



Faith Baptist Church of Cabot, Arkansas
Pastor's Mid-Week Bible Study
January 6, 2010

Lesson Fourteen - An Example to the Believers
1 Timothy 4:12-16

Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity. Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership. Meditate on these things;

give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all. Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.

Introduction

Having written to Timothy about how to be a good minister, the Apostle Paul now gives Timothy counsel on how to overcome the challenge of youthfulness. Timothy was probably somewhere in his thirties. There were no doubt elders older than him at Ephesus. And some of the heretics he must confront are older than him. Timothy is not to allow anyone to disdain his youth as use it as an excuse not to listen to his teaching. Regardless of the minister's age, these verses give sound advice on how to proceed with maturity in leading a church.

Exegesis

❖ Be an Example (12)

- In word – in what the minister says and how he says it not just in the pulpit, but in everyday conversation.
- In conduct – in the minister's manner of life and personal conduct away from the pulpit.
- In love – in how the minister loves God, loves his family, loves the church, loves those without the church and acts correspondingly toward all.
- In spirit – in how the minister walks with God. [omitted in some texts]
- In faith – in how the minister trusts God across the mountains and through the valleys of personal life.
- In purity – in how the minister maintains pure motives before God resulting in moral purity in life.

❖ Give Attention to Scripture Filled Ministry (13)

In this context, the reading is most likely the public reading of Scriptures from which the minister would exhort and teach. It is in accordance with the Scriptures that the people are called alongside by the minister for rebuke, correction and encouragement. The Scriptures are the textbook for the teaching of the people. The minister who misuses or does not use the Scriptures makes a mockery of his ministry and while some people will like him, he will not be respected as a man of God.

❖ Do Not Neglect Your Gift (14)

The minister must not waste the gift of grace in his life. That a man would be placed into ministry is an act of grace. As a man kneels before the Lord and the presbytery places their hands upon him, there is nothing but grace. No man earns it. And every man who receives it must diligently protect it and develop it to the glory of the One Who called him.

❖ Be Diligent in Your Personal Spiritual Growth (15)

The minister must meditate, or carefully attend to, these personal matters so that his spiritual growth becomes evident in his words, attitudes and actions. How may a minister lead the people to the greater things of God if he, himself, is not progressing there? No minister, regardless of age and experience, reaches the end of learning from and growing in the Lord.

❖ Remain True (16)

Get a hold of (take heed) yourself and the doctrine. The minister must constantly be guarding his mind against the wiles of the devil. He must constantly cling to the truths of God given him not only to teach, but first to live. In so doing he brings deliverance to himself and his people from the temptations of immorality and heresy.

Application

1. Let 1 Timothy 4 affect the kind of minister you want.

Should a minister look appropriate to his cultural context? Yes. But more importantly he should be appropriate in the Biblical ministerial context. If a man is what God desires Him to be, his ministry will be what God wants it to be.

2. Let 1 Timothy 4 affect how you pray for your minister(s).

Do not be disappointed in your minister's failings when you have not been praying for his protection in his battles against the devil. Satan is actively seeking to do harm to the man of God with the intent to harm the church of God. Pray then not just for the success of the church, but for the spiritual development and strength of God's minister(s) in the church.

3. Let 1 Timothy 4 affect how you respond to your minister(s).

- Respect a 1 Timothy 4 minister for the sake of the example he sets for you.
Follow a 1 Timothy 4 minister as he leads you into the greater things of God.
Submit to a 1 Timothy 4 minister as he teaches you the Holy Scriptures so that your obedience is not to the man of God, but to the Word of God.