

## The Qualities of an Excellent Minister – Pt. 1

1 Timothy 4:6-9

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Pastor Gary Hollinger

**Paul has been inspired to encourage Timothy to pursue personal and ministerial excellence.**

### **I. Excellent pastors must warn people of spiritual dangers. (v. 6a)**

With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” (Acts 2:40)

So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears. (Acts 20:31)

I am writing this not to shame you but to warn you as my dear children. Even if you had ten thousand guardians in Christ, you do not have many fathers, for in Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel. Therefore, I urge you to imitate me. For this reason I have sent to you Timothy, my son whom I love, who is faithful in the Lord. He will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church. (1 Corinthians 4:14-17)

### **II. Excellent pastors must feed on the Word of God so they can feed others. (v. 6b)**

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. (Ephesians 4:11-14)

Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation... (1 Peter 2:2)

Oh, how I love your law!

I meditate on it all day long.

Your commands are always with me

and make me wiser than my enemies.

I have more insight than all my teachers,

for I meditate on your statutes.

I have more understanding than the elders,

for I obey your precepts.

I have kept my feet from every evil path

so that I might obey your word.

I have not departed from your laws,  
for you yourself have taught me.  
How sweet are your words to my taste,  
sweeter than honey to my mouth!  
I gain understanding from your precepts;  
therefore I hate every wrong path. (Psalm 119:97-104)

When your words came, I ate them;  
they were my joy and my heart's delight,  
for I bear your name, LORD God Almighty. (Jeremiah 15:16)

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" (Matthew 4:4)

Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. (2 Timothy 2:15)

### **III. Excellent pastors must avoid worthless teachings. (v. 7a)**

And see to it that no one becomes an immoral or godless person like Esau, who *sold his own birthright for a single meal*. (Hebrews 12:16)

As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith. (1 Timothy 1:3-4)

So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have. I think it is right to refresh your memory as long as I live in the tent of this body, because I know that I will soon put it aside, as our Lord Jesus Christ has made clear to me. And I will make every effort to see that after my departure you will always be able to remember these things.

For we did not follow cleverly devised stories when we told you about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ in power, but we were eyewitnesses of his majesty. He received honor and glory from God the Father when the voice came to him from the Majestic Glory, saying, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." We ourselves heard this voice that came from heaven when we were with him on the sacred mountain.

We also have the prophetic message as something completely reliable, and you will do well to pay attention to it, as to a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. Above all, you must understand that no prophecy of Scripture came about by the prophet's own interpretation of things. For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:12-16)

But reject those myths fit only for the godless and gullible... (NET)

#### **IV. Excellent pastors must exercise their spiritual muscles. (v. 7b)**

In fact, though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food! Anyone who lives on milk, being still an infant, is not acquainted with the teaching about righteousness. But solid food is for the mature, who by constant use have trained themselves to distinguish good from evil. (Hebrews 5:12-14)

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. (Romans 12:1-2)

Spend your time and energy in training yourself for spiritual fitness. (NLT)

#### **V. Excellent pastors must prioritize spiritual health. (v. 8)**

I have come so that they may have life, and may have it abundantly. (John 10:10b)

Do you not know that in a race all the runners run, but only one gets the prize? Run in such a way as to get the prize. Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. They do it to get a crown that will not last, but we do it to get a crown that will last forever. Therefore, I do not run like someone running aimlessly; I do not fight like a boxer beating the air. No, I strike a blow to my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27)

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames. (1 Corinthians 3:10-15)

#### **VI. Excellent pastors must strive to communicate in memorable ways. (v. 9)**

Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. (1 Timothy 3:1)

Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. (1 Timothy 1:15)

“Knowledge of the Bible only makes you a Biblicist. It is life change that proves the reality of your faith.” – Dr. Sajan Mathews, MBI

Phillip Brooks is quoted by Wiersbe: “The great purpose of life is the shaping of character by truth...” He adds, “Prayer, meditation, self-examination, fellowship with other believers, service, sacrifice, witnessing – all of these, can assist me, through the Spirit, to become a more godly person.”