

The Faithful Pastor
1 Timothy 4:11-16

Introduction

- A. Live long enough and one day you too will have the privilege, the rich experience, of a much younger person telling you what you should do. It is one of those “precious moments” of life.
1. I smile when I consider how completely reasonable it seems as a young person to render an opinion and how totally absurd it seems to bother to listen as the older person.

It is a perennial problem. Older people have always found it difficult to accept to accept young people as responsible adults in their own right, let alone as leaders. And young people are understandably irritated when their elders keep reminding them of their immaturity and inexperience, and treat them with contempt. John Stott in *TBST 1 Timothy & Titus Commentary*, p. 119

2. I should perhaps confess that I very much enjoy watching a young person rub their hand across the back of a cat the wrong way (that is, make a suggestion to an older person).
Ex: Telling Jared and some young guys to stick their nose in there. We don't need some young whippersnapper telling us what to do (one time ... don't dye your hair).
 3. Imagine this situation. Something happens to me and we announce that 35 year-old Ben Kreps will be sent in to lead the church. We would see some fluster and bluster.
- B. That is close to the situation Timothy is facing. Timothy's age is thought to be late 20s to mid-30s.
1. Timothy, however, isn't facing Living Hope (faithful believers). Timothy is facing false teachers who happen to be leaders in the church. Good times, right?
 2. Paul gives Timothy a number of instructions because the church in Ephesus, like every church, is in need of a man who is **The Faithful Pastor** (my title).
Prop: The faithful pastor must pay close attention to his life and doctrine.
 3. There are 6 verses and there 6 areas that Timothy (and every pastor or leader) of a church should have front and center in their thinking.

I. Timothy, speak with authority

1 Timothy 4:11 (ESV) [11] Command and teach these things.

- A. Not suggest but command. “These things” are mentioned 8 times in this letter. “These things” which are commanded are the very word of God. Teach these things (even though you are young).
1. This will call for repentance from some in the church in Ephesus.
 2. This young man, who seems to be timid, is to speak with authority. You want a pastor who will speak the word of God that way (even if he is a young man).
- B. The commands are not personal opinion or preference, rather, they are the will and word of God.
1. The priority of prayer
 2. Roles of men and women in worship
 3. Roles of overseers and deacons

4. The pursuit of godliness
- C. This is a difficult assignment for Timothy. Timothy is going to need to use the proper tools if he is to enjoy good success by the grace of God (wrong steps have consequences).
1. So Timothy, don't let them despise your youthfulness. When leadership is questioned or someone challenges a leader it is a significant moment. Trust may be gained or lost.

The great temptation, whenever our leadership is questioned, threatened or resisted, is to assert it all the more strongly and to become autocratic, even tyrannical. But leadership and lordship are two quite different concepts. The Christian leads by example, not force, and is to be a model who invites a following, not a boss who compels one. John Stott in *TBST 1 Timothy & Titus Commentary*, p. 120

2. The example of the leader sets the pace (authority is gained).

Ex: Mother Theresa, John Perkins, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, etc. Not that we support them in every way but their public actions commanded respect.

II. Timothy, set the believers an example

1 Timothy 4:12 (ESV) [12] Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believers an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

- A. 5 areas of life and number one is no accident.
1. In speech (if we do not make mistakes with our speech we are perfect).
 2. In conduct (poor in spirit, brokenhearted, meek).
 3. In love (the preeminent grace of the Christian life).
 4. In faith (not unbelief).
 5. In purity (as a single private actions matter)
- B. What matters more than example?
1. John MacArthur once said that a church will be like it's leaders. That is because leadership sets the tone (atmosphere) for everything that takes place.

Ex: A faithful pastor is never in a situation where he can afford to be a negative example. A faithful pastor is not perfect but his life is worth emulating.
 2. In addition to providing an example a leader must speak words.

III. Timothy, speak the word

1 Timothy 4:13 (ESV) [13] Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching.

- A. The Word of God is central because the Word of God informs about salvation (truth and grace in Jesus Christ and His work).
1. The word exhortation is preaching. Solid preaching always includes an element of teaching. Keep the Word of God before the people.
 2. For preaching and teaching to be effective locally the life of the preacher matters.

