

Ezekiel 2:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear: for they are most rebellious.

Analysis

God commands: "thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear." This fundamental principle governs all biblical ministry: faithfulness matters more than fruitfulness. The prophet's responsibility is proclamation; the response belongs to God's sovereignty. This counters results-oriented ministry that compromises truth for acceptance. Paul echoes this in 2 Timothy 4:2: "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season." The phrase "my words" emphasizes that ministers deliver God's message, not their own opinions. Human rejection of God's Word constitutes rebellion against God, not merely disagreement with the messenger.

Historical Context

Ezekiel prophesied to exiles (593-571 BC) who largely rejected his message until Jerusalem's destruction (586 BC) vindicated his warnings. The exiles preferred false prophets promising quick return to Jerusalem over Ezekiel's calls for repentance and warnings of prolonged judgment. Despite minimal visible response, Ezekiel faithfully proclaimed God's words for over two decades. The historical lesson: effectiveness in ministry is measured by obedience to God's commission, not popular acclaim or numerical growth. Post-exilic Israel recognized Ezekiel's canonical authority precisely because he spoke God's words faithfully regardless of reception.

Related Passages

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

Romans 1:17 — The righteous shall live by faith

Study Questions

1. How does this principle challenge contemporary ministry philosophies focused primarily on results and growth?
2. In what ways are you tempted to modify God's message to gain better reception from your audience?

Interlinear Text

וְדָבַרְתָּ	אַתָּה	דְּבָרִי	אֵלֶיךָ	אָמֵן
And thou shalt speak	H853	my words	H413	H518
H1696		H1697		
וְשִׁמְעָוָה	אָמֵן	וְנִחְתַּן	כִּי	
unto them whether they will hear	H518	or whether they will forbear	H3588	
H8085		H2308		
מְרַבָּה		בְּמָה:		
for they are most rebellious	H1992			
H4805				

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 23:28 (Word): The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; and he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What is the chaff to the wheat? saith the LORD.

Jeremiah 1:7 (Parallel theme): But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I am a child; for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak.

Ezekiel 2:5 (Parallel theme): And they, whether they will hear, or whether they will forbear, (for they are a rebellious house,) yet shall know that there hath been a prophet among them.

Ezekiel 3:17 (Word): Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.

Ezekiel 3:10 (Word): Moreover he said unto me, Son of man, all my words that I shall speak unto thee receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears.

Jeremiah 1:17 (Parallel theme): Thou therefore gird up thy loins, and arise, and speak unto them all that I command thee: be not dismayed at their faces, lest I confound thee before them.

Jeremiah 26:2 (Word): Thus saith the LORD; Stand in the court of the LORD'S house, and speak unto all the cities of Judah, which come to worship in the LORD'S house, all the words that I command thee to speak unto them; diminish not a word:

Matthew 28:20 (Parallel theme): Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

Jonah 3:2 (Parallel theme): Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee.