

MARKS OF A GODLY MINISTER

1 Timothy 4

Knute Larson: Mark Price, all-star guard for Cleveland Cavaliers, less than 6 ft. He played well among giants. Asked how someone short could be effective in basketball, Price reflected on Friday nights alone at gym shooting free throws and 3-point shots, while everyone else was out on a date, or hanging out with friends.

Physical excellence requires training, commitment and hard work.

Spiritual maturity requires discipline, training, and commitment.

Too often we're satisfied with mediocrity.

In 1 Timothy 4, Paul urges us to a higher commitment.

Advice for godly minister who wants to please God.

Again, Paul's counsel for a trusted follower/leader

represents **God's desire for ALL of His people.**

Four sermons in a single chapter! We looked at 1st last week.

HOW TO ADDRESS SOCIETY TURNING AWAY FROM TRUTH 4:1-6

Spirit warns us: people who should know better will depart from the faith.

These people profess to know Christ;

They're identified as part of the church.

They make *choice* to abandon the truth.

They impose rules on others; they themselves don't follow them!

How should we respond to their legalism? 4:4-6

All things are good if God made them.

Enjoy them with thanksgiving.

***In a legalistic culture that denies the truth, a godly minister must take a stand for solid teaching of God's Word
Godly ministers must be NOURISHED by God's Word & sound teaching.***

HOW TO HANDLE PEOPLE WHO PURSUE NONSENSE

7-11 *Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly.⁸ For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.⁹ This is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance.¹⁰ For this we labor and strive, because we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe.¹¹ Command and teach these things.*

Reject nonsense 4:7a Reject religious "junk food!"

Don't waste time with their myths and wives' tales.

–false teaching of people who lead others astray.

Stay away from them!

To discern truth, we must be grounded in God's Word.

Instead of getting wrapped up debating about nonsense...

Focus on training to be godly!

4:7b-11

Train yourself to be godly. "Training" <= "gymnastics" (lit., "gymnasize")

–rigorous training gymnasts go through.

When our kids were growing up, Olympics every few years, stirred interest in gymnastics. They wanted to be Nadia.

Olympic champion gymnasts dedicate their lives to training.

Expert gymnastics requires rigorous training!

Ephesus knew all about training for Olympics.

Their Olympic stadium seated 100,000.

Think *gymnastics* requires rigorous training? **TRY training for *GODLINESS*.**

If you think we achieve godliness in “few minutes a day with God,” you’ve never seriously tried training for godliness!

Achieving godliness requires rigorous training!

Training includes disciplines of godliness: prayer, reading Word, meditating, fellowship, witnessing, service, submission.

Their “stuff” (theological nonsense) is of NO profit.

Physical exercise is of LITTLE profit.

Paul isn’t downgrading physical exercise.

It *is* profitable, but only *some* profit, and only *for a while*.

If you want *permanent* benefit, train yourself for *godliness*.

Training for godliness is ALWAYS profitable!

Ironside: “You have strong, healthy bodies, you rightly delight to indulge in physical exercises... As these things have a place in the *physical* realm, it’s more important that you be strong *spiritually*.... Do not be so concerned about *bodily* exercise that you fail to take time over the Word of God and in prayer that you may be strong...”

Godliness ...

... holds promise for present life, as well as for life to come

... worth the effort; worth “*agonizing*” for!

...appropriate response for those who place hope in living God

Concentrate your efforts on *that*.

Command and teach *these things*.

We've put our hope in Christ, the Living God,
the Savior of ALL.

*HE's the Savior—it's not wives tales, myths, and legalistic
rules that save.*

*HE's the Savior of ALL. His death is sufficient to cover sins
of the world.*

That provision is only enjoyed by those who TRUST Him.

3rd. **HOW TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE WHO MAKE LIGHT
OF YOUR YOUTH 4:12** *Don't let anyone look down on you
because you are young, but set an example for the believers in
speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity.*

Timothy is young.

People at Ephesus didn't vote for him!

Paul dropped him off to handle their situation.

Who does this *KID* think he is to try to tell *US* what to do?!!

Don't let their criticism get to you! Just be faithful.

KEEP TEACHING THE TRUTH!

BE AN EXAMPLE of what godly living looks like!

Don't develop inferiority complex

because you're younger than people you minister to.

Focus on being person God wants you to be.

Young people may be inexperienced & immature;

if they model godly living, they'll get people's attention.

People are looking for something genuine

that makes a difference in people's lives.

Young people are fed up with adults who talk one way on Sunday
and live a different way the rest of the week.

They want religion that makes a difference in our lives.

They watch adults in church and wonder,
... they talk about love, but can't get along with each other
... talk about sharing Christ with others, but never talk to anyone
about Him.

... if we bring someone to church, they're not welcome; they're
different!

When they express concern, they're put down or ignored.

