

## **THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: GOD'S DIRECTIVES FOR HIS UNDERSHEPHERDS**

### **I. 1 Timothy: Basic Local Church Ministry**

#### **J. God's Messengers' Defense Against Apostates And Their Errors (1 Timothy 4:6-16)**

#### **I. Introduction**

- A. In view of reports of great needs and problems in various churches, much of which has been produced by Church leaders themselves, we view the Pastoral Epistles, handbooks on local pastoral ministry.
- B. The church's basic role is to be a conservatory of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15), so those who preach and teach God's Word must understand how to defend its members against apostasy, the opposite of God's truth.
- C. 1 Timothy 4:6-16 instructs God's messengers on this defense, and we view it for our insight and edification:

#### **II. God's Messengers' Defense Against Apostates And Their Errors, 1 Timothy 4:6-16.**

- A. God's messengers must for their benefit often tell their hearers how to discern apostates and their errors, v. 6:
  - 1. Timothy was to be *hupotithemenos*, "pointing out" [for his benefit (pres. mid. ptc.)] to hearers (Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 856) what he wrote in 1 Timothy 4:1-5. (1 Timothy 4:6a)
  - 2. God's messengers for their good must often inform others how to discern apostates and their errors, v. 6b.
- B. God's messengers must refuse extrabiblical sources in ministry and instead exercise themselves unto godliness, commanding and teaching their hearers to do likewise, 1 Timothy 4:7-10, 11:
  - 1. Opposite apostates, Timothy was to "reject, avoid" (*paraiteomai*, Arndt & Gingrich, A Grk.-Eng. Lex. of the N. T., 1967, p. 621-622) profane and old wives' *muthos*, "tales, stories," extrabiblical stories about Bible characters that were composed by rabbis. (Ibid., p 530-531; Wm. Hendriksen, N. T. C.: Expos. of the Past. Epistles, 1974, p. 58-59) Timothy was to avoid paying attention to extrabiblical sources, 1 Tim. 4:7a.
  - 2. Rather, he was to train himself unto godliness, setting his hope on the living God, the Savior of all and especially of those who believe, and he was to teach and command these things, 1 Timothy 4:7b-10, 11.
- C. God's messengers must example godliness in their lives, 1 Timothy 4:12:
  - 1. Timothy was not to let his relative youthfulness shy him away from leading in the church, 1 Tim. 4:12a.
  - 2. The way Timothy was to lead was by the influence of a godly example in his speech, conduct, love, faith and moral purity, 1 Timothy 4:12b. (cf. 1 Peter 5:3)
- D. God's messengers must give themselves to the public reading, preaching and teaching of Scripture, v. 13:
  - 1. The word rendered "reading" (KJV) is *anagnosis*, "public reading" (Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 52), which in this context meant the public reading of Scripture in church meetings, 1 Timothy 4:13b.
  - 2. The word rendered "exhortation" is *paraklasis*, "exhortation" (Ibid., p. 623), what here refers to our practice of preaching a sermon, 1 Timothy 4:13c; Ryrie Study Bible, KJV, 1978, fn. to 1 Timothy 4:13.
  - 3. The word rendered "teaching" (KJV) is "teaching." (*didaskalia*, Ibid., Arndt & Gingrich, p. 190); v. 13d.
  - 4. Timothy was to perform these actions until Paul arrived (1 Timothy 4:13a), meaning God's messengers must *faithfully* occupy themselves with the public reading, preaching and teaching of Scripture.
- E. God's messengers must utilize the spiritual gift that God gave them for service in their ministries, 1 Timothy 4:14. [The spiritual gift was given Timothy at his salvation (cf. 1 Corinthians 12:1-31) but he "had been made aware" of it "through prophetic utterance" at his ordination by the elders, Ibid., Hendriksen, p. 159.]
- F. God's messengers must give themselves fully to all of the above practices that their hearers might see God's spiritual development of them, causing the hearers to have more confidence in heeding their teaching, v. 15.
- G. God's messengers must watch their lives and beliefs to guard themselves and their hearers from error, v. 16a. In doing so, they would "save" themselves and their hearers (v. 16b), and the context of 1 Timothy 4:1-5 clarifies this "salvation" would be deliverance from apostasy.

***Lesson:*** *God's messengers must guard themselves and their hearers from apostasy by often informing their hearers for the messenger's own benefit how to discern apostates and their errors, by shunning extrabiblical sources, by exercising themselves unto godliness and by teaching and directing their hearers to do likewise. God's messengers must lead by example, they must faithfully devote themselves to the public reading, preaching and teaching of Scripture and use their spiritual gifts while focusing on these practices and guarding their lives and beliefs.*

***Application:*** *(1) May we who serve as God's messengers in the local church heed the directives of 1 Timothy 4:6-16. (2) May those of us who sit under the ministries of God's messengers understand the duties they have before the Lord that we support and not oppose their efforts to heed God, for it is for the good of the body, Hebrews 13:17.*