

Persevere in These Things

1 Timothy 4:1-16

1. **A Warning of Apostasy** (vs.1-3)

Paul has instructed Timothy on several issues including proper behavior of men and women in the church (1 Tim. 2:8-12) as well as the servant-leadership of the local church (1 Tim. 3:1-13). He now reminds Timothy of the unavoidable apostasy that will plague the churches because of the influence of false teaching (1 Tim. 4:1-3a).

2. **Encouragements and Prohibitions** (vs.4-10)

In light of inevitable apostasy, Paul reassures Timothy that both proper instruction and personal discipline will be beneficial for both him and the rest of the church.

A. Do (vs.3b-6)

Timothy is to regularly teach sound doctrine (v.6) and to remind the believers of the goodness of all things that God has created. No one is to forbid what God has not commended (Gen.2:21-25) or what He no longer forbids (Mark 7:19; Acts 10:13-15).

B. Don't (v.7a)

The admonition to teach sound doctrine is coupled with a prohibition against being entangled in worthless disputations. He is to refrain from speculating on fanciful tales and focus on what is true (cf. 1 Tim. 1:4).

C. Discipline (vs.7b-10)

One of Paul's five trustworthy statements concerns the importance of godly discipline (vs.7b-8). The effort put into spiritual discipline will endure when the body fails and bear rewards farther in the future (cf. 1 Cor. 3:14).

3. **Duties and Diligence** (vs.11-16)

A. Teaching (v.11)

Paul's encouragements to Timothy (vs.6-10) were not solely for his benefit, he was continue teaching these things to them.

B. Conduct (v.12)

Instead of being cowed by those who would not follow his instruction on account of his age, he was to be committed to excel in godliness in order to be an example for the faithful and so that antagonists would be silenced (cf. 1 Pet. 3:16).

C. Preaching (vs.13-14)

The prior encouragement for regular teaching (v.10) could be done either privately or publicly, but Paul's instructions here are explicitly for the conducting of public worship and the ministry to which Timothy had been called (cf. 2 Tim. 1:6). Reading Scripture is vital, God has spoken to His people in His Word (cf. 2 Tim. 3:16-17). Teaching focusses on the action of explaining the meaning of the Scriptures so that people can understand them (cf. Neh. 8:1-8), and exhortation is the way in which Timothy was to challenge the people to apply these truths in the regular course of their lives.

D. Dedication (vs.15-16)

Timothy was to give careful attention both to his disciplined personal godliness and to the biblical fidelity of his ministry so that there would be public evidence of them. This dedication would ensure that both he and his hearers would continue to have the gospel message and not be led astray by false doctrine (cf. John 6:68).