

## II TIMOTHY 4

Please turn in your Bibles this evening to I Timothy chapter 4 as we continue our study through the Word of God.

I believe Paul's focus here in I Timothy chapter 4 is born out of what he finished saying in chapter 3.

Paul tells us starting in verse 14 of I Timothy chapter 3, "**These things I write to you, though I hope to come to you shortly; but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth. And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh, Justified in the Spirit, Seen by angels, Preached among the Gentiles, Believed on in the world, Received up in glory.**" I Timothy 3:14-16.

Paul is speaking of how we are to conduct ourselves in church, that we as part of God's family are to conduct ourselves in a way that honors God and according to His standards. It is the church, God's people that present the truths of God in this world and Paul tells us that the church is the supporting structure, it is the framework of God's truth and to negate it or move away from it will only weaken the structure. It is what we are built upon; the Word, Jesus!

And keep in mind that the early church read from the Old Testament and then they added to that the readings from the apostles' letters and the Gospels.

We see this spoken of in Colossians 4:16 where Paul wrote, "**Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.**"

And also, we see this spoken of in I Thessalonians 5:27, “**I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren.**”

You see, they were to take these letters and pass them around, let others read them, other churches.

In fact, Justin Martyr wrote just after the close of the first century, “On the day called Sunday, all who live in cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles and the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has finished, the president speaks, instructing and exhorting the people to imitate these good things.” (John Stott, Guard the Truth, p. 121)

And that is what we call expository preaching or what Nehemiah tells us, “**So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading.**” Nehemiah 8:8.

In other words, the text is read. Then they would expound on what was happening in that day. And lastly, they would apply that to their lives today to help them to live accordingly. That is what we do here at Calvary Chapel, and it is what we will continue to do because this is what God has told us to do.

In fact, John Stott put it like this. He wrote, “It was taken for granted from the beginning that Christian preaching would be expository preaching, that is, that all Christian instruction and exhortation would be drawn out of the passage which had been read.” (John Stott, Guard the Truth, p. 122)

And here is the thing, and we see this so often today in so many churches. Any preaching that does not guide the listener through the Scriptures is an aberration from the apostolic practice! And yet, not many teach verse by verse through the Bible today!

And we will see that played out in our study this evening, how these false teachers with their false teaching had come into the church and they twisted the Scriptures to make them say what they wanted and not what God was really saying!

Let me show you how this plays out because, like I have said, I Timothy chapter 3 leads us into what Paul is saying here in I Timothy chapter 4, obviously, but look at how this fits together.

In I Timothy 3:16 Paul speaks of the mystery of godliness or God's hidden program to bring godliness into this world.

How is that done?

Paul tells us that God became flesh, He was the perfect sacrifice for our sins, angels are witnesses of His work as He brought the Good News to the Jews and also the Gentiles, and after His crucifixion and resurrection He was received up into glory.

Now it is the local church, as part of the body of Christ, that continues on in the work, which He began!

And, like I have said, as we move into chapter 4 Paul is going to speak of those who are weakening the pillars, cracking the foundation because they have fallen away from the truths of God found in the Word of God and they are bringing their destructive heresies to the people.

And then he will show us what are the attributes of a good pastor, what is he to do!

With that said, let's begin reading in I Timothy chapter 4, starting in verse 1 and see what the Lord has for us this evening as we study through His Word.

**I TIMOTHY 4****VERSE 1**

Paul's warning to Timothy and to us is that we are to be the guardians of the truth because the Holy Spirit is telling us that there is coming a time when wide-spread deception will come, not might.

Now please understand that there has always been deception ever since the Garden of Eden and the fall of man into sin.

Satan got Eve to doubt God's Word, doubt God's judgment for sin, and doubt God's goodness and that same doctrine of demons continues making man into God and in control of his destiny, he can do what he pleases!

Satan's words, these doctrines of demon's echo through churches today as the pastor says, in a sense, as he denies the Word of God, "***Has God indeed said?***"

Now we can understand that mentality outside the church, with unbelievers, but here the Holy Spirit is warning that this deception will cause some to depart from the faith, some who are in the church, who look like Christians, but are not!

And look at the church today and see all the garbage, all the doctrines of demons that they are embracing, and you may wonder how this can happen? Listen carefully,

Imagine yourself in a room with walls that are papered bright green. You walk to an adjoining room where the walls are green, but the shade is imperceptibly bluer. You enter a third room, bluer than the second. Again the difference is too small to be noticeable.

