



II. THE MINISTER'S CALL TO ARMS (1 Timothy 4:6-11)

A. The Call to Remind (1 Timothy 4:6)

1. The choice in obedience—"If"
 - a. It is quite obvious that Timothy was being presented with a conundrum that would soon plague the New Testament church as a whole and likely the body of believers with whom he was presently stationed in Ephesus.
 - b. Paul's, and more importantly, the Lord's intent was that Timothy heed this warning and pass it along to the brethren.
 - c. As the minister, Timothy was presented with a choice of whether or not to take the warnings he had received from the word of God and pass them along.
 - (1) Paul obviously considered it his mission (Acts 20:31, 35).
 - (2) Paul sent Timothy to Corinth for this cause (1 Corinthians 4:17).
 - (3) Paul accomplished this in his correspondence with Timothy (2 Timothy 1:6).
 - (4) Paul admonished Timothy to do this work in the lives of others (2 Timothy 2:14).
 - (5) Peter thought it to be a pillar of his ministry (2 Peter 1:12-15; 2 Peter 3:1-2).
 - (6) Jude thought it to be part of his ministry (Jude 1:5).
 - d. Should Timothy heed the warning and instruct the saints accordingly, it would offer a testimony of his character and usefulness in the Lord's work.
2. The confirmation of obedience—it would testify:
 - a. He was a good minister of Jesus Christ.
 - (1) Joshua was identified as Moses' minister (Exodus 24:13; Joshua 1:1) and in another as Moses' servant (Numbers 11:28) which stood before Moses as an attendant (Deuteronomy 1:38).
 - (2) Elisha is said to have ministered unto Elijah (1 Kings 19:21) which was described elsewhere as pouring water on the hands of Elijah (2 Kings 3:11).
 - (3) Perhaps it is a little too simple, but 2 Chronicles 29:11 associates ministering unto the LORD as standing before Him and serving Him.
 - (4) This idea of a minister equaling a servant is confirmed in the comparison presented by the Saviour in Matthew 20:26-28.
 - (5) Approving one's self as a minister is accomplished by enduring less than favourable circumstances (2 Corinthians 6:4-10).
 - (6) The New Testament minister is emphasized as one who makes something known (Ephesians 6:21; Colossians 1:7-8, 25-29; Colossians 4:7; 1 Thessalonians 3:2-3; 1 Peter 4:10).
 - b. He was nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine. In other words, Timothy's obedience demonstrated he was a mature believer who was nourished and not malnourished in the scripture.



B. The Call to Refuse (1 Timothy 4:7-11)

1. The warnings of a good minister (1 Timothy 4:6-9)
 - a. To remind (1 Timothy 4:6)
 - b. To refuse (1 Timothy 4:7-8)
 - (1) The contrasted matters (1 Timothy 4:7)
 - a) Fables
 - i) Fables defined
 - (a) Historically, the word *fable* identifies something that is a falsehood or fictitious narrative.
 - (b) Scripturally speaking
 - (i) They minister questions rather than faith (1 Timothy 1:4).
 - (ii) Paul specifically battled against profane fables, old wives' fables (1 Timothy 4:7), and Jewish fables (Titus 1:14).
 - (iii) These are where men turn when they turn from the truth (2 Timothy 4:4).
 - (iv) The gospel of Christ was and is not a cunningly devised fable (2 Peter 1:16).
 - ii) Fables characterized
 - (a) Their nature—"profane"; simply put, it is unholy (Ezekiel 44:23) and could be viewed as that which is carnal or of the flesh
 - (b) Their origin—"old wives"; This would suggest tradition passed down from one generation to the next.
 - b) Godliness—two things should be understood about this
 - i) Godliness, in a basic sense, means god likeness.
 - ii) Godliness is here contrasted with fables and is associated with spiritual life. Contrariwise, fables are associated with the physical life and carnal things.
 - c) Perhaps the best way to show the difference between the two is to consider the words of 2 Corinthians 4:18. In that passage, the two contrasting words are *temporal* and *eternal*.
 - (2) The contrasting charges (1 Timothy 4:7)
 - a) Profane and old wives' fables are to be **refused**. In other words, fables are not to be pursued or attended unto.
 - b) Godliness is to be **exercised**. In other words, men are to given themselves to the pursuit of and practice of godliness.
 - (3) The contrasting results (1 Timothy 4:8)
 - a) Little profit
 - i) The common assumption when studying the scripture topically is that "bodily exercise" speaks of physical fitness.



