

*We exist to make disciples who delight in God and make Him known
by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

A Good Pastor, Pt 2

1 Timothy 4:6-16

Keywords: Pastor, Shepherding, Confrontation, Preaching, Godliness, Self-Control, Myths

PowerPoint Presentation included: NONE

SermonAudio Blurb: In this brief series out of 1 Timothy 4:6-16 Pastor Henry seeks to show the seriousness of the pastoral office and its responsibilities. In a time where pastors are expected to be anything and everything Pastor Henry brings the focus back to the essentials—and it is not what many people would expect.

Ask for Email Addresses for those I lost for Sermon Notes. Dismiss

I. Introduction.

- A. Read 1 Timothy 4:6-16
- B. This is the final sermon on this passage.
- C. Give brief reminder of what we are doing.

II. Twenty Qualities of a Faithful Pastor.

- A. The next three are found in vs 13 and are controlled by one verb “give attention” (devote ESV).
 - 1. It is a command in which Paul expects Timothy to make this his consistent habit to pursue and perform these three duties.
 - 2. It speaks almost of an addiction to these responsibilities.
 - 3. Three things that he is to be devoting his attention toward: The reading of Scripture in the public service, exhortation and teaching. Nothing is sadder than in a supposed worship service where the bible is not at the forefront or even appealed to in any real way.
 - 4. These three terms taken together serve to remind believers of their identity in the people of God and what behavior and behavioral changes that identity entails.

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5. There is a real possibility that part of what is the problem in the church is that these three activities have been stopped by the false teachers and other things replaced them. If so, we can sense the urgency of Paul in his present tense command.
- B. The eleventh is to be centered upon the Bible.
1. In vs 13 he tells Timothy that he is to give attention to the public reading of the Word until he comes.
 2. The most basic thing a pastor must be and do is a life and ministry centered on the Word of God. If he cannot get this right then he will get nothing right in the long run.
 3. Teaching the bible always begins with reading the bible.
 - a. This could be used to refer to private reading but that is not the point here. The phrase literally reads, “give attention to the reading.”
 - b. It is a technical phrase that refers to the public reading of Scripture which held a central place in early Christian worship.
 - c. It was one of the practices the first Christians carried over from Jewish worship
 - (1) In Luke 4:16-21 we have the practice described regarding our Lord Himself, who entered a synagogue and took up a scroll and read from Isaiah.
 - (2) By the time of this letter the bible was not only of the Old Testament scrolls but also many of the letters of the apostles.
 - (3) Examples:
 - (a) I adjure you by the Lord to have this letter read to all the brethren. (1Th 5:27 NAS)
 - (b) And when this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part read my letter that is coming from Laodicea. (Col 4:16 NAS)
 4. In 1 Peter 2 we learn that it is the Word of God that is designed to cause us to grow in our salvation. If this is true, then there should be much emphasis upon the Word and the pastor should press it upon the people.

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5. When a farmer would plow with his horse or ox he would fix his eyes on some far object at the end of the field and keep focused on it until he reached the end. The result was a straight line. So too for the pastor, fix his eye upon the Word and constantly keep in before him.
- C. The twelfth is to be passionate for the growth of your flock.
1. This is found in the term, 'exhortation.' Exhortation can range from speaking comfort to admonition.
 2. This is where the pastor takes the Word that has been read and puts it into the hearts of his people.
 3. To put this simply, it is the time where the sermon is given.
 - a. At times this is in the form of comfort and encouragement, pointing to the majesty of God, the satisfaction that is found only in Him. Or it is in the reminding of the gospel and the effects it has on our lives.
 - b. Other times it is begging and pleading with the flock to consider some serious issue in the text.
 - (1) No good pastor can read from Jude and not exhort his people to beware of false teachers and to consider their own doctrine.
 - (2) A biblical example would be the writer of Hebrews who over and over urges his readers to not fall away from Jesus and go back to things that will never save.
 4. Exhortation simply is taking the Word of God and seeking to move the heart and emotions.
- D. Thirteen, you are a teacher first and foremost.
1. Notice vs 11, 'Prescribe' and teach these things is a succinct demand that Paul has for Timothy.
 - a. Prescribe speaks of an authoritative announcement or command. It is given because you are to be teaching apostolic teaching (i.e. the Word) and it is not a suggestion. It is used in military contexts to speak of commanding the troops .
 - b. To 'teach' is not commands as much as instruction. By combining these two you have a sense of the pastoral ministry where there is