After passing through fifty rooms, each slightly bluer than the last, someone hands you a sample of the wallpaper in the room where you started. You are astonished by how green it is. Suddenly you realize that the room you are now in is not green at all! It is blue.

Something like this often happens when people move away from Christ. Subtle influences gradually edge one away from pure belief to that which is ultimately not belief at all.

This happened to thousands who have succumbed to siren songs of legalism, mysticism, or asceticism. The tragedy is that their departure was so imperceptible that they did not know their belief had changed.

- R. Kent Hughes and Bryan Chapell, 1-2 Timothy and Titus – To guard the Deposit, p. 105

Yes, these changes started out small, but over time, look at how far some churches have gone by embracing all kinds of sin, by embracing all kinds of unbiblical teaching or I should say they are embracing doctrines of demons.

This is exactly what Paul was warning Timothy about, the dangerous days he was living in and the dangerous days we are living in. Look at how this is played out for us:

- The danger of apostasy. (some will depart)
- The danger of deception. (deceiving spirits)
- The danger of false teaching. (doctrines of demons)

Now when it speaks of them departing from the faith, does that mean that they have lost their salvation or that they have walked away from it?

Like I have said, I don't believe you can lose your salvation, walk away from it after you have been saved? I don't believe you can. I don't believe that the Scriptures support that!

John tells us in I John 2:19, **“They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.”**

You see, they never were saved, they called themselves Christians, they professed it, but they never possessed Christ in their lives.

Even Jesus said, in Matthew chapter 7, of those who looked like they were Christians but there was no relationship there, and Jesus said of them, ***“I never knew you!”*** (Matthew 7:23)

Also, look at Judas and Demas and the false disciples in John 6:66, where we are told, **“From that time many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more.”**

Keep in mind that the Greek word for **“depart from”** means ***“to remove oneself from the position originally occupied to another place.”***

These people came close to being saved but then moved away from saving faith to hold onto these doctrines of demons!

They are not struggling to believe but willfully abandoned the faith!

In other words, they would depart from the faith (the truth of God) and would give heed to deceiving spirits and in the process, they would embrace doctrines of demons which they would ***“Christianize”*** and pass off as biblical Christianity.

And, as I have said, we are seeing this being fulfilled right before our eyes.

An example of a pastor departing from the faith is seen in a June 1997 article in U. S. News & World Report. The article describes a Virginia pastor who “would rather preach on ‘Bosnia, justice, or world peace’ than on Bible stories or personal salvation.” He has departed from the faith!

Another important point to make is that this is a spiritual battle and it will only intensify more and more as we get closer to the Tribulation Period.

You see, we are living in the **“last days”** as we are told in Hebrews 1:1-2, **“God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds.”**

The **“last days”** is a broad term that began with the first coming of Jesus Christ and will continue on through His second coming!

Paul warns us of seducing spirits in II Corinthians 11:13-15, as he says, **“For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.”**

Be on guard, be in the Word because a lie can travel at the speed of light and the truth seems to go by foot!

We are seeing these lies come into the church today and the only way to expose them and remove them is by the truth that is found in God’s Word – the ***FAITH!***

It is as we are told in John 8:31-32, **“Then Jesus said to those Jews who believed Him, ‘If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.’”**

And in John 17:17 Jesus said, **“Sanctify them by Your truth. Your word is truth.”**

You see, the faith is the pillar and foundation of the truth – God’s Word and it is what stabilizes the church!

It is time for us to earnestly contend for the faith that has been entrusted to us, as Jude warned us!

And look at how this is played out in the lives of these false teachers as we read on.

### VERSES 2-3

Paul, in describing these false teachers, says that they are “**speaking lies in hypocrisy**” who willingly embrace falsehood to justify their sin or their pride. And for those who teach the Bible, they use the Bible by twisting the Scriptures to support their own ideas and agendas! Be careful, be warned!

Now we tend to look at cults, like the Jehovah Witnesses or Mormons who think they are Christians, and obviously are teaching doctrines of demons!

But what about those who call themselves Christians and yet, speak against what the Bible is teaching?

And then you show them in the Scriptures their error, and they ignore it, they don't see it, they say it doesn't mean that, why? Because it goes against what they want to believe.

I mean, it seems so obvious to us!

