

Study and Ministry

How can I use my study to reach others?

- I received some advice a number of years ago about study and teaching
- Taking that advice has never led me astray
- It is to consider every time of study my own
- Even when I am preparing to teach to others
- Don't study for someone else

- I have a relationship with God
- I am meant to be growing
- I need the enlightenment and instruction of scripture
- And whatever I learn should overflow to those I teach

- Prep for teaching is personal study time
- If I learn nothing, I have nothing to teach
- But I always have learned something
- And I have always had something to teach

- Today we're asking, how can I use my study to reach others?
- I think our passage of the day has answers

- In it, Paul speaks to Timothy about his life and pastoral ministry
- He says if Timothy helps others remember things from scripture, he will be nourished
- That he will have a better understanding of the faith and of doctrine
- It seems this will be the case for us as well

- You see, every Christian is commanded to make disciples - to teach others
- Timothy is being instructed personally, about his own particular ministry here
- But there's much we can take for our ministry in these 11 verses

- Our task will be to answer our question of the day
- As we continue talking about our personal, diligent examination of God's word
- And how it is useful (critical, really) in our daily walk with Christ

- Paul speaks of false teaching and false teachers in preceding verses
- He says they will "depart from the faith"
- And says they will give heed to "seducing spirits" and "doctrines of devils"

- He encourages Timothy to remember this and inform the brethren about it
- But to go beyond that as well
- Emphasizing always good doctrine...

1 Timothy 4:6

6 If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained.

- Yes, there will be some that teach falsely
- That believe and teach things contrary to the word of God
- But we are to know and live in truth
- To remind one another of sound teaching

- Timothy was tasked with these timely reminders
- He was to feed the brethren wholesome words of truth
- So that he and those he was teaching would be nourished up
- That their minds would be filled with excellent and useful teaching
- Teaching which came directly from God

- No man finds or reminds anyone of this kind of teaching without study
- Proper study, with honesty of heart, and a Godly, focused mind

- If anyone is to spot false teaching
- Then they must be so well-acquainted with the text, that they know when something contradicts it
- This means detailed and consistent study

- Timothy studied in this way
- This is the kind of doctrine he continued in...

1 Timothy 4:7-8

7 But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.

8 For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.

- That which is profane - ungodly - should be refused
- Old or new, anything which contradicts or distracts from truth should be thrown out

- But Godly character should be pursued
- And it can be shaped only by scripture
- Let's look at the first five verses for context...

1 Timothy 4:1-5

1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;
 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.
 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving:
 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.

- If we are tasked with recognizing that which is false
- Then we must be so well-acquainted with the text that we notice even subtle deviations
- It says that some will depart from the faith and be seduced
- Instead of speaking truth, they will believe and then begin to speak lies
- Demanding that others hold to rules and guidelines that are not scriptural
- We must not go their way
- Those of us who are responsible to teach must exercise ourselves unto godliness
- Exercising ourselves unto other, worldly things has minimal profit
- For instance
- A person can build up the physical body
- But that is a temporary improvement
- The results fade even more quickly than they arrive
- But righteous character profits on earth and in eternity
- It lasts
- For our own growth and strengthening in faith
- And so that we can help and encourage others, we must know and do the scripture...

1 Timothy 4:9-11

9 This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.
 10 For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe.

11 These things command and teach.

- It is for truth that we suffer persecution in the world
- The falsehoods and fairytales of false teachers are worthy of no suffering - at least in this world
- Those things are vain and worthless

- We trust in the Living God and Jesus Christ His son
- And we want to know what He said and what He meant by what He said
- This is the only teaching of value for mankind
- So learn it and teach it with diligence
- Not just a minister like Timothy, but every disciple of Christ

- That which is outside the word of God may bring temporary help
- But it is only the good doctrine of faith that comes with study that profits long-term

- And Timothy was to, in his learning and teaching, be an example...

1 Timothy 4:12

12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

- Depth of knowledge in the word of God was the beginning of character change
- It would take obedience and a daily walk with Christ to complete it
- No matter his age, this Godliness was to show forth from Timothy
- He was to be example - as every believer - in numerous areas
- In what he said, his daily actions, the way in which he loved, his spirit, his faith, and his purity

- Paul wanted Timothy to maintain this example and told him how...

1 Timothy 4:13

13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.

- Paul would come in person, but until He did
- Timothy was to read, come alongside others, and learn sound teaching
- He was to embrace the truth and act upon it consistently
- This was to be his concentration in regard to ministry

- And this is a proper instruction for us as well...

1 Timothy 4:14-16

14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery.

15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.

16 Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.

- Timothy was gifted, like everyone in the church, to do ministry
- Exactly that ministry which God had called him personally to do
- But in order to carry it out, he would need equipping

- He was to meditate upon the truth found here
- To give himself wholly to it
- Both knowing it - and obeying it

- It was not just for the purpose of telling others (although it was for that purpose)
- But for himself - his own relationship with Christ
- And as he was becoming what God wanted him to be
- He could then instruct others
- Both parties would be built up in the faith
- Given a solid foundation
- Provided with eternal value
- And then capable of living in victory
- For the glory of God