

## “BE AN EXAMPLE”

I Timothy 4:12-16

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### INTRODUCTION

So, it is time that **all Christians** take this responsibility seriously.

And, it is time that **all young Christians** started being godly examples of the believer.

**You must be a good “minister” of Jesus Christ.** And, in doing so:

**YOU MUST BE AN EXAMPLE OF THE CHRISTIAN** (“Be an example of those who believe.”)

In this passage we note the following points about the Christian “servant/minister”:

- 1) A good minister must be an Example in various ways.
- 2) A good minister must Occupy himself with Reading Scripture, Exhortation, and Teaching.
- 3) A good minister must be Purposed.
- 4) A good minister must be Determined.
- 5) A Good minister must have a Good Testimony.
- 6) A good minister must be Vigilant.
- 7) A Good minister must have a Sense of Awesome Responsibility about his ministry.

#### I. A GOOD MINISTER MUST BE AN EXAMPLE IN VARIOUS WAYS (12).

But what is the meaning of “*Let no man despise your youth*”?

- “Despise” is “think down upon.”
- The verb is 3<sup>rd</sup> person imperative—not 2<sup>nd</sup> person: “Let no one” not “don’t you allow.”
- So others are spoken to here in addition to Timothy!
- “Youth” must be understood in light of Timothy’s likely age at this point [likely 34-37].

A. In **word** and in **conduct**.

B. In Christian Virtues:

1. Love
2. Faith [and faithfulness]
3. Purity

#### II. A GOOD MINISTER MUST OCCUPY HIMSELF WITH THE MEANS OF GRACE (13).

A. Reading Scripture—OT and including the growing NT canon

B. Exhortation—practical use and application of Scripture

C. Teaching—the foundation of proper exhortation

The believer must avail himself of each of these “means of grace.”

#### III. A GOOD MINISTER MUST BE PURPOSED (14).

A. He must not show a “no care” attitude toward his divine gift. He must **care very much!**

- Such spiritual gifts are from God—literally a “grace gift.”
- To neglect one’s spiritual gift is **sin**.

B. The Spirit announced and bestowed the gift upon Timothy.

- Both his office and his ability to administer it are from God.
  - The Spirit gives the various gifts, including prophecy (I Cor. 12:11).
  - The Spirit used human instruments to announce His will and impart His gift.
- C. The Elders of the church (presbytery) gave their affirmation and approval and signified the impartation of this gift by the laying on [pressing on] of their hands [cf. Acts 6, 13, etc.].
- This event was likely Timothy’s ordination service.
  - The exact time cannot be certain—whether at Lydia before he departed with Paul on his journeys in Acts 14, or when Paul left Timothy at Ephesus (cf. II Tim. 1:6—Paul’s hands).
- IV. A GOOD MINISTER MUST BE DETERMINED (15).
- A. “Meditate” or “Take Pains” with these things—vv. 1-14, esp. vv. 12-14. [Give one’s mind over to something so as to be preoccupied with it].
- B. “Be in them”—“give yourself wholly to them.” **Total absorption.**
- V. A GOOD MINISTER MUST HAVE A GOOD TESTIMONY (15b).
- A. He must be making **progress**—spiritual headway, clearing the way before
- Personal spiritual advancement
  - Professional growth
- B. Such progress must be clearly evident to all [believers and unbelievers].
- VI. A GOOD MINISTER MUST BE VIGILENT (16).
- A. “Take heed, pay close attention”—focus the mind on very carefully.
- B. “Stay on, remain, persevere”
- To what does the servant need to pay such close attention?*
- **Your life**—“yourself”—character (cf. v. 12) and behavior (cf. vv. 13-14).
  - **Your teaching**—doctrine.
  - **Straight doctrine and effective teaching are ruined every time by a crooked life or character.**
- VII. A GOOD MINISTER MUST HAVE A SENSE OF AWESOME RESPONSIBILITY ABOUT HIS MINISTRY.
- A. He will save others.
- B. He will save himself. [For the idea, see Phil. 2:12.]

## CONCLUSION

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Let no one despise your youth. **You must be a good “minister” of Jesus Christ.** And, in doing so: **YOU MUST BE AN EXAMPLE OF THE CHRISTIAN** (“Be an example of those who believe.”)