

**Title:** True Ministers  
**Scripture:** 1 Timothy 4:6-11  
**Series:** The Pastoral Epistles

1. Introduction –

- a. Pastors are often evaluated on the basis of the wrong criteria. Their effectiveness is frequently gauged by the size of their church, their building program, their popularity, their educational background, the number of books they have written, or their radio or TV exposure.
  - i. These are the wrong criteria for measuring a minister of the gospel.
  - ii. The criteria for assessing a minister, as we have learned, is based upon the minister’s spiritual character. We assess how he loves, protects, and nourishes the sheep of our Lord. In general, we look at how he treats the souls that have been granted to him to shepherd.

2. Verse 6 – Reminding the Sheep is Loving the Sheep – If you put these things before the brothers, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine that you have followed.

a. **If you put these things before the brothers** –

- i. Timothy must warn against coming danger. He must point out what will be the outcome of certain errors or the following of certain teachers. (persistently)
  - 1. The present tense of the participle indicates that Timothy is to continuously remind the brothers to steer clear of false doctrine promulgated by apostate teachers.
- ii. The expression “these things” refers to the things touched upon in verses 1 Timothy 4:1-5. Timothy must submit these things to the brothers, that is, he must place a firm foundation under their feet by warning them of the evil Satan intends.
  - 1. This part of a pastor’s job is summarized in the following verse – **Ezekiel 3:17** “Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel. Whenever you hear a word from my mouth, you shall give them warning from me.

iii. In other words, “A pastor’s heart...is not measured by how good a man is at petting sheep, but by how well he protects them from wolves and feeds them so they grow to be mature and strong.”

1. Therefore, a man of god must develop and preach strong convictions. He must continually warn his people of error as the need arises. He is the protector of God’s flock.

b. ...**you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus** –

i. A minister is a good servant of Christ Jesus when he takes his responsibility to teach and protect the sheep seriously. In doing so, he serves the people of God but more importantly, he is serving Jesus Christ by following the Good Shepherd’s example. Being a good servant is all that we can aspire to be!

c. ...**being trained in the words of the faith and of the good doctrine**

i. An Excellent minister must read the Word, study it, meditate on it, and master its contents.

1. **2 Timothy 2:15** Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.

2. If Timothy was to remain a highly qualified minister of Jesus Christ, he must be constantly nourished by this kind of food. A minister who neglects to study his Bible and the doctrine based upon it atrophies.

ii. ...**words of faith** –

1. Christian truth contained in scripture

2. He must be a student

iii. ...**good doctrine** –

1. A minister must have a deep understanding of Christian doctrine. He must be a systematic theologian.

d. ...**that you have followed** – Timothy had obeyed these mandates up to this point. He needed to continue to serve Jesus in the ministry. He could not slack off.

3. Verse 7A – Shun the False – Have nothing to do with irreverent, silly myths.

- a. Timothy was commanded by the Apostle to avoid false teaching and false teachers. He was to:
  - b. **Have nothing to do with it (them)** – he was to reject all falsities
  - c. ...**irreverent** – radically separate from what is holy (unhallowed). This is in reference to anything, or anyone that contradicts the word of God.
  - d. ...**silly myths** – lies; drivel that belongs to the category of silly superstitions
4. Verse 7B to 8 – Instead Seek Godliness – Rather train yourself for godliness; for while bodily training is of some value, godliness is of value in every way, as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come.
- a. Since ministry is the overflow of a godly life, there is no effective spiritual ministry apart from personal godliness.
    - i. J. Oswald Sanders wrote, “Spiritual ends can be achieved only by spiritual men who employ spiritual methods.”
  - b. **Rather train yourself for godliness** –
    - i. ...**train** – GK. *gumnazō*; to exercise. We get the word gymnasium from this word.
      - 1. Rigorous, strenuous, self-sacrificing training. The type of training that an elite athlete participates in.
    - ii. The present tense of the verb is a call for pastors to train themselves in godliness constantly.
    - iii. There is a call to spiritual self-discipline and this is the key to godly living.
      - 1. **1 Corinthians 9:24-27** Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one receives the prize? So run that you may obtain it. (25) Every athlete exercises self-control in all things. They do it to receive a perishable wreath, but we an imperishable. (26) So I do not run aimlessly; I do not box as one beating the air. (27) But I discipline my body and keep it under control, lest after preaching to others I myself should be disqualified.
    - iv. Hence, Timothy is told to gymnasticize towards godliness.

1. Just as a young athlete in the gymnasium exerted himself to the utmost, so Timothy, by God's grace and power, must spare no efforts to attain his goal.
  2. Just as a young athlete discarded every handicap or burden in order that he may train the more freely, so Timothy, too, should divest himself of everything that could encumber his spiritual progress
  3. Just as a young athlete had his eye on a goal, so Timothy should be constantly aiming at his spiritual objective.
- c. ...**for while bodily training is of some value** –
    - i. The benefits of physical exercise is limited in time and scope. There is a benefit but that benefit is limited. We will all eventually die. (SEE 1 Corinthians 9:24-27 above)
  - d. ...**godliness is of value in every way** –
    - i. Godliness is of benefit not only for the body but the soul.
  - e. ...**as it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come** –
    - i. Its positive effects are also not limited to this life.
    - ii. Oh, beloved, should we not exercise ourselves towards godliness.
5. Verse 9 – What should be Evident – The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance.
    - a. The truth of what Paul has just shared in verse 8 is to be self-evident, an obvious truth understood by Christians.
    - b. Time spent in exercising toward godliness is never time wasted.
  6. Verse 10 – Effort is Required – For to this end we toil and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.
    - a. **For to this end** – connects verse 10 to verse 8
    - b. ...**we toil** – (GK. Kopiaō) – to work to the point of weariness and exhaustion.
    - c. ...**and strive** – (GK. Agōnizomai) – the source of our English word “agony.”
    - d. ...**because we have our hope set on the living God** – in the past and in the present. We are setting our hope constantly upon God.

- i. As a minister we are reminded that we serve the **living God**.
    - e. ...**who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe** –
      - i. God saves all men in the temporal sense.
      - ii. God saves believers in the eternal sense.
      - iii. In this life, all men experience to some degree the protecting, delivering, sustain power of God. Believers will experience that to the fullest degree for today and all eternity.
        - 1. **Acts 14:16-17** In past generations he allowed all the nations to walk in their own ways. (17) Yet he did not leave himself without witness, for he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness.”
        - 2. **Isaiah 63:8-10** For he said, “Surely they are my people, children who will not deal falsely.” And he became their Savior. (9) In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them; in his love and in his pity he redeemed them; he lifted them up and carried them all the days of old. (10) But they rebelled and grieved his Holy Spirit; therefore he turned to be their enemy, and himself fought against them.
          - a. That God was not the savior in the spiritual sense of every Israelite is clear from verse 10, which says He became their enemy and fought against them.
7. Verse 11 – Authority – Command and teach these things.
- a. Timothy must teach such things as, “Apostasy is coming,” “That error is an insult to God and to his work of creation”, “An excellent minister is one who is nourished on sound doctrine which he transmits to others”, “The benefit which we gather from godly living transcends that which results from physical training”, and that “This work will require commitment and sacrifice.”
8. Benediction –
- a. **2 Timothy 2:22-23** So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the

Lord from a pure heart. (23) Have nothing to do with foolish, ignorant controversies; you know that they breed quarrels.

**Public Reading of Scripture**  
**2 Timothy 2:14-26**