



First Timothy

Good Servant

Following Sound Doctrine

I Timothy 4:6

Lesson Fifteen

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum

First Timothy

A Study of the First Letter of the Apostle Paul to His Son in the Faith

Good Servant

What does a good servant do? We begin, with this lesson, a section of practical advice for Timothy, but advice which is good also for any teacher or minister. Let's look at how Paul described a good servant who was a church leader. Read I Timothy 4:6

The first thing that we notice is that Timothy had a specific task. Good servants understand their job. Back in the third verse of the first chapter, Paul said that he had asked Timothy to remain in Ephesus to give further instruction to some people who were teaching "myths and endless genealogies" to the people in the Ephesian church. He said that the goal of that instruction was to be "love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith."

In our last lesson, we learned that there are people who were teaching things that were given them by Satan. They were disturbing the church and leading people astray. Paul said that Timothy should be teaching the church that all things that God blesses are good, because God created them.

In our verse for today, we first hear Paul say that pointing out these things to the church is good. It is important for Christians to know the right things to teach. It is easy to get sidetracked by things that are not important or that are not what the church needs to hear. At this time, in this church, the false teachers were making people feel that faith was not enough and that they needed to be doing more...earning their salvation by doing things.

Paul told Timothy in II Timothy 2:2 that it was the responsibility of the teacher or minister in the church to teach what they had learned from him, they were to pass on to others who could also pass them on to even others. A good servant...a good teacher...will know that what you learn should be shared with others.

It's like the person being told by the drug dealer that just taking this drug will make you feel really, really good. But, a friend comes along and says, "Wait, that stuff could kill you. It could reduce your reflexes and cause a car crash. It could make you feel so good that you will do something that at that moment seems like a good idea, but later will embarrass you and even hurt a friend or family member." We also know that in the end, drugs will ruin your life. So, the friend is being what Paul told Timothy to be. Be a good servant and tell everyone that bad advice (the drug dealer) will hurt you and those around you. Pass on to others what is good.

Paul says that what Timothy will be doing is "pointing out" things to the church. The word which we have as "pointing out" is not about issuing orders. It is not a word that means laying down the law. It is a gentle word. It means to advise or to suggest. Humility is a primary qualification for a teacher. Timothy should be leading them to discover with their own minds what is the truth, not imply that he knows it all and that they must come to him for the truth.

He goes on to say that this is the sign of a good servant. Shepherds are known to be gentle. Paul spoke of gentleness many times. (See II Thessalonians 2:7; II Timothy 2:24; Titus 3:2) He said the one of the fruits of the Holy Spirit of God is gentleness.

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By teaching this way, they become “good servants of *Christ Jesus*.” Paul referred to the gentleness of Jesus in II Corinthians 10:1. Jesus was the *good shepherd*. If Christian teachers are good servants of Christ Jesus, we must be like Him, humble and according to Philippians 2:8, “obedient to the point of death.”

Paul then said, that Timothy should be “constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of sound doctrine which you have been following.” Timothy was brought up in faith. This is referred to in II Timothy 1:5, where his mother and grandmother are referred to as women of faith. But, background and previous life, though important, don’t make us good servants always. We must constantly nourish our Christian life. Just as the physical body needs regular nourishment, so does the spiritual body. Some people want to depend on their parent’s faith and good works. However, that doesn’t work. Salvation and Christian service are an individual opportunity and task.

Timothy, and we, should be “nourished on the words of the faith and of sound doctrine.” Words of the faith come to us through Scripture, through stories of great Christians from times past, and from people we know who are faithful Christians. Sound doctrine (doctrine is simply the truth about God, His work and His Word) comes to us the same way, with the understanding that the word “sound” part is most important. What we read in Scripture must be interpreted. There are good sources for discovering good, sound doctrine as written in Scripture. We have stories and writings of great Christians who have lived before us which can help us know sound doctrine. There are many Christian teachers and writers today who study God’s Word and help us know the truth.

The teacher or leader who doesn’t constantly study and grow is not worthy to be called a servant of God. The truth of God’s Word feels right in our hearts. That’s because God’s Holy Spirit was sent by Jesus to guide us in truth. (John 16:13) If we stay close to Him in prayer, read His Word in faith, and depend on His Spirit for guidance, we will be nourished in sound doctrine.

Paul goes on to compliment Timothy as someone who has been following sound doctrine.

*Underlined words and phrases are to be used in completing the Student Worksheet.

Lesson Goal: To let students know what are some of the qualifications of a good servant.

Scripture Memory: “**In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.**” I Timothy 4:6



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Student Worksheet—Following Through

Good Servant

- >How were the false teachers leading people astray?

- >“Pointing out” is not about issuing orders. It is not a word that means laying down the _____. It is a _____ word. It means to _____ or to _____.
- >What is the primary qualification of a teacher?
- >What two things were the people in the church at Ephesus being told not to do?
- >What did Paul mean when he said that false teachers had consciences seared with a hot iron?
- >If Christian teachers are go be good _____ of Christ Jesus, we must be like Him, _____ and according to Philippians 2:8, “_____ to the point of death.”
- >How do words of the faith come to us?
- >What does doctrine mean?

For Memory: “In pointing out these things to the brethren, you will be a good servant of Christ Jesus, constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine which you have been following.” I Timothy 4:6

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that the God of the Bible is the true God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.