First of all, they are not saved and thus, these false teachers are insensitive to the conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Also, it is because their heart has been hardened, it is cold; it is insensitive to the things of God because they willfully have chosen to move in that direction.

The Greek word for “**seared**” is KAUSTERIAZO, (kows-tay-ree-ad'-zo) and it speaks of cauterizing, and thus, there is no feeling, the tissue is dead.

There is no guilt, no remorse as they teach these false doctrines.



And you read what some in the Emerging Church are teaching, what they are promoting, and they are proud of their doctrines of demons they are promoting, although they will never see it that way, and it is very dangerous.

But if what you are saying, if what you are teaching goes against the Word of God, then it is a doctrine of demons and their language is nothing but lies or I should say truth mixed with enough lies to kill you!

Let me give you this example and you will see the boldness some have in speaking out against the Word of God.

In an interview, Brian McLaren questioned the idea of God sending His Son to a violent death, calling it “false advertising for God”:

[O]ne of the huge problems is the traditional understanding of hell. Because if the cross is in line with Jesus’ teaching then - I won’t say, the only, and I certainly won’t say even the primary - but a primary meaning of the cross is that the kingdom of God doesn’t come like the kingdoms of this world, by inflicting violence and coercing people. But that the kingdom of God comes through suffering and willing, voluntary sacrifice. But in an ironic way, the doctrine of hell basically says, no, that’s not really true. That in the end, God gets His way through coercion and violence and intimidation and domination, just like every other kingdom does. The cross isn’t the center then. *The cross is almost a distraction and false advertising for God. . . .*

Marcus Borg is a key force in the emerging “new paradigm” of Christian faith.

Borg explains in his book *The God We Never Knew* that his views on God, the Bible, and Christianity were transformed while he was in seminary:

I let go of the notion that the Bible is a divine product. I learned that it is a human cultural product, the product of two ancient communities, biblical Israel and early Christianity. As such, it contained their understandings and affirmations, not statements coming directly or somewhat directly from God. . . . I realized that whatever “divine revelation” and the “inspiration of the Bible” meant (if they meant anything), they did not mean that the Bible was a divine product with divine authority

This attitude would certainly explain how Borg could say:

Jesus almost certainly was not born of a virgin, did not think of himself as the Son of God, and did not see his purpose as dying for the sins of the world.

- <http://bit.ly/2SYwQ71>

That is just a small sampling of the dangerous teaching that is out there. And do you see the danger of these doctrines of demons? I hope so and I pray that you do not embrace these false teachers, and there are many. But if they deny the Scriptures, if they move you away from the Bible, flee their teaching!

How can they do this? We talked about it, but Paul, in Ephesians 4:18-19 tells us, **“having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.”**

That is the point, they are beyond feeling!

And we see here in our text in I Timothy chapter 4 that some of the false teaching related to the practice of forbidding marrying and abstaining from certain foods.

Now please understand that there is nothing wrong with being single or abstaining from certain foods.

Then what is the point?

The reason they were doing this was to win favor with God, be more spiritual by having their rules and the idea is a salvation by the Law through Works, which will never save you!

Do you really think that by eating a salad it will make you more spiritual than if you have a Big Mac? Of course not and yet, I have seen some do this, even in our church, abstaining from certain foods to get closer to God! Not going to happen!

Paul, in Colossians 2:20-23 tells us, **“Therefore, if you died with Christ from the basic principles of the world, why, as though living in the world, do you subject yourselves to regulations – ‘Do not touch, do not taste, do not handle,’ which all concern things which perish with the using - according to the commandments and doctrines of men? These things indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh.”**

Again, the reason that they don’t see this is that they have their conscience seared with a hot iron and they miss all that God has for them, they miss what the Holy Spirit wants to show them through the Word and they are embracing doctrines of demons!

I like the way Calvin put it as he said, “the controversy is not about flesh or fish, or about black or ashen colors, or about Wednesday or Friday, but about the mad superstitions of men who wish to obtain God’s favor by such trifles and by contriving a carnal worship, invent for themselves an idol in God’s place.”

If Grace through Faith in Christ saves us, and we are sustained by Grace through Faith in Christ, and we will be received up into glory by God's Grace through faith in Christ, why would we have to practice some physical self-denial for our salvation?

We don't!