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an authoritative flavor to the teaching. Every imperative coming from the pulpit should be based from biblical authority.

2. Teaching involves doctrine.
 - a. It is the building up of the theology of the church.
 - b. If Exhortation is for the heart and will, the teaching is for the mind.
 - c. I want you to notice that the reading of the bible is not enough. God has determined that it is through the hearing of the Word, being exhorted in the Word and being taught in the Word that His people grow in their faith.
 3. For Ezra had set his heart to study the law of the LORD, and to practice it, and to teach His statutes and ordinances in Israel (Ezra 7:10 NAS)
 4. It is important to note that Paul does not say to do drama or give advice on how to be happy or fulfilled.
 - a. Rather it is simply to read and then explain the Scripture. Bible exposition has always been at the heart of biblical worship.
 - b. (good place to make the distinction between what is often called worship and what real worship is.)
 5. So a good pastor is centered on the Word, seeking to put it into the hearts and minds of his people until they are people of the Word.
 6. If I had time here I would consider the terrible cost of churches that do not drive their people to the Word, seeking short sermons and short services that are focused on the entertainment of the person rather than the exaltation of the Triune Creator-God.
- E. Fourteen, you seek to develop your gifts to the fullest.
1. This is the second of three references to Timothy's commissioning for this unique ministry (1ti 1:18; 2ti 1:6).
 - a. It is being used by Paul to encourage Timothy, he has the gifts and skills necessary to do the task.
 - b. Notice that it was both through the prophetic utterance AND the laying of hands by the elders.

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- (1) This is important to Timothy since he is now confronting and challenging the elders at Ephesus.
 - (2) It is not saying that the prophecy is what gifted Timothy, merely that it was through that prophecy it was stated that he was gifted, and the elders laying on of hands confirmed that.
2. Timothy needs to give thought and regard to his giftedness and the way to do that is to call into remembrance the event that confirmed his gift.
 - a. This also is a reminder to rise up to the responsibilities and authority that are inherent in that gift and act accordingly.
 - b. It is also a message to the church to receive Timothy as one who is duly gifted and commissioned.
3. He wanted Timothy to have a Charismatic ministry in the proper sense of that word.
 - a. A ministry not based off of natural skill and energy but from the strength that comes through the Spirit blessing the gift He has given.
 - b. True, effective ministry is a work of the Spirit through people, never through the strength of the people themselves.
4. We learn here that a gift can be cultivated to make it more effective and if it is ignored it is not something you just start using without effort.
 - a. In 2ti 1:6 he tells Timothy to kindle afresh this gift. Apparently by then he had lost some of the fervor and focus and the gift needed to be fanned back into full strength.
 - b. It is a maxim that for you to neglect the Spirit's gift in you affects His work through you. For some, if they are working hard and yet not seeing the effects expected it may be that the gift they are trying to use is not one given to them.
 - c. Look and think about where you find yourself most effective in your ministry to the church.
5. To neglect the gift implies that it would reduce Timothy's effectiveness and faithfulness. There are few things sadder in a church than those who resist or ignore their gifts out of comfort or fear. The church is robbed and the person is robbed.

