

## Take Heed to Yourself and to the Doctrine      1 Timothy 4

### 1 Timothy 4                      Introduction

- Timothy was commissioned by Paul with the weighty responsibility of heading up the church in Ephesus.
- Paul now shares some personal insights with his young friend.
- In this chapter he'll explain a few things that make both a healthy minister and a healthy ministry.
  
- These encouragements in the Pastoral Epistles are not really just for pastors.
- Every Christian is in "full time ministry."
- That is, we have each committed our total lives to the service of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- How is a life of Christian ministry really supposed to look – regardless of your vocation?

### 1 Timothy 4                      Outline

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| II.  | A Good Minister         | 4:6-11  |
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### The Future Departure                      4:1-5

- 4:1                      **depart** This word is related to the one translated "falling away" in **2 Thess 2:3** and our English word "apostasy".
- The point is not that people are leaving the church, but that the church is leaving the faith.
  
- Notice the source of these deviant teachings:
- **"Deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons!"**
- See also **Ephesians 6:12**
  
- When a church begins moving into false teaching, many reasons can be given to make the shift away from the truth more palatable:
  - The Bible is inaccurate and cannot be trusted.
  - The Bible has been misunderstood all along by more traditional Christians.
  - Our understanding of the Bible must agree with our experience.
  - We're keeping up with changing times.
  - We're going back to ancient practices.
  
- 4:2                      A **seared conscience** is one that is burnt (literally "cauterized") to the point of complete insensitivity.
- This person is now fully deceived and fully prepared to be used by the deceiving spirit to influence as many other people as possible.

- 4:3 Customs like forbidding to marry or abstaining from certain foods might appear to many as something spiritual.
- In a self-indulgent culture like our own, they become especially attractive as a way of contrasting with the word around us.
- 4:4-5 But Paul emphasizes that no such thing is required by the Christian faith in any ritualistic or legalistic sense.

#### **A Good Minister 4:6-11**

- 4:6 **minister** *diákonos*
  - This word simply means “servant.”
- A minister is a servant. When we engage in ministry it should be done in an attitude of service to others.
- The same Greek word is translated “deacon” in **3:8 & 12**.
- 4:7 **exercise yourself toward godliness**
- The Christian concept of “grace” teaches us that there is nothing we do to earn merit in God’s sight.
- Some Christians get confused here thinking that not earning merit means not putting forth effort.
- Exercise without effort would be a strange sort of exercise indeed.
- 4:10 **suffer reproach** (NKJV)
- Many translations say “strive” or something similar at this point, which might be the better translation.
- The striving is literally “agonizing,” speaking again of the earnest effort put forth to move forward in the Christian life.
- 4:10 **the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe**
- Christ’s death is good enough to save “all men”, but only “those who believe” receive the benefit.
- There is no other Savior besides the Lord.
- See **Isaiah 43:11**.
- 4:11 These things command and teach
- Notice the emphasis on teaching in the Pastoral Epistles.
- In this chapter alone we have references to teaching or doctrine in **4:1, 6, 11, 13** and **16**.

## An Example to Believers      4:12-16

- 4:12    Good teaching without trying to set a good example is worthless.
- 4:13    Three things to focus on:
  - Reading
  - Exhortation
  - Doctrine
  
- **Reading**
- Literally “the reading”. The NASB, NIV and ESV all emphasize that this refers to “the public reading of Scripture.”
- NLT says “reading the Scriptures to the church.”
- See **Acts 13:15** for an example of the practice in the synagogue.
  
- **Exhortation**    *paraklēsis*
- This has to do with encouragement, comfort, or urging the people to do something.
  
- **Doctrine**
- Teaching or instruction. Also in v.16.
- The exhortation needs teaching to back it up. Otherwise, it is possible for a minister to lead his people into comfort, encouragement or action not supported by the Scriptures.
  
- 4:14    **Do not neglect the gift**
- Divine empowering makes itself plain through human diligence.
- Without the gift from God, we cannot be effective. Without exercising the gift, God will not work through it.
- God’s gifts must never be left unused.
  
- 4:15    Paul intended Timothy to take these things seriously.
- He was to give himself to them.
- The idea implies total commitment which will eventually yield progress toward spiritual maturity.
  
- 4:16                    Paul tells Timothy to “take heed” or “pay close attention” to two things.
- Both are equally important:
  - **Himself**
  - **His Doctrine**
- One without the other leads to imbalance.
- Neither a messed up life nor messed up teaching is much help to anyone.