It is as Hebrews 13:9 says, "**Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.**"

And let's read on and see what Paul has to say about the food we eat, as again, some think by abstaining from some foods makes you more spiritual.

#### VERSES 4-5

Why do we take what God says is good and make it evil?

That is foolish!

God has given us a hunger for food; there is nothing wrong with that until we move away from the good and we eat in excess, where the food is now in control of us.

Clarke put it like this, "Both among the pagans, Jews, and Romanists, certain *meats* were prohibited; some *always*, others at *particular times*. This the apostle informs us was directly contrary to the original design of God; and says that those *who know the truth*, know this."

Also, there is nothing wrong with sexual desires; God has given them to us, and I thank God for that.

In fact, Paul tells us in Hebrews 13:4a, "**Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled . . .**"

You see, sex within the marriage relationship is good but Satan has come in and perverted sex and says that sex outside of marriage is good, sexual relations with the same sex is good, but God says just the opposite.

Paul continues on in Hebrews 13:4b and says, “**... but fornicators and adulterers God will judge.**”

And let me say this, if you are unsure of a situation you are in, in something that you are doing, bring what you do before God, He will show you what is good and what is not, read His Word, and may you thank God for the goodness He gives to us!

Now, starting in I Timothy 4:6 and running through I Timothy 4:10, Paul moves from the dangers of false teachers to the blessings of godly pastors, and really, all the way to the end of the chapter Paul will be speaking about what a good pastor is all about.

#### VERSE 6

*One of the aspects of a good pastor is that he will watch out for false teachers and warn his people against their false teaching.*

Now some would argue that what makes a good pastor is:

*“How big his church is!”*

*“How many programs they have!”*

*“How big the worship team is with its light show and fog show!”*

And the list can go on, but that is not what Paul is saying here. Paul says, “**If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ.**” And the things that Paul is speaking of is what he just finished talking about, the false teachers with their false teaching, expose their lies, warn the people!

And this is interesting to me because there are so many out there that don't want to do this, they avoid any confrontation with false teachers and their false teaching, but please understand that the word "**instruct**" is a word that means "*to remind*" or to "*lay before*" but in the Greek it's in the present tense which means constantly.

A good pastor is to constantly be looking out for the people that God has entrusted to them and to warn them about the false teachers and false doctrines, really doctrines of demons that they are promoting!

One writer put it like this, "*There's a lot of weak preaching going on in the church today but God hasn't called us to 'pet' the sheep, He's called us to feed and protect the sheep and some of that means by warning them against the wolves and their teachings.*"

That is exactly what Paul warned the Ephesian elders back in Acts 20:29-32, "**For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.**"

But not only warning them but teaching them the truths of God so as false doctrine comes in, they will see it for what it is, doctrines of demons!

Not only are we to protect the sheep that God has entrusted to us, *but a good pastor will also be a student of the Word himself*. That is what Paul said in the last part of this verse, "**... nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.**"

That is what Paul said in II Timothy 2:15, **“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”** You see, by teaching God’s Word correctly, you are able to understand it and then teaching it to others because **“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”** II Timothy 3:16-17.

You can’t give to the people God has entrusted to you, what you don’t already possess, and thus, a pastor needs to be a man of the word!

You see, as you are teaching the truth of God the sheep will grow and mature and they will go out and do the work of the ministry.

Paul, in II Timothy 2:2 speaks of this as he says, **“And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.”**

Remember that God gave the church leaders, **“for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”** Ephesians 4:12.

Thus, in teaching, preaching and warning the sheep, you are a good minister of Jesus Christ!

#### VERSES 7-9

*Another aspect of a good pastor is that he stays focused on his own spiritual growth and doesn’t let anything distract him from that.*

We see that here in I Timothy 4:7, **“But reject profane and old wives’ fables, and exercise yourself rather to godliness.”**

And this is really important for all of us as well.

You see, the focus is the Word of God and growing in godliness, not giving into fairy tales or things that are meaningless.

Don't become distracted from the truth, speak if forth, teach it and you will grow.

The Word that Paul uses for "exercise" in the Greek is GUMNASIA, (goom-nas-ee'-ah) and from it we get our English word "gymnasium" and "gymnastics."

The Greeks were big into physical training and each Greek city had its own gymnasium, Gold's Gym you might say, and Ephesus was no exception.

Thus, Paul picks up on this that was familiar to them and he tells us that physical exercise isn't wrong, it helps some, but that which is more important, more beneficial is the exercising of our faith, to train up the inner man.