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6. So a good pastor realizes that he is not there by mistake, but by the gifting of the Spirit. And that he is to tirelessly and faithfully exercise his gift in such a way that the church grows firm in their faith.
- F. Fifteen, you watch your personal life, knowing that you are a sinner.
1. This is found in vs 15 and 16a. This is probably the most intensely personal part of this letter.
 - a. Paul is concerned for Timothy and wants him to understand that he is not exempt from the temptations that the false teachers succumbed to.
 - b. Bishop Butler said it well, "Be more afraid of thyself than of the world."
 - c. To practice here speaks of pondering and exercising oneself. In other words, Timothy is to be meditating on the things Paul has taught him and told him.
 - (1) Part of that meditation is on how to best implement them rather than merely acting out in reaction to something. He is to set his mind and hands to a daily practice of what he knows is true.
 - (2) A pastor who is hot and cold, fast and slow, becomes a hindrance to the growth of a church; it is that long, consistent lifestyle and message that leads the people to maturity.
 - d. Practice is something that is necessary in the Christian life. But it is hard sometimes to know if you are progressing.
 - (1) I can use my sermons and notes as one indicator. I can look at old emails and such as another pointer, seeing how my theology has matured or my wisdom has deepened.
 - (2) Aside from the wisdom of writing out a prayer that is prayed publically, it also becomes a permanent indicator of my growth. How I write a prayer out today should not be the same in 10 years.
 - e. Literally he is commanded to "be in them" (15) The idea of immerse or absorbed is added by the translators to give the sense of

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what is written. He is to surround himself with these things so that they can then permeate his life.

(1) Guthrie says it well in this regard: "The mind is to be as immersed in these pursuits as the body in the air it breathes."

(2) As a fish lives and moves and has its being in the water, as the bird is made for the sky and the worm for the earth---so we must be in these things, indeed, we must be in these things.

(3) To be sure, if the pastor is the example to follow, then the desire of Paul is to see the church become immersed in the life of spiritual maturation as well. It is to be on their minds and in their lives.

f. The false teachers were promising progress in the lives of those listening to them. Paul wants Timothy to not merely confront and reject their teaching, but also to be a living example of true progress in one's salvation.

2. In vs 16 this all comes together in the phrase, "Pay close attention to yourself..."

a. A good pastor immerses himself in the truth to counter the constant presence and pressure of sin.

b. "pay close attention" speaks of fixing one's attention on something, observing and taking note of something.

c. What Timothy is to be focused on are two things, his life and his teachings.

d. Ministry is not the way that a person is filled, but rather ministry arises out of a person filled with Jesus.

3. A pastor is a fool if he forgets to first give watch over his own soul before he watches over others. He must always remind himself that Satan is like a roaring lion seeking whom he might devour.

G. Sixteen, you watch your teaching, knowing that you are a sinner.

1. By now I have said so much regarding teaching that this requires only the briefest of comments.

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2. The good pastor is to keep a close watch on his personal life. But he is also to be attentive to the faithfulness in his message to the church.
 3. Sin has a way of working in my heart to make me dull to the Word.
 - a. I become tempted to use it for my purposes and my glory.
 - b. Or I am tempted to soften a hard word or make hard what should be a gentle word.
 - c. I know I mess this up and it is something that constantly nags at my heart—did I teach and preach well? Could I have done better? Did I serve the people and my Lord? Or did I merely fulfill my task?
 4. If a pastor forgets he is as wicked as the bible says he is, the fall may not come immediately, but it will come. And the harm will not be only to him, but to his family and his flock.
 5. So a good pastor watches his life and his teaching, for he is a sinner. And so he reminds himself of his Great Savior and Master.
- H. Seventeen, you stay the course.
1. One of the reasons to stay in a ministry as long as you possibly can is so that people have time to see you over the long haul and come to believe that what you preach is really what you believe because it's what you live. It's what you live.
 2. I cannot say that it is always wrong to leave a church after a few years. In fact there are times that the best thing for them is to leave.
 3. But I can say that for many it seems to diminish their impact in the lives of those they had responsibility for. The man who moves every 3-5 years will never have the ability to speak the Word of God deeply into the lives of the people.
 4. But there are times when a pastor needs to leave and when a church needs to move him on. And it is when he is not persevering in the things Paul has commanded Timothy here it is time to go.
 5. But glorious things can happen when a man stays at a church and perseveres
- I. Eighteen, you press yourself to persevere in the faith.

