

Nourished in the Word • 1 Timothy 4:6-16

I. INTRODUCTION – Read Text

A. Pottery from Israel

1. This is a piece of pottery from Israel. I found it on one of the tours we've taken.
2. I have a whole shelf of this stuff in my office. That shelf is a small portion of all I've found over the years.
3. I find it all over the ground there. You look down & there it is.
4. At first, the other people in the group don't see it.
 - a. I pick up a piece & they go, "'Oo, Oo, where'd you get that?'"
 - b. I point down, "There."// They say "Where?"// I say, "Right there. Look--That's another piece sticking out of the ground." // "Where?" They don't see it.
 - c. I reach down & pick it up & they say, "Oo, Oo. Where'd you get that?"
5. People broke pots & plates for thousands of years at these places so the ground is **covered** w/this stuff.

It IS the ground.

6. But **tourists** have a mental block that blinds them to it.
 - a. They think stuff like this is in a museum display case;
 - b. Not lying on the ground for the taking.
7. So even though they're **looking** right at it, they don't **see** it. They think it's a rock.
8. What's fun is to **help them set aside their blinders** & realize what they're looking at is a piece of an ancient plate or pot that's 2500 years old.
 - a. Once their eyes have been recalibrated, they go running around filling their pockets!
 - b. They pick up a piece, then call to a friend, "Look what I found."
 - c. They try to outdo each other by getting the biggest or most elaborate piece.
 - d. Our guide says, "Lance, can you tell them to stop excavating?"
 - e. "Come on now, it's time to head back to the bus." – "But there might be buried treasure over here."

B. Today

1. Our passage today is like the ground at one of those sites in Israel.
2. It's one many pass over without discerning the good stuff there.
3. They're so busy looking for the major sites & verses, they miss the nuggets under their feet & nose.
4. Let's slow down & take the time to glean the good stuff Paul writes here to Timothy.

II. TEXT

A. V. 6

⁶ If you instruct the brethren in these things, you will be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished in the words of faith and of the good doctrine which you have carefully followed.

1. Since we're diving in mid-thought on Paul, I need to quickly recap what's going on.
2. The church at Ephesus was an important center of outreach to all Asia Minor.
 - a. So strategic was it a few years before, Paul had spent 3 years there.
 - b. Now, when he & his assistant Timothy returned they discovered the church had begun to drift due to some goofy teaching by some of the church elders.
 - c. Urgent matters west of there needed Paul's immediate attention, so he left Timothy in Ephesus & sailed off, intending to meet back up w/Tim as soon as possible.
 - d. Not knowing when that would be, he sent this letter to encourage Tim & remind him of his duty.
3. Here in v. 6, Paul says, "Timothy, being a good pastor means **keeping God's Word** the main thing."
Keep yourself in it.
Draw your spiritual nourishment from it.
Take your direction & counsel for life from it.
And keep it **ever** before the people you're leading."
4. Paul writes, "**instruct the brethren in these things.**"
 - a. We could translate it "**Lay it out for them.**"
 - b. In Bible college they'd say, "**Exposit** the text." // Do an **exposé** = Make it plain, understandable.
 - c. Explain what the text **means.**
5. Paul tells Tim to preach & teach God's Word.
 - a. This has to be at the **very center** of what a pastor does.
 - b. Especially in a church troubled by false teachers & drifting from the truth.
6. V. 6 is another of several passages in this letter where Paul **presses in on** Timothy to **step it up.**
 - a. This was Tim's first time to be out from under Paul's tutelage for a length of time. leading a church.