- ii) However, when the context is considered, the introduction of physical fitness would seem unusual and erratic.
 - iii) After all, the exercise contrasted in the passage is between fleshly or carnal things and godliness.
 - iv) The basic idea of exercise is the carrying out of an action and the contrast presented is that a man can either do that in godly things or bodily things. Historically, the word *bodily* meant pertaining to the body and was used to contrast that which is spiritual.
 - v) In the context, the message is that exercising one's self in profane and old wives' fables or other things pertaining to the flesh offered little profit.
- b) Profitable unto all things
- i) Exercising one's self in godliness offers a much different set of results.
 - ii) In a general sense, the Bible states that "godliness is profitable unto all things."
 - iii) More specifically, the scripture divides the benefits into two categories.
 - (a) Promise of the life that now is
 - (b) Promise of that which is to come
 - iv) The truth is that exercising one's self in carnal or fleshly things (things pertaining to this life) can, at times, offer temporary profit, albeit limited to "the life that now is." Even there, the profit is minimal. However, godliness offers profit both now and into eternity.
 - v) The Bible uses the word *godliness* fifteen times (1 Timothy 2:2, 10; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 Timothy 4:7-8; 1 Timothy 6:3, 5-6, 11; 2 Timothy 3:5; Titus 1:1; 2 Peter 1:3, 6-7; 2 Peter 3:11).
 - (a) The opportunity to live a life of godliness is the reason why we pray for those in authority (1 Timothy 2:2).
 - (b) Erroneous behaviour and teaching on godliness suggests a man's pride and ignorance and warns believers to disassociate (1 Timothy 6:3-5).
 - (c) Godliness with contentment is great gain (1 Timothy 6:6).
 - (d) Godliness is one of the supreme virtues encouraged by the apostle Peter (2 Peter 1:3-7).
 - (e) Understanding Bible prophecy ought to propel believers to godliness (2 Peter 3:11).
- c. To receive (1 Timothy 4:9)
- (1) This (the above statement) is a faithful saying.
 - (2) This is worthy of all acceptance.



2. The motivation of a good minister (1 Timothy 4:10)
 - a. The labour
 - (1) The object of labour
 - a) The demonstration of the object
 - i) For
 - ii) Therefore
 - b) The identification of the object
 - i) Exercising unto godliness
 - ii) Life now and to come
 - (2) The companion of labour—"and suffer reproach"
 - b. The trust—"because we trust in the living God"
 - c. The person
 - (1) The identification of the person
 - a) The living God
 - b) The Saviour
 - (2) The work of the person
 - a) Its twofold nature
 - i) Saviour of all men
 - ii) Specially of those that believe
 - b) Its complication
 - i) God, the **general** Saviour
 - (a) The problem—Some might interpret this to mean that all men will be saved regardless of their willingness to humble themselves and trust Christ as Saviour.
 - (b) The provision
 - (i) God is the general Saviour of all men in His provision for salvation. In other words, Christ's salvation has been provided for ALL MEN.
 - (ii) God is the general Saviour of all men in His offer of salvation. In other words, Christ's salvation is accessible and available to ALL MEN.
 - ii) God, the **special** Saviour
 - (a) Just because salvation is provided for and available to all men does not mean that all men are saved.
 - (b) The prerequisite for obtaining the salvation and specifically knowing God as Saviour is to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ for salvation.
 3. The charge of a good minister (1 Timothy 4:11)
 - a. The subject—"These things"
 - b. The command—"command and teach"
 - (1) To command is to order or direct.
 - (2) To teach is to instruct or inform.



C. The Call to Represent (1 Timothy 4:12)

1. The negative

- a. The threatening audience—"Let no man" (see Titus 2:15)
 - (1) Timothy was responsible for how others handled his age. Paul's advice was for him to be an example in every facet of life. If he did that, no man would despise his youth.
 - (2) In the beginning, David was disdained because of his youth (1 Samuel 17:33, 42), but when he defeated Goliath, he was given the respect of a war hero. David did not demand or expect others to respect him; he earned it through his actions.
- b. The threatening act—"despise"; this means to scorn or disdain
- c. The threatening attribute—"thy youth"

2. The positive

- a. The responsibility expressed—"but be thou an example"
- b. The pattern expressed—"of the believers"; Note: We typically read this as though it says "to the believers," but the word *of* makes allowance for a broader teaching. Timothy was not just to be an example to believers, but of believers. This could be accomplished both around the saved and the unsaved.
- c. The areas expressed
 - (1) In word—written or spoken communication
 - a) One of the first things to note is that there is a distinction between the intended truth conveyed by using the phrase *in word* and the phrase *in conversation*.
 - b) This point involves communication, either written or spoken (Colossians 3:17; 1 John 3:18).
 - (2) In conversation—way of life before others
 - a) Conversation involves something observable (1 Peter 2:12; 1 Peter 3:2) and considerable (Hebrews 13:7).
 - b) Scripturally speaking, our conversation reveals how we live our lives in front of others.
 - (3) In charity—love to others
 - a) Charity is a deeper, fuller, and stronger type of love.
 - b) It is the peak of Christianity (1 Corinthians 13:13; 2 Peter 1:7) and is to be sought above all else (Colossians 3:14).
 - (4) In spirit—attitude
 - a) While we understand the word spirit or Spirit can speak of a member of the Godhead or to one man's three-part makeup, this is not the intended meaning in our passage.
 - b) In our context, it refers more to character or disposition (see Proverbs 25:28; 1 Peter 3:4)
 - (5) In faith—trust of God
 - (6) In purity—way of life before God
 - a) Timothy's rearing shielded him from wickedness and filth to which others were exposed (2 Timothy 1:5).
 - b) With this in mind, Paul told him to be an example in purity.