Look at health clubs today and what you tend to find is many mirrors, why?

So you can look at yourself and see how well you are doing, flexing those muscles.

For us, the world is a mirror from where we came from and the Word of God is a mirror to show us how well we are doing as we encounter different situations and how we respond will tell us if we are growing, if the inner man is being built up!

People do spend much time and much money, lots of effort on preserving these bodies that God has given to us, it is a multi-billion-dollar industry from plastic surgery, to exercise programs, to diets, to pills and-so-on.

I am not saying we should not take care of ourselves. Our bodies are the Temple of God and the Spirit of God indwells us. But we focus so much attention on the outward man that is perishing than the inward man which is eternal!



And think about this. I will let you in on a little secret. The moment you are born your body is moving towards disorder, decay, and death! They will go back to the dust of the earth unless the Lord comes for us before that happens!

I am not trying to be a downer, but the reality is, we are all going to die and how are we preparing ourselves?

One pastor put it this way, *“There is, indeed, a little profit in bodily exercise. It’s a good thing - but not nearly as important as exercising oneself in godliness. If you have to choose between working out and worshiping, opt for worship every time. If you have to choose between Bible study and bodybuilding, always go with Bible study. It’s good to jog and to do deep knee bends, presses, and curls. But I wish people would put the same emphasis on jogging their memory of Scripture, bending their knees in prayer, pressing on in the faith, and curling up with a good Book – the Word of God.”*

Paul put it this way in II Corinthians 4:16-18, **“Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”**

You see, like I have said, the outward man is perishing, wearing down but that is not who we are. We are soul and spirit and when these bodies, these tents, go back to the dust of the earth we will be with the Lord and He is preparing for us new bodies, mansions for our soul and spirit to dwell in. And thus, our focus should be on the building up of the inner man as Paul did in his own life.

That is what Paul said here in I Timothy 4:8, “**... having a promise of life that now is and of that which is to come.**”

In other words, don't let the temporal distract you from the eternal. We need to stay focused on that which is really important, as Paul reminds us in Colossians 3:2-4, “**Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory.**”

Also, listen to what Paul wrote in I Corinthians 9:24-27, “**Do you not know that those who run in a race all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may obtain it. And everyone who competes for the prize is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a perishable crown, but we for an imperishable crown. Therefore I run thus: not with uncertainty. Thus I fight: not as one who beats the air. But I discipline my body and bring it into subjection, lest, when I have preached to others, I myself should become disqualified.**”

Just as our human body grows by eating and exercise, so too does our spiritual lives, the inner man. That is done as we feed on God's Word, as we exercise our faith, we will grow, we will mature and this is truly profitable for our lives, more so than physical exercise even though it does help some!

#### VERSE 10

*The fourth aspect to a good pastor is that he is committed to hard work*, and that is exactly what we read here in I Timothy 4:10. “**For to this end we both labor and suffer reproach ...**”

In other words, don't get into this race half-heartedly! To be a lazy pastor is not really being a pastor. A pastor is actively involved in the spiritual growth of those whom God has entrusted to him. And it does take work.

Let me show you what I mean.

First of all, Paul speaks of "**labor**" or KOPIAO, ((kop-ee-ah'-o) in the Greek and it means, "*to work to the point of weariness and exhaustion.*"

Next, Paul says that we are to "**suffer**" or AGONIZOMAI, (ag-o-nid-zom-ahee) in the Greek, from which we get our English word "agony" from and it means, "*to engage in a struggle.*"

J. Oswald Sanders wrote, "If he is unwilling to pay the price of fatigue for his leadership, it will always be mediocre . . . True leadership always exacts a heavy toll on the whole of man, and the more effective the leadership is, the higher the price to be paid."

Make no mistake about it, a good pastor works hard and suffers-long to serve the Lord and to take care of His people.

Next, when Paul speaks of the living God and says, "**. . . who is the Savior of all men, especially of them who believe,**" is he speaking of a universal salvation where all men are saved in the end?

Not at all!

God's desire is that all are saved, but it is man's free will to choose that also plays a role. You see, the work of Christ on Calvary is more than adequate to save all men, but it is only effective in saving those who come to Him by faith.