- B. Aristotle (ancient Greece) developed a list of requirements for rhetoric (public discourse) that is difficult to improve because it reflects the Word of God. He gave 3 categories:
1. Ethos - character (credibility)
 2. Logos - reasoned discourse (truth and relevancy)
 3. Pathos - passion (emotional response)

Your ability to communicate effectively with people will contribute more to your success than any other skill that you can develop. I've studied success and achievement in America for more than 30 years. I've spoken to more than a million people, individually, and in groups, and I've taken extensive courses on speaking and the art of persuasion. I've read countless books and articles on how to influence, negotiate with and persuade people. I've learned that fully 85% of what you accomplish in your career and in your personal life will be determined by how well you get your message across and by how capable you are in inspiring people to take action on your ideas. Brian Tracy quoted on Dave Kraft blog Feb 4, 2012

- C. If you can't communicate clearly you can't lead. The faithful pastor, in his communication, seeks to implant the word of God into the heart of his sheep.
1. But the faithful pastor also labors in ministry.

IV. Timothy, spiritual gifting matters

1 Timothy 4:14 (ESV) [14] Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you.

- A. Everything gift a leader has was received. He is what he is by the grace of God.
1. A leader may be called to serve in ways he does not believe is a gifting. Over time a leader may find a new passion. He is effective.
Ex: Marty Machowski doing CM at CovFel. Serving matters more than gifting.
 2. Yet over time if a leader serves in areas where grace is lacking he will wear out.
Ex: I can't and won't sing solos.

V. Timothy, show them progress

1 Timothy 4:15 (ESV) [15] Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress.

- A. Practice what things? Speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity. Immerse yourself in them.
1. This is why Beth and I are in a care group. We believe we need eyes on our lives because we seek to immerse ourselves in these things. With the Apostle Paul we have not yet arrived.

Philippians 3:12-16 (ESV) [12] Not that I have already obtained this or am already perfect, but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. [13] Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, [14] I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. [15] Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. [16] Only let us hold true to what we have attained.

2. Why does progress matter? Because as we see folks grow up in the Lord they gain our respect.

Ex: One advantage of a long pastorate is you get to know the leader. You get to see progress. I'm grateful that some of you have endured me for almost 19 years.

B. A leader who does not keep a close watch on himself, though he may ooze charisma, will likely crash and burn. Most leaders don't finish well (biblically).

1. Paul wraps up this word of exhortation by pointing to what is at stake.

VI. Timothy, salvation is at stake

1 Timothy 4:16 (ESV) [16] Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.

A. Salvation is by faith alone through grace alone. We do not trust in our goodness to be right with God. We need the goodness of another (Jesus Christ).

1. How can it be said that by persisting in keeping a close watch on yourself and the teaching you will experience salvation?

2. The answer is that we are only saved from the wrath of God if we persevere to the end. Perseverance is the evidence of our salvation (but not the grounds).

B. Pastors (and though Timothy is an apostolic delegate he is functioning as a pastor) are an invaluable means of grace in our lives.

1. They keep watch over our souls (primarily by preaching and teaching).

Hebrews 13:17 (ESV) [17] Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you.

2. They keep watch by leading and guiding their flock toward what Psalm 23 calls green grass and still waters.

Close

A. I thank God for pastors.

1. Beth and I consider Robin Bosivert to be our pastor. Almost anyone who has grown up in the Lord can point to a pastor that made a difference in their life.

2. I hope you have someone, humanly speaking, you can point to and thank God for. A faithful pastor who made a difference in your live for your salvation.

Ex: I hope for at least a few of you I have that privilege.

B. This text is about faithful pastors (certainly parts can apply to anyone who wants to influence others toward godliness). What is the application for you from this text?

1. We invite you to charitably examine our lives (you can't help but do so). Then we want to hear from you. Psalm 145:3 must function in our lives.

Psalm 141:5 (ESV) [5] Let a righteous man strike me—it is a kindness; let him rebuke me—it is oil for my head; let my head not refuse it. Yet my prayer is continually against their evil deeds.

2. The only perfect shepherd is Jesus. The rest of us seek to grow into His likeness. Your help is invaluable. Thank you.

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