

Character of A Minister Part II

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 di'ak'on'os, from which we get the English word deacon.

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- 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. We have already examined the first six:

1. We warn people of error
2. We are skilled students of Scripture
3. We avoid the influence of unholy teaching

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4. We discipline ourselves in personal Godliness
5. We are committed to hard work
6. We teach with authority

Part 1 can be found at www.iaugt.com under the Resources menu.

Now let's take a look at the other five.

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

Paul wrote Timothy and said, "Let no man despise thy youth, but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (v. 12). When you set an example, you are giving people a pattern to follow.

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

Hebrews 13:7 declares, "Remember them who have rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God, whose faith follow."

When you minister in the church, you are to lead a life that others can follow.

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

That's a tremendous challenge, which is why James 3:1 declares, "Be not many teachers, knowing that we shall receive the greater judgment."

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

By being "an example [to] the believers, in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity" (1 Tim. 4:12).

IN WORD – The conversation of the servant of God is to be exemplary.

Ephesians 4: 25 – “Putting away lying.”

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

Ephesians 4: 25 – “Speak every man truth with his neighbor.”

Ephesians 4: 26 – “Be angry and sin not.”

Ephesians 4: 29 – “Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth.”

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

Speech that glorifies God "is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers" Ephesians 4:29

But there's no place for perverse talk, angry speech, or a lying tongue.

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

IN CONDUCT – You are to be a model of righteous living – a person who lives out his convictions based on biblical principles. The things you do, the places you go, the things you possess – every aspect of your life is a sermon.

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

IN LOVE – Ministering in love doesn't necessarily mean you're to be a hand-shaker and a back-slapper. The apostle Paul and his fellow worker showed their love to the church by hard work (1 Thess. 2:7-12; Phil. 2:27-30).

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

IN FAITH – The Greek word translated "faith" in 1 Timothy 4:12 could be translated "faithfulness," "trustworthiness," or "consistency." Timothy was to be consistent, faithful, and trustworthy in his ministry. In 1 Corinthians 4:2 Paul says, "It is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful."

VII. We Are A Model of Spiritual Virtue

IN PURITY – In the Greek "purity" refers not only to sexual chastity but also to the intent of the heart. If your heart is pure, your behavior will be pure as well.

History has shown us that a ministry can be devastated by sexual impurity on the part of its leaders.

VIII. We have A Thoroughly Biblical Ministry

Paul told Timothy, "Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine" (v. 13).

READING – In verse 13, a definite article appears in the Greek text before the word translated "reading." Timothy was to give attention to "the reading."

VIII. We have A Thoroughly Biblical Ministry

That model of expository preaching comes from Nehemiah 8:8: "They read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading."

VIII. We have A Thoroughly Biblical Ministry

EXHORTATION – If the reading and exposition of Scripture tell us what it means, then exhortation is a call for people to apply it. To exhort is to warn people to obey with a view toward judgment.

VIII. We have A Thoroughly Biblical Ministry

DOCTRINE – The Greek word for "doctrine" means teaching. That means systematically teaching the Word of God in both group and individual settings.

IX. We Fulfill Our Calling

In 1 Timothy 4:14 Paul writes, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." Some people go into the ministry but bail out because they weren't called there in the first place.

IX. We Fulfill Our Calling

The true mark of an excellent servant of Jesus Christ is that he fulfills his calling to the end.

X. We Are Absorbed in Our Work

"Meditate upon these things," Paul told Timothy, "give thyself wholly to them" (v. 15). The Greek word translated "meditate" conveys the idea of thinking through beforehand, planning, strategizing, or premeditating. When a minister is not doing the work of the ministry, he's to be planning it.

X. We Are Absorbed in Our Work

"Give thyself wholly to them" literally reads "be in them" in the Greek text.

Paul told Timothy to "be diligent in season, out of season" (2 Tim. 4:2). Diligent is a military word. It means to stay at your post, to stay on duty.

XI. We Are Progressing in Spiritual Growth

"That thy profiting may appear to all" (v. 15) suggests that Timothy's spiritual progress should have been obvious to everyone. That implies he hadn't yet reached perfection. A minister should not try to convince his people that he has no flaws; instead he should allow them to see his growth.

Conclusion

Paul concludes 1 Timothy 4 by saying, "Take heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine; continue in them" (v. 16). Timothy was to focus on two things: his conduct and his teaching. Those two things are the heart of the ministry. The eleven qualities we've seen in this passage can be summed up in those two commands.

Conclusion cont...

Paul assured Timothy that his continuing in personal holiness and accurate teaching would move him along the inevitable path of final and glorious salvation: "For in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee" (v. 16).

Conclusion cont...

Are you ready to accept and carry out your calling? In order to do so, we must learn to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ! Therefore, take 2 Timothy 2:3-4 to heart and prepare your mind to understand the disciplines and rigors of combat.

Questions or Comments

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