- b. And Ephesus was no little fellowship of a couple dozen.
- c. It was comprised **dozens** of house-churches. All told, the church at Ephesus probably numbered a couple thousand.
- d. If that wasn't intimidating enough, the false teachers were the **elders**.
- 7. Along comes Timothy to put things in order. A daunting assignment.
- 8. Paul knew Tim's tendency toward timidity & writes this to steel him for the task.
- 9. **Central** to it must be his **commitment to the Word**. First to live it, then to teach it.
- 10. I love the way Paul says it here –The Word that creates faith **nourishes** us.
 - a. That word **nourish** means **to develop skill**.
 - b. It's not just **head** knowledge. It's **practical** knowledge; application.
 - c. God's Word isn't just for formulating theological statements.
 - d. It's good for life & living.
 - e. It not only tells us **where** to go, it tells us **how** to get there.
- 11. If you read & apply the Bible, **you got skills**.
- 12. Paul's tells Tim– "You've got skills; USE them!"
- 13. We'll come back to this later.
- 14. But before we move on, I want to encourage you to not neglect the reading of God's Word.
 - a. There are lots of good books & CD's & DVD's out there.
 - b. It's easy to get caught up reading & listening to what **others** say.
 - c. Don't let their words crowd out God's Word.
 - d. The best commentary on the Bible is the Bible.
 - e. And the best Bible teacher, is the HS.

B. Vs. 7-9

- ⁷ But reject profane and old wives' fables, and exercise yourself toward godliness.
- 1. Last week we learned the false teachers told people to abstain from pleasures.
- 2. Here Paul says what people need to abstain from was the silly stories that make the rounds of people who have nothing to do all day but sit around & stir up trouble by flapping their jaws.
- 3. A modern take on this is those emails that fill up your inbox.
 - a. Nigerians who want to send you a fortune.
 - b. People who wake up in a bathtub filled w/ice & a note on the mirror telling them to call an ambulance.
 - c. Disney wants to send you free tickets to Disneyland & give you a guest acting spot opposite Johnny Depp in the next *Pirates of the Caribbean* movie.
 - d. You've seen them. Those chain & scam emails, that you better be sure to send to 10 people or something terrible will happen to you!
- 4. It's all a pointless, time-wasting **distraction**.
- 5. Paul tells Timothy to turn his attention instead **toward godliness**, toward **spiritual maturity**.
- 6. He's to **invest himself** in the **pursuit** of it.

⁸ For bodily exercise profits a little, but godliness is profitable for all things, having promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come. ⁹ This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance.

- 7. This was a great illustration for Timothy because as a major Greek city Ephesus was a center of sport.
 - a. The Greeks & Romans were all about physical strength & prowess, even more than we are today.
 - b. We're not the only ones to have gyms & fitness centers.
 - c. Every city of decent size had at least one **gymnasium**.
 - d. That's the word used here for **exercise** = gymnos
- 8. When Paul says, "Exercise yourself to godliness," he means, "**Train & discipline** yourself spiritually just like an athlete **prepares** for competition."
- 9. Anyone who's been in sports & gone through the physical conditioning at the start of the season knows how intense it is.
- a. Guys, remember hell week in **football**? The wind sprints?
- b. **Basketball** players, remember running lines & bleachers?
- c. **Wrestlers** do endless Thompson drills, 6-count burpees, & Breakdowns.
- 10. There's nothing of the weak or wimpy in this word **exercise**.
It's giving it your all, **& then some** Just like a good coach is able to get out of you.
- 11. That's what Paul is being for Tim A spiritual coach; urging him on.
- a. After denying the "salvation by hard-work" route of the false teachers, Paul doesn't want to leave Tim thinking

the path to heaven is a kicked-back ride in a cart pulled by angels.

b. Godliness isn't obtained by being **lazy**.

c. It is a whole-hearted pursuit that demands all we are & all we've got.

12. Paul says physical exercise **is good**. It's **good** to be in shape.

a. You're in better health & that's **good stewardship** of the body.

b. You'll be around a little longer, able to do more for the Lord & others before your go home to heaven.

c. When you're in shape, you'll probably spend less time at the doctor's office.

d. You'll go to sleep quicker, sleep more soundly & wake up more refreshed.

e. You won't get that afternoon blah that makes you want to take a nap.

f. Your clothes will fit better.

13. But the benefits of physical health, as good as they are, **don't come close** to the benefits of **spiritual health**.

a. No matter how much you can bench, how many pull-ups & sit-ups you can do or how fast you can run a mile – None of that matters in heaven.

b. Love, peace, hope, joy, faith, courage, loyalty, patience, kindness, gentleness, self-control – All that is good for right now **AND** You get to take it w/you.

