

Growing Strong in Faith | Part 7

Lesson 5

1 Timothy 4:11-16

July 9, 2023

Five Things to Watch in Life

INTRODUCTION

“Words, words, words,” uttered Shakespeare’s Hamlet. Yet, 1,550 years before the writing of *Hamlet*, the Apostle Paul said much about THE WORD through written words, even though spread of the gospel was first accomplished through speech: spoken words.

Speech, then, is one of the “five things” of this lesson. The remaining four interact remarkably with speech and with each other, a fact of which Paul was no doubt aware when he advised Timothy to include in his ministry all five: speech, conduct, love, faith, and purity.

The content of one’s speech depends upon virtuous practice of the other “four things,” just as a person’s faith may be revealed in his speech, accompanied by love demonstrated through his conduct.

One could spend hours connecting these “things” with one or more of the other. Instead, let us take note of how Paul incorporates them into his letter to Timothy.

Memory Verse: “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith and in purity.”

—1 Timothy 4:12

Pray, and read 1 Timothy 4:11-16. What questions or observations do you have about this passage?

OBSERVATION: What does the passage say?

1. Timothy is recognized in biblical history as having a reticent and/or timid manner. What single directive does Paul give Timothy to offset this trait?
(1 Timothy 4:11)
2. To counter Timothy's youth and inexperience, Paul emphasizes five essentials of discipleship which Timothy should maintain and strengthen. What are they? (1 Timothy 4:12)
3. What is the most productive way that Timothy can serve until Paul returns to Ephesus? (1 Timothy 4:13)
4. How should Timothy approach the work assigned him?
(1 Timothy 4:15-16a)
5. What effect will Timothy's service have on others?
(1 Timothy 4:16b)

INTERPRETATION: What do the passages mean?

1. When Paul tells Timothy to, “Command and teach these things” (1 Timothy 4:11), he is also saying he must speak with authority, especially when he is conveying the Word of God. How is speaking with authority significant in other passages of the New Testament? (Matthew 7:28-29; Luke 4:32, 36).

2. What other examples besides 1 Timothy 4:12-13 does Paul present that augment the confidence of youthful leaders? (Titus 2:7-8; James 3:11; 1 Peter 2:12)

3. “Preaching and teaching,” which Paul advises in 1 Timothy 4:13, may include a warning or rebuke. To what problem in Ephesus might a warning refer? (Mark 13:5-22; 1 Timothy 4:1-2, 7).

4. Paul believes it is important that “everyone may see your [Timothy’s] progress” (1 Timothy 4:15b) in his ministry. What testimony did he offer to encourage Timothy? (1 Corinthians 9:25; Philippians 3:12-14).

APPLICATION: How do the passages apply to your life?

1. In *Imitation of Christ*, Thomas A Kempis said, “It is easier not to speak a word at all than to speak more words than we should.” Is this a problem for Christians, especially when the words are intended to win someone to Christ?

2. Besides speech, conduct is the second essential which enables us to be active Christians, while love, faith, and purity are the motivators that spur our activity. How is this accurate or inaccurate?

3. Progress in the faith was important to Paul as is indicated in 1 Timothy 4:15. What methods can be employed to nourish faith daily in the twenty-first century?