

The Most Excellent Way

Discipleship/Leadership Bible Study Homework

“Again, Teach Sound Doctrine”

HEART ATTITUDE: Persevere with Sound Doctrine

It is not enough that a teacher appears to know what he is talking about, is disciplined and moral, and says he is speaking for God. If his words contradict the Bible, his teaching is false. Paul warned Timothy not only of this specific problem, but of any teaching that caused believers to dilute or reject parts of their faith. False teaching can be very direct or extremely subtle. Paul warned about “deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.” Satan deceives people by offering a clever imitation of the real thing — the truth of God. We must look beyond a teacher’s methods and protestations of faith in Jesus to his teaching concerning Jesus Christ. A teacher’s attitude toward Jesus shows the source of his message.

1 TIMOTHY 4:1-16 (NIV)

The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons.

²Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron.

³They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.

⁴For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving,

⁵because it is consecrated by the word of God and prayer.

⁶If you point these things out to the brothers, you will be a good minister of Christ Jesus, brought up in the truths of the faith and of the good teaching that you have followed.

⁷Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.

⁸For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.

⁹This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance

¹⁰(and for this we labor and strive), that we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, and especially of those who believe.

¹¹Command and teach these things.

¹²Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.

¹³Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.

¹⁴Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you.

¹⁵Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.

¹⁶Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

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- **FOCUSING**

1. How do you discern the difference between sound doctrine and false teaching?

2. What are some of the godless myths you hear in The Most Excellent Way meetings?

- **STUDYING GOD'S WORD**

3. What did the Spirit say some would do in the later time? (4:1)

The “later times” began with Christ’s resurrection and will continue until His return, when He will set up His Kingdom and judge all mankind.

4. What did Paul say about the consciences of hypocritical liars? (4:2)

5. What did the liars whom Paul attacked forbid people to do? (4:3)

6. What is true about all that God created? (4:4)

7. Why should anything received with thanksgiving not be rejected? (4:4-5)

Everything that God made is good. We should ask His blessing on His created gifts that give us pleasure and thank Him for them. This does not mean we should abuse what God has made — for example, gluttony abuses God’s gift of good food, lust abuses God’s gift of love, and murder abuses God’s gift of life. Instead of abusing, we should enjoy these gifts by using them to serve and honor God.

The false teachers gave stringent rules (such as forbidding people to marry or to eat meat), making themselves appear self-disciplined and righteous. Their strict disciplines for the body, however, could not and do not remove sin.

8. Under what circumstances would Timothy be a good minister? (4:6)

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9. What did Paul instruct Timothy to do? (4:7)

10. How did Paul contrast physical training with godliness? (4:8)

11. What saying is trustworthy? (4:9-10)

Are you in shape physically and spiritually? Physical fitness is emphasized in our society, but Paul declared that spiritual health is even more important. We must develop our faith by using the abilities God has given us to serve Him and one another.

12. What should young people strive for? (4:12)

13. What kind of example did Paul want Timothy to set? (4:12)

14. To what was Timothy to devote himself? (4:13)

Timothy was a young pastor. It would be easy for older Christians to look down on him because of his youth. He had to earn the respect of his elders by setting an example in his teaching, living, love, faith and purity. Regardless of your age, God can use you. Whether young or old, don't think of your age as a handicap. Live so others can see Christ in you.

15. What was Timothy not to neglect? (4:14)

Timothy's "gift" (verse 14) was confirmed by prophecy and by the laying on of hands by church elders. He was not a self-appointed leader. If you aspire to leadership, seek the counsel of mature Christians who know you well and who will hold you accountable.

16. What did Paul want others to see? (4:15)

Our progress in our walk with God is important for others to see, especially if we are called to leadership. Skilled and talented athletes lose their prowess if their muscles aren't toned by constant use, and we lose our spiritual gifts if we don't put them to work. Our talents are improved by exercise, and failure to use them causes them to waste away from lack of practice and nourishment. What gifts and abilities has God given you?

17. What could Timothy do to save himself and his hearers? (4:16)

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• **UNDERSTANDING**

18. For what reasons do people today abandon their faith?

19. From what good things have people persuaded you to abstain?

20. How can you be a good minister of Jesus Christ?

21. What does your use of time show about how much you value training for godliness?

22. In what ways can you be an example to other believers?

23. What importance does your church assign to the public reading of Scripture?

24. What gift has God given you that you should not neglect?

25. How will watching your life and doctrine save you?

• **GETTING PERSONAL**

26. What specific actions will you schedule into your daily routine to learn sound doctrine?

27. What false doctrines will you discard in favor of sound doctrine?

28. How can the Lord help you help others to mature in godly speech, godly lifestyle, godly love, godly faith and godly purity?

May the Lord richly bless you as you study His Word!