14. So, **work out, go** to the gym, **use** that treadmill you bought a while back, but use now for a clothes rack.

a. Turn that cooler into a six-pack.

b. Get in Shape - But be even **more diligent** to get into the Spirit!

15. I've seen a number of you there & I'm always stoked to see you, knowing your physical health is important to you.

a. I go because for me it's **stewardship** of my body.

b. I go so I can stay healthy & serve God, my wife & family & you.

c. I don't really like it. It's hard. But it's good!

16. While I work out, I either reading or listen to the Word, or studies. Working out both the body & the soul.

C. V.10

¹⁰ For to this **end** we both labor and suffer reproach,

1. Paul & Timothy labored toward was **godliness**, spiritual maturity, both for themselves & for those they were leading.

because we trust in the living God, who is *the* Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.

2. Paul isn't teaching universalism. He's not saying **everyone** goes to heaven.

3. He means the work of Christ on the cross has the **potential** to save everyone.

4. But **ONLY** those who believe in Him **are** saved.

5. See Paul's attitude toward ministry here.

a. He **poured himself, heart & soul into** his calling.

b. It was something he labored in & suffered for. // c. He calls Tim to the same devotion.

6. I don't understand how a guy can have 3 or 4 hobbies **& be a good pastor**.

a. Hobbies & sports take time. If you want to excel, you have to **invest** greatly in them

b. It also takes time to study & put a good sermon or Bible study together.

c. Being a pastor means meeting w/people, prayer, developing leaders.

d. If a pastor is married & has kids, they're his **first** ministry!

e. How in the world can he be a scratch golfer, pro-kite-surfer, rebuild classic cars, & run a kung-Fu studio & be a good pastor?

7. A few other pastors are just lazy! They don't even have hobbies.

a. I don't know what they're doing but they're never in the office.

b. They rarely study. They download a sermon from the internet.

c. They don't answer their phone. Don't return email. Don't do hospital visitations.

d. And they're usually the ones who complain the loudest about how busy they are.

8. The man who's blessed to be called by God into full-time ministry as a pastor ought to throw himself into it w/all he's got. Paul did.

D. Vs. 11-12

¹¹ These things command and teach. ¹² Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.

1. Here's another instance of Paul **encouraging** Timothy to step in & up.

2. Paul knew he'd be tempted to shrink under the opposition of men who'd at one time been elders.

a. They'd gone off into error & needed to be silenced.

b. They wouldn't go quietly. They'd give Tim some serious push-back.

- c. Timothy was in his late 20's to early 30's & they'd us that as a point of attack.
3. So Paul tells him – "Listen, be bold! **Command** these guys! Don't be mealy-mouthed & wishy-washy. Speak a clear word of definite direction."
4. Being a pastor carries w/it a measure of spiritual authority.
 - a. When God calls a man, He gives Him what he needs to fulfill that call.
 - b. So God bestowed on Timothy the **authority** to get the job done.
5. And **age** had **nothing** to do w/it.
 - a. So when critics give him grief, he's not to let it trouble him.
 - b. He's not to back down or apologize for stepping on their heretical toes.
6. The way to overcome questions about his age was to focus on his ministry & example.
 - a. If he was teaching & preaching God's Word,
 - b. If he followed the Lord in his personal & social life,
 - c. What could the critics say except – "He's young."
 - d. So what?! Timothy's young but he's **mature**. He's serving God, bearing spiritual fruit & being a blessing.
 - e. **You** false teachers on the other hand, may be older, but you're flakes!
- E. Vs. 13-16
- ¹³ Till I come, give attention to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine.
 1. It was Paul's plan to wrap up what he was doing in Macedonia, then rejoin Timothy in Ephesus.
 2. Not knowing how long that would take, he encouraged Timothy to stay focused on the basics.
 3. He was to make the public reading & teaching of the Word as the center-piece of their gathering.
- ¹⁴ Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy w/the laying on of the hands of the eldership.
 4. Timothy's calling to be a pastor came by a clear word of prophecy. That call had been **ratified** by men respected as godly elders.
- ¹⁵ Meditate on these things; give yourself entirely to them, that your progress may be evident to all.
 5. Paul knew as Tim **embraced his call** & dove into it w/o reserve his gifts in leading & teaching would flourish. He'd **grow** in his role as pastor.
 6. Pastors **do** grow & become more proficient as time passes & they gain more experience.
 7. I think back to my early years; all the mistakes! The teaching!
 8. We need to give guys a chance. They' make mistakes – how do they handle them? DO they learn, adjust, go on?
- ¹⁶ Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.
 9. "Take heed to yourself, **your life**, & your doctrine."
 - a. **Life & doctrine** = Theology & practice Life & doctrine.
 - b. What you believe. How you live. Take heed to it.
 - c. Listen you young guys, some of you are doing really well on the doctrine. / Not so good on the living.
[elab]
 - d. Others, doing well on the living, but not so good on the doctrine.
[elab – "here's a flower" – Need a verse]
 - e. Life & doctrine = both!
10. Paul knew a church **as a whole** can only go as far as their pastor so he tells Tim to keep growing.
 - a. The key for a church's spiritual growth is for the pastor to grow.
 - b. His holiness, purity, virtue, courage; his **faith** will have a major impact on those he leads.
 - c. This is why it's crucial for a church to support & take care of its pastor.
 - d. They need to keep an eye on him and make sure while he's laboring hard for the Lord, he's not destroying himself.