Thus, the warning we are to give as watchmen, in Ezekiel 3:17-21, **“Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel; therefore hear a word from My mouth, and give them warning from Me: When I say to the wicked, ‘You shall surely die,’ and you give him no warning, nor speak to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life, that same wicked man shall die in his iniquity; but his blood I will require at your hand. Yet, if you warn the wicked, and he does not turn from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but you have delivered your soul. Again, when a righteous man turns from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and I lay a stumbling block before him, he shall die; because you did not give him warning, he shall die in his sin, and his righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; but his blood I will require at your hand. Nevertheless if you warn the righteous man that the righteous should not sin, and he does not sin, he shall surely live because he took warning; also you will have delivered your soul.”**

May we do that, may we warn people in the love of Christ of the coming judgment and the everlasting life that Jesus has for them.

#### VERSE 11

*The fifth aspect that makes a good pastor is that they are a strong leader*, and again, we see that here in this verse, here in I Timothy 4:11.

One writer put it like this in regard to this verse, “This has the note of authority. Timothy was not to enter the pulpit with speculations and opinions and theories of men. He was to fearlessly bring God’s Word before God’s people and let the chips fall where they may.”

Let's face it, when you speak forth the Word of God with the boldness of the Spirit, you are going to offend some people.

Over the years I am sure that I have made many uncomfortable and they may have even gotten mad at me for saying what I said.

I do teach the Word of God passionately, but let's face it, if I was not passionate about what God is saying in His Word, then I should not be up here, plain and simple.

If I offend someone, I am sorry, but I am not going to change what God's Word has to say to make people more comfortable.

I have had many examples of this over the years, people mad at me for what I teach and one of them was after the events of 9/11.

I was asked to share at Washington Park because everyone was so upset and fearful of what took place. And I really felt the Lord showing me where to teach from, out of Jeremiah 29:11, **“For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, says the LORD, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope.”**

And I shared Jesus, the Prince of Peace. Now, after I was done, I had one woman come up to me and she was yelling at me and basically said to me, ***“What gives you the right to speak of Jesus here? I don't believe in that and that is not what I want to hear!”***

She was offended to say the least!

The thing is, she was not mad at me but God and instead of getting mad at God, she was mad with me, His servant, and many react the same way.

Thus, many will leave the church and find a place where they will hear what they want as Paul said in II Timothy 4:1-5, **“I charge you therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables. But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.”**

Don't be a man pleaser but a God pleaser, serving Him and let the chips fall where they may!

You see, it is like throwing a rock into a pack of dogs, the one that yells the loudest is the one who was hit! My prayer is that the conviction of God she was feeling would bring her to Jesus, that she would surrender her life to the Prince of Peace!

***THESE THINGS COMMAND AND TEACH!***

#### VERSE 12

***The sixth aspect of a good pastor is that he is an example for other believers to follow.***

Listen again to this verse, **“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.”**

First of all, because Timothy was young, a word that speaks of someone who is under forty years of age, Timothy was probably in his late 30's; he had not established himself with the people, his credibility with the people.

Make no mistake about it, they knew Timothy, but it was this age thing. You see, they tended to keep those who were much older in high esteem and rejected youth. But we need to remember that God used many young people to do His work, like Daniel and Jeremiah and even Mary!

Thus, Paul wants to encourage him by telling him that his age won't matter if he lives what he believes and as he does, others will notice, he will be an example to them.

Paul lists six things that should be manifested in his life.

- First by “**word**” or the things he says.
- Then by “**conduct**” or how he lived his life, the things he did.
- In “**love**” which speaks of his sacrifice towards others.
- Then in “**spirit**” which may speak of his attitude.
- In “**faith**” which is service with eternity in view, not focused on the temporal things.
- And in “**purity**” which speaks of a sexually pure life.

It is as Paul said in Philippians 4:9, “**The things which you learned and received and heard and saw in me, these do, and the God of peace will be with you.**”

This is not just for a pastor or minister, but our lives should be an example to others of what God has done and is doing in us!

One author put it this way, *“[This is a] quality strangely lacking from the make-up of many Christians. Plenty of enthusiasm for a football match, or for an election campaign, but so little of it for the service of GOD. How the magnificent enthusiasm of the Christian Scientists, the Jehovah’s Witnesses, the Communists should put us to shame. Oh, for the flaming zeal again that once the church knew.”*

May our lives be an example to others, how we live out our faith!

