

Character of A Minister Part I

I Timothy 4:6-16

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Introduction

"Thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ." I Timothy 4:6

- A. The epistle of I Timothy was written to instruct Timothy on how to minister to the church at Ephesus.
- B. "Minister" is the translation of the Greek word diakonos (dee-ak'-on-os), from which we get the English word deacon.

Introduction

- c. It implies that anyone who serves in any capacity in ministry must see himself or herself as a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- D. We are called to be servants and stewards, managing that which belongs to God in a way that will bring honor to His name.

Introduction

In I Timothy 4:6-16, the apostle Paul gives eleven characteristics of being an excellent minister of Christ. Let's study them.

I. We Warn People of Error

In I Timothy 4:1-5, Paul talks about doctrines of demons propagated by seducing spirits through lying hypocrites. Then he instructs Timothy to warn the church about such doctrines. "Put the brethren in remembrance of these things" (v. 6).

I. We Warn People of Error

God holds pastors and ministers accountable to warn their people of spiritual danger. If they fail to do so, they will have to answer to God (Heb. 13:17).

II. We Are Skilled Students of Scripture

"Nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, unto which thou hast attained" (v. 6). The Greek word translated "nourished up" implies that being nourished with the Word of God is a continual process of feeding.

III. We Avoid The Influence of Unholy Teaching

We Avoid the Influence of Unholy Teaching:
"Refuse profane and old wives' fables" (v. 7).
"Fables" is a translation of the Greek word muthos (moo'-thos), from which the English word myth is derived. II Timothy 4:4 says that some "shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

IV. We Discipline Ourselves in Personal Godliness

The issue in ministry is godliness. It isn't how clever you are or how well you communicate; it's whether you know the Word of God and are leading a godly life.

I Timothy 4:7 says, "Exercise thyself rather unto godliness." The English word gymnasium comes from the Greek word gumnazo (goom-nad'zo), translated "exercise."

IV. We Discipline Ourselves in Personal Godliness

In Hebrews 5:14, we find the same Greek word as it pertains to exercising our senses.

“But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

IV. We Discipline Ourselves in Personal Godliness

Physical exercise profits little (to the advantage of) (v. 8). In contrast, "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come" (v. 8).

V. We Are Committed to Hard Work

Having called us to be godly, Paul now brings us back to earth. The ministry is a heavenly pursuit, but it is also an earthly task. It's hard work! "We both labor and suffer reproach" (v. 10).

V. We Are Committed to Hard Work

"Labor" in the Greek means "to work to the point of weariness." To "Suffer reproach" means "to agonize in a struggle."

V. We Are Committed to Hard Work

In 2 Corinthians 11:24-27 Paul tells of the many times he was beaten with rods and a whip, and endured weariness, suffering, pain, agony, and shipwreck.

V. We Are Committed to Hard Work

In Colossians 1:28, Paul said his goal was to "present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." Then he said, "For this I also labor (or "agonize" in the Greek), striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily" (v. 29).

VI. We Teach with Authority

"These things command and teach," Paul instructed Timothy (v. 11). The Greek word translated "teach" in verse 11 refers to passing on information, in this case passing on instruction or doctrine. It is to be done in the form of a command.

VI. We Teach with Authority

Matthew 7:28-29 says, "It came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings [the Sermon on the Mount], the people were astonished at His doctrine; for He taught them as one having authority."

VI. We Teach with Authority

In 1 Timothy 1:3 he says, "Charge some that they teach no other doctrine."

God said of Jesus, "This is my beloved Son . . . hear ye Him" (Matt. 17:5).

Conclusion

As we anxiously await Part 2, let us live the first six characteristics and, according to Paul's admonition to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them" (v. 16).

Conclusion

Timothy was to focus on two things: his conduct and his teaching. Those two things are the heart of the ministry. And what we have learned here today can be summed up in those two commands.

Questions or Comments

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