.
2. But it is also our great confidence. Nothing shall separate us from God. Nothing will remove His favor from us. We are His children, His beloved. He is with us.
3. Moses' final sermon to Israel:  
**Deuteronomy 31:6 NAU** - "Be strong and courageous, do not be afraid or tremble at them, for the LORD your God is the one who goes with you. He will not fail you or forsake you."
4. Solomon spoke at the Temple dedication:  
**1 Kings 8:56-57 NAU** - "Blessed be the LORD, who has given rest to His people Israel, according to all that He promised; not one word has failed of all His good promise, which He promised through Moses His servant. <sup>57</sup> "May the LORD our God be with us, as He was with our fathers; may He not leave us or forsake us"
5. And our Lord's words to us:  
**Matthew 28:20 NAU** - "lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age."