VERSE 13

*The seventh aspect of a good pastor is that he honors God's Word and makes it the focus.*

That is what this verse is all about. And yes, Paul was planning on returning to Ephesus, we don't know if that happened or not, but until he did, Timothy was to read the Word of God, exhort the people in the Word of God, teach them the Word of God.

And in the Greek, it implies that there was some preparation before he taught showing that he was committed to the work, the study of Scriptures, he prepared himself before he taught.

I knew a person who said he didn't prepare, he just got up and taught as the Spirit lead him.

That may sound spiritual, but it is not, it is just plain laziness!

Again, you can't give to others what you yourself have not received!

Each study I do takes about 6 to 8 hours, I am not boasting, but if I don't study, if I don't prepare, then you are going to get a lot of hot air, nothing that you will be able to take with you to help you to grow.

Remember what we read in Nehemiah 8:8, **"So they read distinctly from the book, in the Law of God; and they gave the sense, and helped them to understand the reading."**

Nehemiah 8:8.

Notice again what they did. They read the Word of God, they explained the Word of God and they applied the Word of God to the people's lives. We call it expository preaching and we do that from Genesis through the book of Revelation, verse by verse!

That practice needs to continue on if people are going to grow in their faith!



Preaching and teaching God's Word is not only the highest calling of a minister, but it is what we are to do!

Tragically many have moved away from sound doctrine and spend their time on non-essentials; foolish things while their sheep starve!

VERSE 14-15

***And the eighth aspect of a good pastor is that he is completely committed to the principles of Christian maturity found in the Word of God!***

Here we see that Timothy is warned not to ignore or lay aside or bury the spiritual gifts that God has given to Him.

What a great lesson for us to take heed and apply. It seems that the elders in Timothy's home church, the elders in Lystra and Derbe, prophesied and laid hands on Timothy before they sent him out with Paul on his journey.

Thus, to negate God's call on his life that was confirmed by prophetic utterances would be wrong.

And then Paul speaks of meditation and when we think of meditation, we many times think of emptying our minds, a kind of eastern meditation.

That is not at all what Paul is calling for Timothy to do. Paul wants Timothy to fill his mind with the Word of God.

We are good at filling our minds with all kinds of things, but when it comes to God's Word we stumble.

We can know all about music and movie stars, all kinds of statistics of sports stars, but how important is that? Not at all and when it comes to God's Word, that is what we need to know.

Paul, in Romans 12:1-2 said, **“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.”**

May we fill our minds with the Word of God, to give our whole being to the Lord so that we may grow in the Lord and be an example to others!

It is as Paul said in I Corinthians 15:10, **“But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.”**

Spiritual growth doesn't just happen, yes, it is a gift of God, but there is the work on our part, we too must labor and grow!

#### VERSE 16

*And the ninth aspect of a good pastor is that he is faithful and steady in his course for God!*

Look at what Paul is basically saying to Timothy. *“Timothy, keep a close eye on the life you live and on the doctrine that you are teaching!”*

That is an important aspect for all of us. What we do and what we say, may they match up and may they be in line with God and His Word.

When Paul is speaking of saving yourself and those who hear you, I don't think Paul is speaking of the salvation of your soul here, that is not the context of this chapter.

I believe he is speaking of false doctrine and not only Timothy falling prey to it and being in bondage to it because he is not in the Word of God, but leading others down that same dangerous path.

Not that Timothy did that, but it is a warning to him and to us!

Look at these nine aspects once again for a good pastor and really, it should be found in all our lives.

- A good pastor will watch out for false teachers and warn his people against their teaching.
- A good pastor will be a student of the Word himself.
- A good pastor stays focused on his own spiritual growth and doesn't let anything distract him from that.
- A good pastor is committed to hard work.
- A good pastor is a strong leader.
- A good pastor is an example for other believers to follow.
- A good pastor honors God's Word and makes it the focus.
- A good pastor is completely committed to the principles of Christian maturity found in God's Word.
- A good pastor is faithful and steady in his course for God.

As I close this evening, let me leave you with Paul's words from Philippians 3:12-16, as he said, "**Not that I have already attained, or am already perfected; but I press on, that I may lay hold of that for which Christ Jesus has also laid hold of me. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended; but one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forward to those things which are ahead, I press toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Therefore let us, as many as are mature, have this mind; and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal even this to you. Nevertheless, to the degree that we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us be of the same mind.**"

Let us press on!