



First Timothy

Christian Duties

Read, Preach, Teach

I Timothy 4:13, 14

Lesson Eighteen

Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum



First Timothy

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

Christian Duties

Timothy was asked to stay in Ephesus while Paul went elsewhere. This letter, as we have discovered, was written to both Timothy and the church at Ephesus for encouragement and for further instruction. Paul had taught them a lot while he was in Ephesus, but he was not through. Also, there were those who wanted to add to Paul's teaching and convince the people that there was more to becoming a child of God than Paul had said. As he was concluding the letter, he assigned Timothy some specific Christian duties to keep things going the right way in Ephesus. Read I Timothy 4:13, 14.

Paul definitely intended to come back to Ephesus. But, he told Timothy, until he came back, Timothy needed to focus on three things:

First, he said that Timothy should see to it that the church heard the Word of God read out loud. There are several reasons for that. First, many people in those days could not read. It was just not that important to the average person to be able to read. Second, there were very few copies of Scripture. They certainly weren't lying around in every home. Probably, the only copies available to most people were in the Jewish synagogues. When Christian churches began, they met in homes and finding copies of Scripture for most people was impossible.

Also, the only Scripture available at that time was what we now call the Old Testament. Paul, Timothy and other church leaders gave their messages and taught from the Old Testament. The copy of the Old Testament, used by most, was a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament called the Septuagint. (Sep'-too-uh-jint)

The churches copied the way the Jewish synagogues did their worship. They would read out loud a portion of the Scripture and then someone would exhort, or preach. Of course the part of Scripture would be carefully chosen and the preacher would be guided by God's Holy Spirit as to what should be said about that Scripture. Almost all the New Testament books contain quotations of Old Testament Scripture. Jesus, Himself quoted the Old Testament. He preached a sermon from the Old Testament (Isaiah 61) recorded in Luke 4:16ff.

As time went by, and the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John) were written, and as the churches began sharing the letters of Paul, and others, the churches would have a reading from the Old Testament, and then one from the New Testament. This reading was out loud, and many churches today follow this pattern.

Second, he said to exhort, or preach. This was the way to urge people to do what the Scripture was telling them to do. Also, it was pointing out to them where they were not doing what Scripture was telling them to do. The word exhort has a lot of emotion or feeling in it. The exhorter is excited and very serious about what he or she is saying. Paul was telling Timothy to be completely involved with his mind **and** his emotions in preaching about what Scripture said. He was to get excited about God's Word.

The reading of Scripture gave a basis for preaching. It was not just the ideas of the preacher



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that were being preached, the basis for the sermon was God's Word. This gave the message of the preacher Spiritual power.

The third thing that Timothy was to do was teach. This is different from preaching. Teaching has to do with helping people learn for themselves what the Scripture says. This is taking the words in the Bible, and making them well known to those taught, and helping the pupils completely understand what the Bible is saying. It is telling, but it is also making certain that the hearer (student) accepts the truth.

Becoming a Christian means that we understand the basic idea that Jesus is the Son of God, that He lived a perfect life, that He died for our sins, that He rose from the dead to prove that He cannot be destroyed, even by death. All that was for us. So, when we understand and believe that, we ask for forgiveness of our sins and ask Him to become the Lord of our lives.

That, is just the beginning. From that point, we begin to learn all the things that He has done for others and for us as we understand His Word. We find out how to live the best life possible. We are taught how to live as His children, how to share His Word with others, and how to help those who have needs. All that we learn from the Bible.

The Christian teacher is responsible for teaching us. Jesus told His disciples, just before He went back to Heaven that they were to make disciples, "teaching them to observe all things I have taught you." Since the word disciple means learner, this is a double charge. We are to make learners, and teach them. Teachers help people want to learn and then they teach them.

In verse fourteen, Paul told Timothy that he was to remember that God's Spirit had given him a gift, we can assume it was preaching and teaching, and that Timothy was to continually use it. He said that the gift was not only known to Timothy, but was recognized by the elders of the church. These elders, leaders of the church, because they believed that Timothy was spiritually gifted, had laid hands on him.

The ceremony of laying hands on specially designated church leaders happens in our day. It is not something that distributes the power of God, it represents the blessing of the church. You might think of it like the President of the United States giving a Medal of Honor to a soldier who has proven himself in battle. The President is not making the soldier brave, or giving him the ability to fight well, he is simply recognizing what is already obvious to everyone about that soldier.

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

Lesson Goal: To help students see some of the responsibilities of church leaders, and to become good church leaders.

Scripture Memory: "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching." I Timothy 4:13

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Student Worksheet—Following Through

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>What were the three things Paul told Timothy to do until Paul came back to Ephesus?

1.

2.

3.

>Why was it important that the Word of God be read out loud in Ephesus?

>What did the church in Paul's day do that was copied from the Jewish Synagogues?

>What was the basis for preaching?

>What are some of the things that we learn after we become children of God?

>Why did the elders of the church "lay hands" on Timothy?

For Memory: "Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching." I Timothy 4:13

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.