

1 Timothy
C.) The Church and its minister
3. 4:11-16 Exercises for ministers to stay fit
4:11-16
“Correcting yourself to correct others”

I. Introduction

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I. Introduction

Have you ever wondered what would happen to the church if everyone was just like you?

This could be a *glorious responsibility* or a *grave possibility* depending upon your growth and maturity in Christ but one thing is for certain; it wouldn't take long to determine where you really were as you witnessed your life in others. It was 35 years ago today, Donna and I were on our honeymoon and the very first day we walked out of the Holiday Inn and over to the Barnyard Shopping Center and into D'Lanor Jewelers where I met my future boss Ron Hinges. I had made our wedding set while employed at a store in Modesto and was quite proud of my accomplishments. But when compared to all the handmade items in the store I was dumbfounded. Ron came over to talk to us and soon discovered that I was working as a goldsmith, he took a look at our rings and was polite but I knew they were nowhere close to the masterpieces in his cases. He asked, "*How long Dale have you been working as a goldsmith?*" Facing those cases with all those beautiful items on display I timidly bleated out, "*One year*". His response shocked me as he said, "*That's great Dale you will only have to unlearn one year of bad habits, when you come to work for me.*" And with that backhanded job offer I entered a great adventure learning from a master. I look at these pastoral letters of Paul to Timothy and Titus in much the same way as **Timothy was learning ministry at the feet of a master.**

II. Vs. 11-12 Let and Set

Vs. 11 By the time Timothy was placed as the pastor of Ephesus the church was pretty well established with seasoned elders and leaders. It was some of those leaders who according to the first chapter verses 3-4 were engaged in false teaching that Timothy was called to correct. To make matters worse these were some of the same men who Paul had also trained but were a good deal older and more experienced than he was. That's what this section is all about, "**How to stay on the right path while correcting those who are going the wrong way.**" Paul starts out in verse 11 saying, "*These things command and teach*" but in verses 12-16 you will read that every sentence is an exhortation not to others but to Timothy. The word "command" is better rendered "*proclaim*" or "*announce*" and carries the idea of calling one's attention to something. That reveals a very important truth: "**The best way to correct others is by making sure you are correct!**" Charles Spurgeon warned, "*Beware of being like some, who go about with theological revolvers in their ecclesiastical trousers.*" The Bible isn't to be used like a flame thrower to burn the truth into people instead it must be modeled and lived out before people!

Vs. 12 Paul gives **6 things to check in your own life before you attempt to check someone else's life, the first two are found in verse 12.** In some versions the first two are distinguished by two words with only one letter difference; "**LET** *no one despise your youth*" and "*but **SET** an example to the believers..*"

- a. **NEGATIVE:** "**LET** *no one despise your youth*": This doesn't mean that Timothy was to go around and take issue with anyone that took issue with his age, instead it meant that Timothy should be making sure that he came across well to people

especially those that were older and more experienced than he was. There was this young King of Syria named Ben-Hadad who gathered up his armies against the Ahab King of Israel saying “*Your silver and your gold are mine; your loveliest wives and children are mine.*” And Ahab said “*Just as you say...all that I have are yours.*” But Ben-Hadad shot back “*That’s not enough, my armies shall raid all the houses of whatever is pleasant to their eyes in all of Israel.*” They went back and forth until Ben-Hadad said he was not going to not leave any dirt in Samaria to which Ahab said, “*Let not the one who puts on his armor on boast like the one who takes it off!*” Often what folks reject isn’t the truth we speak of but the way we presented the truth. We must make sure that we check our ego’s at the door!

- b. **POSITIVE:** “*but SET an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.*” Having first told Timothy **what not to do** Paul can tell him **what to do in two ways these ought to be demonstrated:**

1. **What you say:** “*In Word*”
2. **What you do:** “*In conduct*”

These **four qualities ought to come through “What you say” and “What you do”:**

- a. **Love:** Above all else in word and conduct we need to be loving. You must not be arrogant, negative or critical. Our correction of others will always go further when we are loving in words and deeds.
- b. **Spirit:** Next the person must in words and action be a person who relies on the power and presence of the Holy Spirit.

- c. **Faith:** In words and deeds we are to be people who trust in only the Lord and His word.
- d. **Purity:** Finally, we must be in word and deed someone who is pure.

III. Vs. 13-16 The work of the Word

Vs. 13 Here we see public ministry and specifically the work of teaching the Word of God and again the emphasis is inward before it is outward, as Paul says that Timothy was to make certain that his time in the word involved **three things**:

- a. **Reading:** “*What does the Word God SAY?*” **OBSERVATION**
- b. **Exhortation:** “*What does the Word of God MEAN?*” **INTERPRETATION**
- c. **Doctrine:** “*What does the Word of God mean to Me?*” **APPLICATION**

The Church needs to hear the “*Word of God*” from taught from “*A man of God*”, “*led by the Spirit of God*” who carefully has implanted the Word of God first in his own heart.

Vs. 14-16 Paul continues on by explaining to Timothy **threes steps to how this is accomplished**:

1. Vs. 14 **Inspiration** “*Do not neglect*”: Dear ones there is only One great Bible teacher and that is the Holy Spirit. We must always remember before we open up the text to pray that the Holy Spirit will teach us. You have heard me often say that a bible teacher must never “*study to teach, they must always study to learn.*” I’ve also said that the most important person that needs to hear the message of the word of God is the person preparing the message because if it doesn’t first and foremost transform my heart it will do little good to the others that will hear it. I also believe and the Bible confirms that “teaching” the Word of God is a gift of

the Spirit and that gift will become evident as you will teach and it won't matter who.

2. Vs. 15 **Preparation** "*Meditate on*": This 2nd stage takes time and to give a typical message for me is around 20 hours of work per study. I realize that folks tend to think that I go online to "sermons are us" and purchase the messages but I can assure you that is not the case. I outline the entire book to start with that each individual message, and chew it over, research the words and history in the context. Essentially, I tear it apart to examine it and then put it back together. I have often heard that "*A bible that is well worn and falling apart usually belongs to a person who isn't!*"

3. Vs. 16 **Perspiration** "*Take heed to yourself*": This is the personal side of the Word as it must remain personal to the reader and this will come as you WORK HARD at applying it into your life. With all the years I've been studying the Bible I have yet to find a verse that doesn't apply to me. My biggest problem is not trying to make sense out of the verses that are hard to understand but rather trying to apply the ones that aren't! I've been working on "*Loving my neighbor as myself*" for 33 years and I still haven't mastered it yet but I keep at it. My goal isn't to memorize the passages, my goal is to be transformed by the passages. When Paul says, that in so doing he will be able to "save both himself and his hearers" he is not speaking of eternal salvation he is speaking of maturity and application.

Timothy was to grow in his walk with Christ as that would silence his critics and inspire his comrades' as they would desire to imitate him. *No shepherd can lead his sheep to pastures that he has not gone himself!* If you want the fellowship to be

more loving than the pastor must be more loving! Furthermore if I'm not willing to grow towards Christ I am not stagnate I'm going backward. During our trip I watched children get on those "people movers" at the airport and they would turn around and face backwards and stand still but even though they weren't moving they were still going backward, that's the case for us if we are not moving forward in our walk with Jesus.

As God's servants we must:

- Preach the Word
- Practice the Word
- Progress in the Word