

Marks

of Discipleship

Daily Prayer ■ Weekly Worship ■ Bible Reading ■ Giving Time, Talents & Resources ■ Spiritual Friendships ■ Service In & Beyond the Church

July 3, 2022

Day 1: I Timothy 4:11-12

These are the things you must insist on and teach. Let no one despise your youth, but set the believers an example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity.

In Paul's world, age was a mark of wisdom and one who was young was generally not thought of as being able to teach. Timothy will be listened to because his speech is free from manipulation. The way he goes about his daily activities is an example of Christ's teaching. He demonstrates love and faith by the way he speaks, with authority and humility. He keeps himself wholly devoted to God. Timothy is asked to win the peoples' respect, not by skillful speaking but by correct action. This kind of example is hard to ignore.

Question: Do you think wisdom comes with age or can it be learned?

Challenge: Think of the people you respect; how did they win your respect?

Scripture: Deuteronomy 4:1-11

Day 2: I Timothy 4:13

Until I arrive, give attention to the public reading of scripture, to exhorting, to teaching.

Paul is coming to support Timothy. Until Paul arrives he wants Timothy to continue to lead public worship. The scripture that was most often read in the early churches was the Prophets and the Psalms. The early church saw in them (the Prophets and the Psalms) predictions of the coming of the Lord. Exhortation was encouraging the congregation to live according to the teaching of Christ. The teaching was the content of the faith.

Question: Do you think Paul is describing worship or some other gathering?

Challenge: If someone came to you and asked you to teach them three basic beliefs of the Christian faith, how would you answer?

Scripture: Proverbs 1:3-13

Day 3: I Timothy 4:14

Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you through prophecy with the laying on of hands by the council of elders.

Timothy has the spiritual gift of Prophecy. Prophecy in the Old Testament was "speaking the Word of God." Prophecy in the first century was also considered speaking the Word of God, with the difference being that the Word was the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Timothy had the ability to communicate the Gospel message very clearly. His gift was acknowledged and affirmed by the elders in the church with the laying on of hands.

Question: Read the passage below (note verse 6 - husband of one wife). Why or why not do you think we should apply this qualification to today's church?

Challenge: Do you have the qualifications of an elder?

Scripture: Titus 1:1-8

Day 4: I Timothy 4:15

Put these things into practice, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress.

Timothy is to put into practice all the things Paul talks about in verses 11-14. A spiritual gift that is not used will wither. It is like a muscle that is not used - it will lose its strength. As Timothy uses his gift of teaching people will see he has the spiritual gift of teaching. People will respond to his teaching and preaching but unlike other spiritual gifts the results may not be seen for a while. Timothy progress by using and perfecting his gift.

Question: Do you believe if you do not use it you will lose it, or do you think some things one never losses proficiency at?

Challenge: What spiritual disciplines do you practice on a regular basis? Worship - Bible Reading - Service - Spiritual Friends - Prayer - Giving?

Scripture: John 15:1-11

Day 5: I Timothy 4:16

Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; continue in these things, for in doing this you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Until the student uses what is taught, can the teaching be said to have had effect? Teaching is a spiritual gift that does not bear fruit for some time. All of the teaching of the Christian view of life, death, and the meaning of life is not appreciated until someone has to use that teaching to deal with a problem. The teachers taught the beliefs but until someone used those beliefs the teaching was not seen to be effective.

Question: What does Paul mean by *saving* ourselves as well as others by our teaching?

Challenge: What is the best way to "teach" someone a lesson?

Scripture: Mark 1:17-27

Day 6: I Timothy 5:1-2

Do not speak harshly to an older man, but speak to him as to a father, to younger men as brothers, to older women as mothers, to younger women as sisters—with absolute purity.

Timothy is asked to "honor" his elders. He is to act with all the respect the elders are due. Timothy is to take seriously the experience and wisdom of his elders (men and women) so he can demonstrate that the new faith does not ignore the commandments given to Moses. The early Christians were not to disregard the law or throw it out but to understand its place in God's plan of redemption.

Question: Do you take seriously your elders in life?

Challenge: How are you taking seriously those who are elders?