III. CONCLUSION

A. A Charge

1. As we close, there's a big, fat gold nugget in this passage I hope you saw.
2. This is Paul's **commissioning** of Timothy **into** his role as the pastor at Ephesus.

- a. Tim's **call** to be a pastor was already clear.
 - b. This is where he's given a specific assignment & installed as a pastor.
3. This is the **first time** Timothy has been out from under Paul's direct lead for longer than a few days or weeks.
4. Yes, it was Paul's stated plan to reunite with him eventually, but he had no clear idea when that would be and Tim could not delay in his task to take the role of being the lead pastor at Ephesus.
5. So Paul tells him here – "Timothy, it's your turn now! You're the one God's called to do this."
 - a. "I know you can. You're called. You've got skills."
 - b. "In the many smaller opportunities you've had over the years you've followed me, you've proven faithful."
 - c. "Now it's time for you to be on your own. You don't need my assistance any longer."
6. In 1:2, Paul calls Timothy **his true son in the faith**.
7. This is where Paul **launches** his son Timothy into genuine manhood.
 - a. Tim went from being Paul's spiritual son to being a brother; A **man** in every respect.
 - b. Timothy was no longer Paul's **assistant**. He was Paul's **associate**.
8. Paul gives to Timothy a priceless gift, a gift only a father can give to a son.
 - a. He says, "Son, you're a man now."
 - b. "You can do this. You've got what it takes to become the man God created you to be."
9. This is something our culture has lost its grip on, to our great loss.
 - a. Only a man can make a man.
 - b. Women cannot make men. They give birth to babies & raise boys.
 - c. But only a man can turn a boy into a man.
10. This is why I am so stoked about what's happening here at CCO. Men have stepped up & taken on a large part of the ministry here.
 - a. In most churches, women do 90% of the work, teach nearly 100% of the S/S.
 - b. We have a LOT of men teaching S/S!
 - c. We have Cub Scouts & Boys Scouts –which is all about teaching boys to be men =- Good, godly Men!
 - d. WCCA takes the kids out, teaches them to fish. They encourage the dads to connect with their sons.
 - e. They pair up the kids of single moms with godly men.
 - f. EpicLife is all about reclaiming a Biblical idea of what it means to be a man because this world has totally messed that up!
11. SO I want to speak here as we end to the men. To those men who grew up w/o a father; or whose dads were so broken & tweaked by sin they failed as a father.
12. You have a Good Father, a really awesome Dad. I want to introduce you to Him.
He's your Heavenly Father & oh how He loves you.
Everything you've been looking for is in Him.
He's here right now. He's not far off. You don't have to embark on some long adventure to find Him.
He's here. Right here. TO prove How close He is, He sent His Son, Jesus to become one of us and make Himself more real.
Jesus is proof of how much the Father loves you and want to be a part of your life.