***How can young people get older people to pay attention,
so they can make a difference?***

Don't let anyone make light of your youth!

NOT if someone makes light of you, punch his lights out!

It means don't stop trying when people don't respond

Don't give up! Live for God anyway.

Set an example 4:12

Timothy shouldn't be ashamed of young age

(less than 40?)—*neither should you!*

Silence criticism by your example!

How can young people change a church? Be an Example!

K.A.C. => BEE => ***"Be Eager Examples!"***

Johnny Cash tells about his brother who helped family, cutting oak trees into fence posts. Jack announced he wanted to be a preacher. They thought he'd be a good one. He had a reputation for Christian character. He tried to steer Johnny toward the light. Johnny recalls brother's example. Jack was killed in a table saw accident. He was 14. Even young people can ***BE AN EXAMPLE!***

5 areas where young people can make an impact:

Be an example in your speech

Fed up with way people talk about other people?

Model a different way of talking!

James 3 emphasizes the importance of tongue.

Many things bigger, stronger; few do more damage.

Model godly speech!

Be an example in your conduct

Are you tired of lifestyles you see?

"What you do speaks so loudly I can't hear what you say!"

If you want to make a difference, ... ***Model godly living!***

Be an example of love

Are you tired of way people criticize other people?

Are you tired of self-centered way people live?

People seek someone to love them unconditionally.

If you want to make a difference, ***Model godly loving!***

Be an example of faith Remember David?

Are you tired of people saying "It can't be done!"

Are you fed up with people afraid to trust God

to conquer a new mountain? ***Model godly faith!***

Be an example of purity

Had enough godless society where no one expects purity?

Ephesus was world center of immorality.

To change society he must be pure, in impure culture.

Today? *World* community infiltrated by impurity, puts our integrity to the test.

We absorb it at the movies.

We absorb it on our computer and TV.

Kids absorb it at school on their cell phones!

People who want to train for godly living have to turn it off!

Model godly purity!

Don't let anyone tell you

YOU can't make a difference—you're too young!
Almost every movement of the Spirit has begun with young people who dared to trust God to make a difference.

It happens when youth become determined to **be different**,
and **make a difference!**

Don't let anyone make light of your youth! ***YOU be an example!***

HOW TO USE GIFTS GOD HAS GIVEN YOU 13-15

Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. 14 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. 15 Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.

Don't throw in the towel! Hang in there!

Faithfully fulfill the ministry God has called you to do.

Get to work and use the gifts God gave you!

Concentrate on reading the Word—in *public and private* worship.

God has spoken! We need to hear what HE has said.

Concentrate on exposition of Word and teaching of doctrine.

God didn't equip us to admire toys He placed on our shelf!

They aren't decorations to look at and admire.

They're tools—intended to be USED in serving Him.

If we're not USING gift God gave us, we're NEGLECTING it.

Don't neglect it! USE it!

If you don't know how God wired *you*, find out!

Timothy found out how God equipped him when church leadership helped him ***discover where he fit!***

Timothy had to communicate with them to find out.

They told him where *they* believed he fit,
and identified with him, laying hands on him.

It's OUR responsibility not to neglect what God gives us.

Keep working on what God called you to do.

*"Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them,
so that everyone may see your progress."*

In mid-80's, cellist Pablo Casals practiced 4-5 hours/day.

Someone asked why he still worked so hard.

"Because I have a notion I'm making some progress."

Have we stopped practicing?

Paul says be diligent—keep at it!

Keep working at the gifts God has given to you.

Let people see you're still making progress. *Even at 85!!!*

CONCLUDING SUMMARY 4:16

PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR LIFE AND DOCTRINE

*"Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them,
because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers."*

Paul urges us: examine life and doctrine carefully.

When we do that, we'll meet needs of those we minister to,
and we'll be an encouragement, to ourselves,
as well as to those who listen to what we say.

A preacher can get so involved in ministering to others he forgets
to pay attention to his own life and doctrine.

They're "falling like flies" to moral problems, divorce, other issues,
from self-centered fighting, to criminal offenses.

Each of us must pay attention to our life and doctrine.

Then we'll be able to minister effectively in lives of others.

“Save” is broad—applied to victories in battles of life.

As we watch our life and doctrine, we experience deliverance from many attacks that come against us.

Pay attention to your life and to what you believe; by paying attention, you protect yourself and minister to others also.

HOW ARE WE TO MINISTER IN 21st CENTURY?

- * **Know what you believe so you can stand firm in a society that’s turning away from the truth.**
- * **Train yourself for godly living.**
- * **Set an example—in speech, conduct, love, faith , purity.**
Show people what it looks like to live for God—even if young!
- * **Discover how God equipped you; use abilities in His work.**
- * **Keep an eye on your life and on your doctrine.**

Don’t let Satan lead you astray and catch you in His trap!

It all flows together!

***Focus on becoming person God wants YOU to be;
He’ll take care of the rest!***