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1. Notice how it is written here in vs 16, “. . . for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself. . .”
 2. This speaks of something I have taught much on, the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints.
 3. This idea of insuring one’s salvation is not a vague doctrine that barely comes up in Paul’s writing. In almost every letter it shows itself in one way or another. Even in 2 Timothy Paul said, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.”
 4. Paul wants Timothy to be able to say that same.
 5. And it is my desire for myself. My eyes welled up in tears last night as I typed this part out.
 6. A good pastor does not rest, he labors and strives and fight and agonizes and pushes himself to run the race hard.
 7. A good pastor runs that race and remembers the goal, Jesus Christ who is the author and finisher of his faith. All the while he cries out for more strength and more power by the Holy Spirit that it might be run well.
 8. And this naturally leads to the next point as well.
- J. Nineteen, you press your people to persevere in the faith.
1. Timothy not only insures his salvation, but the people he is shepherding as well.
 2. Hiebert said it well, "we are not saved by our faithful performance of our duties, but the faithful performance of our duties is the sphere within which our salvation is realized."
 3. A pastor unfaithful in doctrine and in practice is saving neither himself nor his congregation.
 4. The greatest pain I have felt as a pastor has been the countless people I have met who started well, and then fell away. They haunt me and bring me much ache whenever I see or hear their name.
 5. If I know that I am a sinner and that I can fall away from the faith, then I must also remember that you all are sinners and you too can fall from the faith.

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6. I must warn you to not be deceived by sin which hardens the heart to the gospel of Jesus Christ
- K. Twenty, you recognize that in some way you are responsible for the salvation of your people.
 1. That is what this passage is saying, and it is here that it all comes together.
 - a. Pastoral ministry is not about large congregations, popularity, the number of people who tweet your comments, or any such thing.
 - b. It is about the salvation of men and women.
 - c. Timothy is seen to have a key role in the work of God in saving people. We cannot let that pass and shrug our shoulders.
 - d. Here we have another indication as to how terrible church discipline is as it moves a person out of one of God's main means of persevering grace by removing them from the presence of a faithful pastor.
 2. The salvation is in the future tense, looking to that final day of redemption and salvation, when we have found ourselves faithful to the end.
 - a. This passages gives us two primary means that God uses to the ultimate salvation of people.
 - b. The first is true doctrine (the gospel, doctrine, and its application in living).
 - c. And the second is teachers whose lives reflect the transforming power of this truth.
 3. The pastors of a church have a critical role that God uses in the salvation of sinners.
 - a. Salvation only comes by faith and faith by the hearing of the Word of Christ, which is the gospel (Romans 10:17).
 - b. And as a pastor faithfully proclaims that gospel and the proper responses to it and as he lives them out himself, he is used by God for the salvation of himself and his people.

III. Conclusion.

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- A. Sound preaching can mean the difference between life and death, and acknowledging its vital role in salvation does not detract in any way from the grace God gives in the gospel. In fact, if it is done rightly then the grace of God is magnified rather than diminished.
- B. Thomas Boston, a puritan pastor from the eighteenth century was confined to his bed. Though he was dying he continued to preach, his people would gather outside the widow of his home. His final sermon was called "The Necessity of Self-Examination." He challenged his small congregation to remain in the faith. He begged them to make sure of their eternal salvation, to "bend all their endeavors and attention to gain a blessed and happy eternity."
- C. Beloved, it is a terrible thing to have a bad pastor and it is a eternally glorious thing to have a good one.

Small Group Questions

- Why do you think the reading of the scriptures has become less common in the worship services in today's churches? What are some effects?
- How can a person neglect the Holy Spirit's work in their life? How does that then affect the Spirit's work through their life?
- Agree or disagree: The pastor who grows himself will grow his people? Why or why not?
- What should the command to "Pay close attention to yourself" look like in your life and ministry?